

Mysterious Ways

A newsletter for Pagan men who love men.

Winter / Spring 2021
Volume 2, Issue 1

Happy New Year!

2020 was quite a year!!! The Coronavirus, politics, wild fires, an overactive hurricane season, riots, murder hornets, Saharan dust clouds — you name the apocalyptic event and we probably had it.

At the outset, 2021 is looking much brighter, though we still have stuff to get through. Vaccinations have started. We elected a new President.

2021 is still uncertain. Will the vaccine work against the new strains of the virus? Will MAGA folks and hate groups shut up now that their man is out of office? How long until we can meet again in person, go to gatherings and events, or even go to the movies? Will 2021 really be our salvation? If only there were a way to know!

This issue of Mysterious Ways is all about divination—ways we can predict the future, interpret the past and present, contact the spirit world, and delve into our own subconsciouses. Perhaps divination can provide the answers we seek.
— Mel Mystery

Theme this Issue: Queer Vision and Divination



Image from Distilled Images - <http://www.distilledimages.net/>



How often do we think of psychics and fortune tellers as being female? Zoltar is the masculine image of a fortune teller.

Inside this issue

Welcome	1
Events and Gatherings	2
From Across the Pond	4
More Events and Gatherings	8
General Articles	9
Queer Vision and Divination	10
Gay Gods and Spirits	12
Poetry and Art	14
Resource Listing	16
Upcoming Events	17

Special Thanks

Special thanks to all who contributed articles and art this month—
John Pead, Levi Waite, and Distilled Images.

Events and Gatherings

Virtual Between the Worlds Review

By Mel Mystery

Between the Worlds: A spiritual gathering for men who love men was one of a few events for queer Pagan men that went virtual this year due to the Coronavirus. The event is normally held in person at Wisteria Campground in Pomeroy, Ohio and attracts an average of around 100 queer Pagan men along with their sometimes non-Pagan partners. Between the Worlds was scheduled for the week of September 21-26, 2020, and given the worldwide Covid-19 pandemic, the planners opted to try their hand at a virtual event this year.

Virtual Between the Worlds hosted workshops, rituals, and entertainment that week using Zoom as their primary online platform. There was also a Facebook group where announcements were made and where folks could socialize in “rooms.” The daily format started with two workshops in the afternoon, a daily ritual in the early evening, and entertainment later in the evening. Obviously, these times were based in the Ohio time zone. Folks attended virtually from coast to coast so local times varied.

Workshops included presentations on Tarot cards, polyamory, using puns to change perspective, Greek archetypal deities for change, and a Q&A session with a female-to-male Trans boomer. My favorite workshops for the week were the Queering the Circle workshops presented by Giariel Foxwood. In this daily workshop, Giariel introduced attendees to topics such as “Queerness as a Spiritual Path,” “Working with Queer Ancestors,” “Working with Queer Divinities,” and exploring the multidimensional aspects of gender in one’s spiritual practice. He ended the week with a “Queer Spirit Empowerment Meditation.”

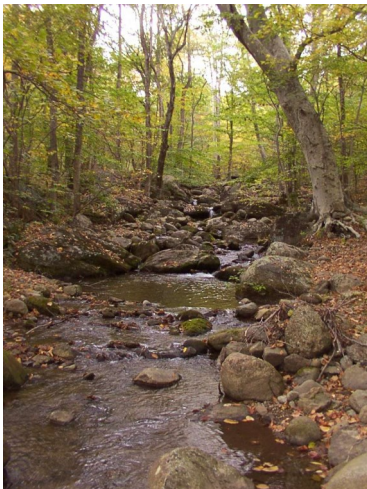
Rituals for the week included a Dionysus ritual and a Hekate Ritual, as well as the usual opening and closing rituals for the gathering. There was also a virtual walk through the Labyrinth at Wisteria. This and some of the other on-site rituals helped retain the event’s connection to the Wisteria Campground as well as to nature. While we couldn’t gather around the bonfire in the real world, we could connect around a ritual taking place at a real-world site with a bonfire via Zoom.

Entertainment for the week included the annual “No Talent Show” hosted by Roxy; concerts by Mac Valentine, Tom Goss, and Jeffrey Altergott; and a VJ Party and an after party hosted by Boden.

While the Virtual Between the Worlds was no match for gathering together in the real world, it provided a much needed source of connection, socializing, and learning during a difficult year where many of us have felt disconnected and isolated during this pandemic. Also, the virtual event allowed for many to attend who may not have been able to attend the real-world event for whatever reason. For all that, I believe the Virtual Between the Worlds was a great success.

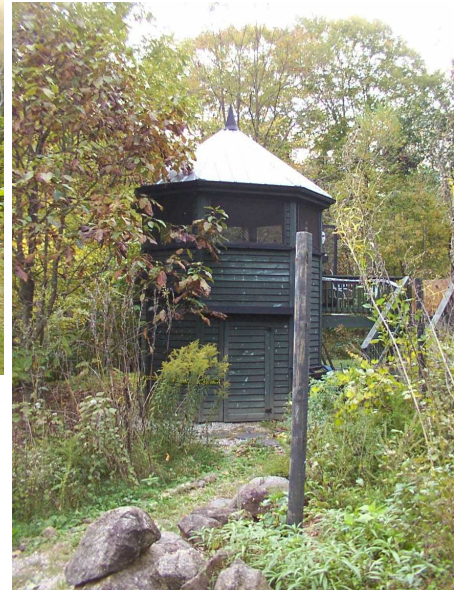
Photos from Arcadia Sanctuary

by Mel Mystery



The Arcadia Camp Out for Queer Pagan Men was cancelled this year due to Covid-19. The event was originally scheduled for October 8-11, 2020 at Arcadia Sanctuary in Amherst, Virginia. While the theme “The Space Between Us: Making Connections Across the Void” would have been especially meaningful this year, it was decided in mid-June to cancel the event in order to ensure everyone’s safety. Thoughts of a virtual event were tossed around, but the campground was unsure if their internet connection would support this and as a fledgling gathering there really weren’t enough planners to move forward with a virtual event. Despite the cancellation, I was able to visit for a weekend get-away to see what it was like camping there. I took lots of photos and will share some here (this and opposite page).

Arcadia 2021 is tentatively scheduled for October 7-10, 2021. We are also hoping to coordinate with the Brotherhood by the Bog planners to host a joint virtual event in the April 2021. Visit <http://www.olympuscampgroundresort.com> for more details. Select “Brotherhood by the Bog” under the Events tab.



Opposite page: Thrashers Creek runs through the Arcadia Sanctuary.

This page (clockwise from top left): Main House and Showers; Stage, Meditation Tower (outside), Nature Shrine, Sacred Well, Pan Shrine, Meditation Tower (inside).



Cancelled! Cancelled! Cancelled!

by Mel Mystery

So many events and gatherings were cancelled in 2020 due to the Coronavirus, and the prospects for 2021 are uncertain. Check out the Events Calendar later in this issue for the most up-to-date listing of 2021 events as of this publication.

Here's a list of events that got cancelled in 2020:

- Brotherhood by the Bog was scheduled to be held in Virginia Beach, Virginia, March 20-22, 2020.
- Stone and Stang was scheduled to be held in Eustace, Texas, May 7-10, 2020.
- Arcadia was scheduled to be held in Amherst, Virginia, October 8-11, 2020.

Adapted events:

- Between the Worlds went virtual this year and was held the week of September 21-26, 2020.
- Gay Spirit Visions events went virtual in 2020.



From Across the Pond

Sanctuary to Apollo Ptoios in Boeotia, Greece

by John Pead (writing from Portugal)

Hopefully this will be a regular series of articles about topics of Pagan belief and artifacts/sites in Europe. I thought it might be interesting for readers of Mel's newsletters who will, I guess, be mainly USA based & may not have had the opportunity of visiting ancient sites or museums in Europe connected with pagan belief.

This first article is about the Sanctuary of Apollo Ptoios in Boeotia. In fact there are two sanctuaries as there is one to Hero Ptoios nearby. Why these particular sanctuaries of the ancient Greeks? Well, my chosen Pagan Faith, although of a 'Great Spirit', is based on a belief that this spirit has made itself manifest throughout history in various guises. Ancient Greek faith is therefore of great interest to me.

So, where are these Sanctuaries located, and indeed, where is Boeotia? (sometimes Boiotia). Boeotia was, and is, a region of Greece and the Sanctuaries are just to the North East of a place called Akraifnio (ancient Akraiphia) which is around 65 miles north west of Athens. See the 1787 map below to see where they were in relation to the greek city of Thebes:



There are three main references to the Sanctuary in antiquity. Herodotus, who lived circa 484-425 BCE wrote his famous Histories. In Book 8 135 he mentions the oracle at the sanctuary:

" But at this time there happened, as the Thebans say, a thing at which I marvel greatly. It would seem that this man Mys of Europus came in his wanderings among the places of divination to the precinct of Ptoan Apollo. This temple is called Ptoium¹, and belongs to the Thebans; it lies by a hill, above the lake Copais, very near to the town Acraephia. When the man called Mys entered into this temple, three men of the town following him that were chosen on the state's behalf to write down the oracles that should be given, straightway the diviner prophesied in a foreign tongue. The Thebans that followed him stood astonished to hear a strange language instead of Greek, and knew not what this present matter might be; but Mys of Europus snatched from them the tablet that they carried and wrote on it that which was spoken by the prophet, saying that the words of the oracle were Carian; and having written all

down he went away back to Thessaly."

¹. Called after Ptoüs, son of Athamas, according to Apollodorus.

Xenophon (who lived circa 430-354 BCE) wrote an oblique reference to the sanctuary in Book 3 5.5:

" Now the Lacedaemonians were glad to seize a pretext for undertaking a campaign against the Thebans, for they had long been angry with them both on account of their claiming Apollo's tenth², at Decelea and their refusing to follow them against Piraeus."

² of the spoils of the Peloponnesian War.

This was about the claim by the Boeotians from Dekeleia of a tithe on the booty from the war for Ptoan Apollo.

Pausanias (who lived circa 120-180 BCE) wrote about the Sanctuaries in his 'Description of Greece' Book 9 Chapter 23: 5-6:

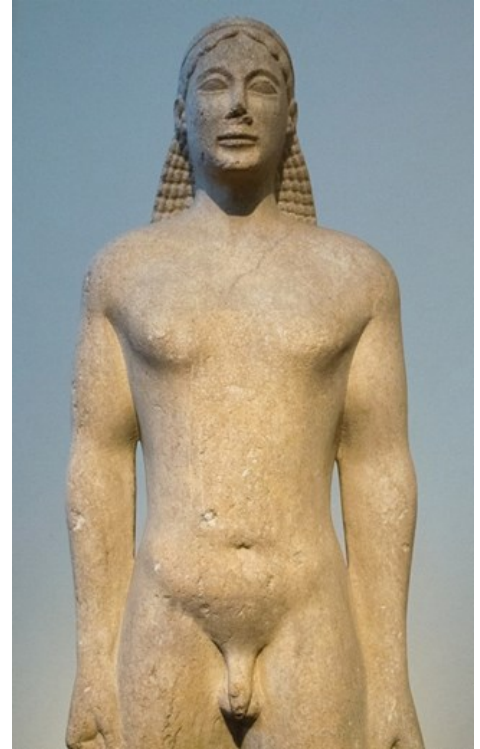
" From this point to Acraephnum is mainly flat. They say that originally the city formed part of the territory belonging to Thebes, and I learned that in later times men of Thebes escaped to it, at the time when Alexander destroyed Thebes.....About fifteen stades away from the city on the right is the sanctuary of Ptoan Apollo. We are told by Asius in his epic that Ptoüs, who gave a surname to Apollo and the name to the mountain, was a son of Athamas by Themisto. Before the expedition of the Macedonians under Alexander, in which Thebes was destroyed, there was an oracle that never lied. Once too a man of Europus, of the name of Mys, who was sent by Mardonius, inquired of the god in his own language, and the god too gave a response, not in Greek but in the Carian speech." A Stadion (anglicized as Stade) was a unit of length of about 172.5 yards.

The history of the Sanctuary stretches from the late Neolithic to Roman times. Michael Scott, in his wonderful book on Delphi, says that in the 6th Century BCE, after a fire, Delphi was being rebuilt. At this time the oracle at the Sanctuary of Apollo Ptoios benefited as many went there instead to gain prophecies. Many Kouroi statues were also dedicated at this time. The Persian King Xerxes also gave gifts to the temple of Apollo Ptoios in preference to Delphi. A commentary on Pausanian by J G Frazer in 1898, referring to Book 9 23:6 (Pages 99 - 104), gives a brilliant tour of the site at that date which also goes into the excavations carried out by Holleaux of the French School of Archaeology in Athens between 1884 and 1891. Excavations were also carried out in 1935 by M. Feyel and in the 1990s.

Before I give you a short of tour of the remains it is best to ask, Why Ptoios? As previously mentioned a short way from the main sanctuary is another to Hero Ptoios. Although the mountain near is named Ptoion or Ptoon, Ptoios refers to a mythical figure named Ptoion who was the son of Athamas, a mythical king of Boeotia. However it seems that Apollo was being worshipped at the main sanctuary from at least 620 BCE so perhaps the local hero was displaced by the major Greek God or they shared traits which made for joint worship. Certainly there is evidence of the worship of Ptoios at the smaller sanctuary from around 580 BCE.

The main Sanctuary consists of six terraces running up the hill. From the highest to lowest in order:

1. This level has a spring which comes from a wall which was described as of 'modern masonry' in 1898.
2. The next level has the temple itself, relatively small, measuring approx 76 .4 x 38.7 feet, of Doric style.
- 2a. A ramp led to another level which had a man made cavern. This connected with the spring on level 1. It is possible that this was where the oracle was. In antiquity caves were often associated with oracles as with the one at Delphi before the main temple was built. Water is often associated with oracles too.
3. This terrace contained another building roughly 65 x 15 feet in size. Both this structure and the main temple itself were aligned north west by south east. Although the foundations were stone, its upper levels were, where they survived, built of crumbly limestone. There were remains of two unfluted columns and a drum of a smaller fluted Doric column.
4. This terrace again had foundations of grey stone and upper courses of limestone.
5. This terrace was supported by a crescent shaped wall and had two inscribed blocks.
6. The last terrace, immediately in front of the crescent shaped wall, contained a structure of 67.5 x 8.75 feet in size. It was made up of seven quadrangular chambers, each 9 x 6 feet in area all below ground. They had neither windows nor doors and were roofed leading to speculation they were cisterns.



Below this level is an old spring which in the 19th Century was called Partridge Spring. Excavations revealed inscriptions, archaic marble statues, bronze statuettes, small primitive style bronze animal figures, bronze reliefs and Corinthian pottery. The thin bronze plates showed scenes of linear/ vegetable patterns, real/mythic animals and human figures as also Gods. Holleaux also found an inscription of the sixth century BCE dedicated to the tyrant Hipparchus.

Games were held every four years called Ptoia. These were not athletic games but contests of music and poetry. Starting between 178 and 146 BCE they lapsed, recommencing at the instigation of Epaminondas son of Epaminondas during the reign of Caligula or Nero. The same man apparently had an altar set up to Nero under the title of Zeus of Freedom to celebrate his liberation of Greece.

The oracle which had seen ascendancy in the time of Delphi's rebuilding seems to have ended upon the destruction of Thebes by Alexander 335 BCE. There are inscriptions that state it was active again from the restoration of Thebes in 315 BCE. They imply that it continued in activity until the mid first century CE.

Another interesting feature of this Sanctuary was the use of Kouroi statues (See below). These are young, male figures, naked, often with large penises. The authoritative work on Kouroi is that by Gisela M A Richter in 1960. Some Kouroi represented Apollo and this would explain their presence in this temple however some also represented human beings and so it is speculative whether they came from an era when Hero Ptoios was being worshipped and the Sanctuary then used as a combined worship centre for both God and Hero. The image below is of Kouroi from Ptoios in the Museum of Thebes.

Sex, Man, and Deities

By John Pead (writing from Portugal)

One of the things which hindered my spiritual growth when a young man raised on Christian dogma was the rejection of my gay sexuality by that church. I was forced to explore my sexuality in secret under threat of eternal damnation if exposed. This, as many ex-Christians will recognise, instilled in me a terrible guilt not only for having been born gay but also in every sexual thought or act I engaged in from recognition of my nature till my rejection of this bigoted hold on anything sexual by that faith.

As I develop in my Pagan identity I have had to face up to residual indoctrination on sex & re-accept myself in the light of the joy that gay sexual acts give not only to the participants but also to the deity/spirit as a gift of unity & brotherhood. The purpose of this article therefore is to examine the freedom of sexual expression not only amongst gay male pagans in the past but also between gods & man.

So, first men. Before Christianity in the middle ages grew scared of sexual acts & started portraying them as something inspired by their devil, other religions were far more accepting of gay sex. In ancient Assyria men seeking gay sex were thought to gain good luck. It was often part of temple ritual & the only censure was sex between men of different social classes. This taboo seems to have been widespread throughout history & I wonder if it was more to do with elites maintaining power rather than a true criticism of gay sexual acts. Ancient Egypt is highly contentious when it comes to gay sex. There is a case of two officials who were buried in the same tomb & who may have been gay partners, but the evidence is rather scant & could be interpreted in different ways. Often a problem with ancient homosexuality. We rely on sparse written sources & imagery (such as pottery) to make reasoned conjectures. Also, written sources are tainted by the views of the writer & by the constraints of societal norms. Hence writers 'hint' at overt homosexuality without actually relating examples.

The Ancient Greeks (my particular interest) are often examined on the subject of homosexuality. Unfortunately, they are mostly known for pederasty (underage sex with youths & boys). However here there are interpretations made on the basis of modern mores, governed predominantly, by Christian or radical Islamic theology. It is often forgotten that before the 19th Century, when life expectancy was far shorter than it is now, both boys & girls had to grow up quicker & married at an earlier age than now. Looking at England, the legal age of consent, for instance, in 1275 it was legally set at age 12! It was only in 1875 this was raised to 13. One whole year in 600 years!! By 1885 it was 16 & in 1950 it was raised to 17 years...in Northern Ireland. Male homosexual age of consent was set at 21 in 1967, having been unlawful before that date. It was lowered to 18 in 1994 & 16 in 2000. It is good to review these events to show how societal attitudes change for what age a boy/girl was considered capable of freely agreeing to have sex, whether to procreate or indulge in homosexuality. It demonstrates that to be a 'boy', 'youth' or 'man' is always the result of a culture's view of those terms in a particular era. With Ancient Greece it is sometimes unclear where these life progressions lie age wise. Also, most sources on law involving homosexual sex (the word homosexual did not exist then) are Athenian & so do not reflect the norms of all Greek City States. Certainly, Athens liked to set out rules with regard to both pederasty & adult/adult male sex, not to mention the social class taboo. Many rules revolved around gymnasia (effectively the schools not only of classics & poetry but also martial skills, athletic ability & social skills). However even here, although men above a certain age were prohibited entry whilst boys were present, Socrates, as an old man, was allowed in! Still, many aspects which are recorded of pederastic relationships were based more upon life teaching, a prohibition against male-female sex too early to control population, & controls on unwanted youthful aggression. The relationships were loving ones involving courtship & gifts, wooing & care in a parental way & were approved of by the boy's natural parents. However there were rules, especially in regard to money for sex which had profound punishments.

On the subject of adult homosexuality sources are few. There seems to have been no problem if you, an adult Athenian man, wanted to have sex with a foreigner (ie, a non-Athenian). However, it was a crime if two free Athenian men had sex. The Athenians were a snobbish lot! You only have to read "History of the Peloponnesian War" by Thucydides to realise how they looked down on not only enemies but their allies too. So, it is not surprising when you read of them calling Boeotians "Boeotian Swine" implying they were more lax in rules on homosexual acts. Unfortunately, there are not many sources to give a counter view but certainly it was in this era when the idea of dom/sub roles became an indicator whether homo-sex was okay or not. If a Top you were more highly regarded than if you were a Bottom. However, can such texts truly reflect the whole picture? Even in the 19th Century the gay world was a thing of shadows & even famous homosexuals hardly ever wrote down about what they actually did except of a supposed 'classical love'. So, Ancient Greece still holds mysteries about the true extent of adult-adult male sex.

The Romans also imposed the Top-Bottom test as to whether you were a true 'man' or a servile prostitute. There are famous examples of homosexual Romans: ie: Hadrian's love for Antinous, Nero & Elagabalus. However, 'manliness' was growing as a 'yes-no' criteria so it is difficult to pinpoint whether adult gay sex was present in the 'mysteries' or in normal life.

With the rise of orthodox Christianity even this changed. Marriage & procreation became the focus for sex & gay sex became a sin & an abomination.

Medieval Islam seems to have been indifferent to gay sex. Perhaps they were more pragmatic? Certainly, even into relatively modern times pederasty was being practiced & Turks happily engage in gay sex so long as they are the Top. Modern, more extreme, Islam outlaws gay sex. However, even here there are fake foundations for some rules. Islam is based upon the Koran & the Hadith (sayings of the Prophet). In the Koran (as in the Bible) the tale of Sodom & Gomorrah is cited. However, the story in both books is open to interpretation. Many scholars hold this as a story against the breaking of laws of hospitality rather than sexual proscription. Such rules of hospitality



were entrenched in tribal custom & incredibly important.

The one Koran statement is usually held to be talking about heterosexual relationships. The Hadiths came after the death of the Prophet but rely heavily upon a chain of communication from the one who heard the Prophet say it. It has been proven that some regarding homosexuality are suspect, if not totally false & yet they are still accepted & acted upon in persecution of gay people in countries under Islamic law.

So, what to think? It is a fact that it is often those in power who define attitudes on gay sex. They nearly always do not reflect what really happened in that culture. However, sex goes on in every culture & in every age & it is not a bad thing unless duress is applied to obtain it. It is, of course, up to every reader to come to his own opinion upon this & I welcome hearing your views.

As to Gods & the semi divine? Well let's concentrate on Ancient Greece once again.

Apollo appears to have been a randy guy. He had an affectionate time in a wood with a shepherd called Branchus. Carnus, the son of Zeus & Europa was, in some accounts, the lover of Apollo. Both the youths Cyparissus & Hyacinthus were lovers too. In one story Hymenaeus son of Magnus was also beloved of Apollo.

Dionysus had several male lovers as befits a god of pleasure. Apelos, a satyr was a lover of this god. He had a rather unfortunate death & was transformed either into a constellation or a grape vine, the latter so his blood would create wine. A nice idea. I wonder whether this was where transubstantiation in Christianity derived. Another shepherd, Prosymnus, was the guide of Dionysus to the entrance to Hades, rowing him there across a lake. He extorted a price of making love to the god on his return but died in the meantime. Dionysus kept his promise by carving a piece of fig wood into the shape of a cock & using it ritually to carry out his promise to the shepherd whilst sitting on his tomb. Is this the first use of a dildo by a god???

Zeus famously fell for Ganymede & abducted him to become his cup bearer with all that involved. It is interesting because in Latin 'Catamitus' of which the English form is 'Catamite' was used as a derogatory term for homosexuals along with sodomite, derived from the Greek word 'Ganymedes'.

Heracles (semi divine) dipped his wick practically everywhere be it in woman or man! He is reputed to have had many male lovers including Abderus & Hylas (although more like a father in the latter case). The case of Iolaus is particularly. He was the son of Iphicles & Automedusa in Boeotia & said to be the nephew of Heracles. He helped the hero in his twelve labours. Plutarch claims he was also the lover of Heracles. Whatever the case he was venerated in Boeotia & the gymnasia in Thebes (Greece) was named after him. His shrine in Thebes was said to be the site of worship & vows by male couples. This probably included the famous Sacred Band of Thebes, an armed force in Boeotia made up of paired gay lovers. Would it not be a fine thing if the location was still known & could be a shrine, even now, for the worship by gay pagan men the world over. If I ever find out I will let you all know :))

Hermes had a few liaisons too. In one version of his life the youth Crocus was killed accidentally by Hermes with a discus. The god being very upset turned the youth into a flower, a Crocus. The same was said of Hyacinthus & Apollo, so there a confusion as to who turned whom into a flower??

Nerites, who was a minor sea god, is supposed to have been a love of Poseidon. You often find that these youths were all very beautiful & ended up as charioteers to the gods. Beauty in youth was highly prized in Ancient Greece however the concept of 'beauty' was not always that of an outward nature. Often the inward qualities were elevated more than that of the body. Poseidon is also supposed to have been the lover of Pelops, son of Tantalus, as a boy. Poor lad, his father cut him up & made a stew of him for the gods. Although Demeter had a piece whilst distracted, the other gods smelled a rat & did not eat the stew. They banished Tantalus & Pelops was put back together & brought back to life. Poseidon then took him to Olympus & taught him to drive the celestial chariot. The good times didn't last long however as Zeus felt the stew had been a gift & so the boy made whole was, in fact, stolen goods. He expelled him from Olympus.

Orpheus had male lovers. Calais, one of the wind brothers from Thrace is said to have been a lover of Orpheus & that (in one version) Orpheus was murdered by the Thracian Women, whilst he was thinking of Calais in jealousy of his only choosing men as lovers,.

One of the greatest semi divine heroes of Ancient Greece, if not all time, was Achilles. Famously he lamented the death of his close friend Patroclus. It is difficult with Homer to say whether this was a homosexual relationship but the later writers Plato, Aeschylus, Pindar & Aeschines all portrayed it as being so. Here again, later cultures did not ascribe the same interpretation to the relationship clearly uncomfortable with such thoughts. They play more on the manliness & honourable nature of Achilles. I think the ancients knew better the culture in which Achilles lived!!!

The semi divine son of the nymph Axioche (or perhaps Danaïs) & Pelops, Chrysippus was a divine hero in Elis. He was kidnapped & raped by the Theban Laius. This crime, it is alleged, is the source of the beginning of all pederasty in Ancient Greece & it is often a marker for historians ie: before or after Laius. His descendants suffered under a curse from the gods. Most notable was Oedipus, the son of Laius & who killed his father & had sex with his mother Jocasta.

Last in the greek list is Pan. Many gay pagans venerate Pan the god of the wild & shepherds. Pan is said to have fallen in love with Daphnis who, although a Sicilian shepherd, was the son of Hermes. Pan taught him to play the pipes. Pan, unfortunately, like the Celtic god Cernunnos, was converted into Satan by the christian church & all horned gods were made evil in christian dogma. Far better to see them for their natural care of nature, pasture & woods. Pan is said (even if it was in a joke by Diogenes) to have learned masturbation from his father Hermes & taught this skill to shepherds. That is a good justification guys for a pleasant pastime.

Here we come to the crux of the matter. What is our view of sex as a ritual offering to gods & what do the gods think about it? Initiation

rites often have sexual elements even if they might sometimes be in jest (i.e.: frat initiation). However deep mysteries once practiced by the ancients may well have had a homosexual form. Perhaps we should accept that deities in the past hardly differentiated between enjoying sex with men or women & so any sexual act used by two men in ritual worship would be equally appreciated by deities now. It can be seen that major gods enjoyed homosexual acts &, indeed, if a priest or shaman was possessed by a god during a ritual, he would be acting as the god within him, in having sex with another man.

All this is important as many have been conditioned, as I was, to abhor any idea of such an occurrence in worship. However, the time has surely come to shatter the shackles of this 'inherited' prudery. We need to both accept & appreciate our bodies & sex between men or man & god as a natural & positive thing instead of something to cast into the shadows of a dirty back street. Perhaps we gay folk have too long tried to fit into a Judeo-Christo-Islamic mould of acceptability, simply to be accepted at best or tolerated at worst. Our Pagan Identity should be our own & not borrowed from other religious traditions.

It is time to be ourselves.

More Events and Gatherings

Brotherhood by the Bog to Host Virtual Retreat

by Mel Mystery

Brotherhood by the Bog is planning a virtual retreat for Pagan men the weekend of April 22-25, 2021. The event is usually held in person at First Landing State Park in Virginia Beach, Virginia — sometimes the event takes place in the cabins and other times it's camping in tents. The theme of this year's retreat is "Metamorphosis." This relates both to coming of spring and the adaptations we've had to make as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic. While the schedule is in process at the time of this writing, online workshops, discussions, rituals, and entertainment will make up the retreat. We are hoping to bring back some past presenters as well as some new ones.

If you are interested in hosting a workshop, ritual, or activity during the retreat, please inquire using the link on the web page. We have a number of workshop slots open at this time. Your workshop should be related to the concept of "metamorphosis", Paganism, Pagan paths and practices, Pagan men, or the men's movement. Rituals, crafts, and other activities are also welcome. We value diversity and would especially like to invite gay and bi Pagan men, Trans men, and Men of Color to present. We will be filling a dozen or more workshop slots. We do not have a specific deadline for workshop proposals though the earlier you get your proposal in, the better chance your workshop will be approved.



This event is free, though donations will be accepted to help with marketing and for hosting future in-person retreats.

FMI: <http://www.olympuscampgroundresort.com/index.php/events/brotherhood-by-the-bog-pagan-men-s-retreat>

Arcadia 2020

"The Space Between Us—Making Connections Across the Void"

A Camp OUT for Queer Pagan Men

October 7-10, 2021

Amherst, Virginia

www.olympuscampgroundresort.com/index.php/events/arcadia

General Articles

Celtic Homosexuality

by Mel Mystery

Since the Druids and the Celtic society in which they lived didn't write things down, it is difficult to confirm beyond a shadow of doubt the sexual practices of the Druids or of the Celts as a whole. The Celts relied on oral histories and stories passed down through the Bards and storytellers of their culture. By the time these stories were written down, they were transcribed by Christian monks and scholars who often revised and edited out those things (such as homosexuality) that didn't fit with their puritanical beliefs.

What we do know about pre-Christian Celtic sexuality and homosexuality is brought to us through second-hand accounts from writers and historians of other cultures that made contact with the Celts at the time. We can also make speculations based on similar institutions – such as male warrior bands – that existed in contemporary cultures.

Writers such as Aristotle, Strabo, Diodorus Siculus, Posidonius, Athenaeus, and Ammianus commented on homosexuality in Celtic culture. From these writers and historians, we get the idea that homosexuality was commonplace among the Celts, and it might even have been preferred to heterosexuality.

In his **Politics**, the Greek teacher Aristotle comments that the Celts may have had an even finer system of male warrior-lovers than the Greeks. Also, unlike Greek homosexuality, the Celts did not consider the passive role in homosexuality to be shameful.

The Greek philosopher Posidonius stated that *"The Gaulish (Celtic) men prefer to have sex with each other."*

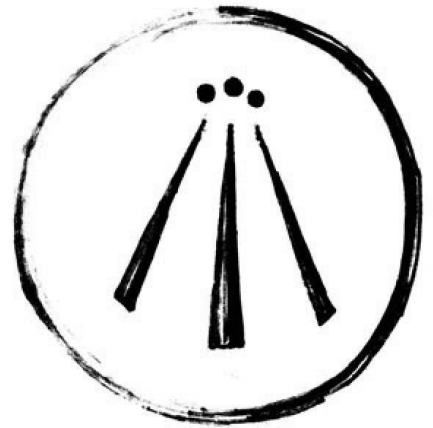
The Greek historian Strabo suggested that young Gaulish Celts were "shamelessly generous with their boyish charms."

In the 1st century BC, the Greek historian Diodorus Siculus wrote: *"Although they have good-looking women, the men are much keener on their own sex; they lie around on animal skins and enjoy themselves, with a lover on each side. The extraordinary thing is they haven't the smallest regard for their personal dignity or self-respect; they offer themselves to other men without the least compunction. Furthermore, this isn't looked down on, or regarded as in any way disgraceful; on the contrary, if one of them is rejected by another to whom he has offered himself, he takes offence."*

The Greek rhetorician and grammarian, Athenaeus of Naucratis and the Roman historian Ammianus Marcellinus have shared similar sentiments to those of Aristotle and Diodorus Siculus.

The Strabo and Diodorus Siculus both suggest that Celtic men like to keep their bodies fit. They like to wear make-up and body paint. They like to wear jewelry including torques that showed off their arm muscles. And they also fought naked and were constantly in the company of other men. Take all these as you may.

The Celtic Brehon Laws also addressed the topic of homosexuality, or at least one instance of it. Brehon Law allowed a woman to initiate divorce against her husband if he refuses her sex in favor of a male lover.



Submission deadline for the next issue of Mysterious Ways is May 15, 2021.

Please consider sharing your articles, reviews, poetry, art, events, and announcements.

E-mail these to Mel at knightsofmatrix@gmail.com. Please put "Mysterious Ways" in the subject line.

Queer Vision and Divination

Shut Up and Dance with Me: A Message from Across the Veil

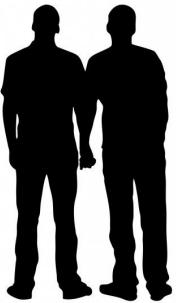
by Mel Mystery

Back in my college days I developed an epic crush on this guy in our gay and lesbian student group. Justin was tall, handsome, and confident. Whenever he was around, my heart just melted. I felt instant connection. We became friends. I helped him with research in the library one day and he called it “the day Melvin helped me in the library.” I’d not yet shortened my name to Mel back then. Justin always made me feel special. Like when I was being totally quiet, he would come up to me and tell me to “Shut up, Melvin!” It always made me smile. At the beginning of the fall semester, he commented on how I was the first person he saw on return to school and he was happy of it. Once he came up behind me and said “Hey fag” which really startled me as an out gay person on campus. I always knew when I’d see him because I’d dream about him and then actually run into him the next day. He thought I could read his mind. I wasn’t that good, but I was perceptive. He even once promised me a dance at the gay dance on campus if I’d come, which I did.



After graduation, I finally got the nerve up to ask him out. He was a few years younger than me and only a sophomore at the time. Unfortunately, he had just started dating someone else, and things got awkward between us after that. I saw him one other time over that summer. He and his boyfriend came through my line where I was working as a cashier at Walmart (thanks liberal arts degree!). I always expected he’d be back to school that fall, but he never did. Spring came and went too. He’d experienced homophobia in the dorms and I always felt the boyfriend was going to hurt him badly (I’d dreamed that too). I never knew exactly why he didn’t come back, but he didn’t.

Over the years, every so often I’d try looking him up. I might have sent a letter once to his parents’ address, but never knew if it actually reached him. Then maybe 7 or 8 years ago I found him on Facebook and was elated when he accepted my friend request. I tried a few attempts at conversation, but really we just remained Facebook friends. He didn’t seem the type to spend much time on there, and I was always afraid that if I pushed my luck, he’d disappear from my life again. At least I knew he was around and seemingly well.



So, I had two dreams about Justin recently. In one, I reaffirmed the unconditional love and friendship I felt for him, and in the other we were at a college reunion catching up on life. It was after the second dream that I decided to see what he’d been up to, as I took the dreams as a sign of something amiss. It turns out he died back in May. He’d contracted meningitis in 2019 and it took a debilitating toll on him. I was devastated, but all during that first week of mourning I received intense signs – his name popping up in unexpected places, book titles that grabbed my attention, and songs on the radio. I watched a handful of YouTube pick-a-card Tarot readings hoping to glean messages from across the veil. Three different readers, three different questions, three different nights, all seemed to confirm messages of things I didn’t know. He was sorry for leaving and anything that may have come between us in life. He liked me more than he let on, but was afraid to get too close. He had insecurities and didn’t always make the choices in life that he’d wanted. He’d felt a connection too.

That week was so intense with messages, but I wasn’t sure how much was from Justin and how much was me making up what I wanted to believe. That Saturday, my big shopping day during Covid, I made a point that I’d be open and looking out for signs from Justin. At some point in the week, I’d thought the ultimate proof that it was Justin (and not my vivid imagination) would be if he could find a nice way to tell me to “Shut up, Melvin!” the way he did in school. So, I was driving down the road from one store to the next, listening to the radio, and on the radio comes the song “Shut Up and Dance” by Walk the Moon. I’d not heard the song in ages. Just as in college, he’d found a way to get my attention and make me smile. I heard two other songs on the radio that day that seemed to be him speaking directly to me “Hello (from the other side)” an Adele cover song (sung by Erato) that even seemed to parallel the fact that Justin had eventually moved to California while I’d stayed on the East coast. And when I thought for sure all the messages were done that day, another song came on the radio called “Haunt You” by X Lovers. In the song, the boyfriend sings about how after he dies, he’s going to come back and haunt the girlfriend. The girlfriend chimes in that she’ll be hoping and waiting to feel his cold touch on her skin.

Is Justin haunting me now? I’ll be hoping and waiting!

My Gay Divination

by Levi Waite

I started my endeavours with astrology and Tarot long before I accepted myself as gay. This would be a wonderful opportunity to whine about my coming of age in a Southern Baptist upbringing, but I will refrain. I am not naturally psychic, but over the years I have learned how to see.

To me working with the Tarot has been a lot like getting to know 78 people. Typically, when someone meets another for the first time there is a superficial introduction. These first impressions eventually ebb away as more and more time is spent with the individual and an opinion is developed based on personal experience. I received my introductions a long time ago with Ms. Eden Gray's *The Tarot Revealed* (which I still highly recommend to anyone interested in getting started) and learntarot.org. Take the Four of Swords for example. It was introduced to me as "rest and relaxation, taking a break, vacation"; however, I have also seen it say, "I can't go on anymore. It's over." The court cards have always been hard for me to interpret despite studying theories of interpretation and projecting into the cards to let the figures speak for themselves. They only speak when they want to, and when they do it is always enigmatic. There have been many times the Queen of Swords has appeared reversed in a spread, and all I can do is wonder to myself, "Am I being *that bitch* right now?" When it comes to guys I rarely, if ever, use my Tarot cards to assess the circumstances surrounding relationships. I already have enough anxiety.



Astrology on the other hand is a different story. When I find myself becoming romantically interested in a guy and the success seems probable, I begin stealthily gathering what I need in order to create his natal chart. The fact that some Facebook users have their birth-day listed on their profile makes this very easy. All that is left for me to do is have a seemingly casual, innocent conversation: *Where are you from originally? So you were born there? I have heard it is a beautiful place... I read a study once that said people born around dawn are overachievers, do you think this is true?* (insert maniacal laugh) Once I have all that I need, I retreat to my lair where I put to use all that arithmetic they taught me in high school along with an ephemeris to produce something that looks like a hot mess of circles and lines drawn on a pie chart. And then I wait for it to speak... It starts slowly and then gains momentum until the messages come so fast that I struggle to catch them all. It reminds me of a tightly wound spring spinning itself loose. I never tell my unsuspecting Prince Charming though. I am sure that this puts me at odds with others ethically. I read a study about twelve astrologers reading a single birth chart which resulted in twelve different interpretations. Jung would argue that the acausal connecting principle and synchronicity allows me to see what I am meant to see. I guess the real magick in all of it is that I have developed a severely over-complicated crutch when it comes to dealing with anxiety and dating.

Blessed be.)O(

All the World in a Grain of Sand

by Mel Mystery

How does divination provide us with the answers we seek? Is it personal intuition? Are invisible hands guiding the results? Is it something scientific like quantum physics or that we live in a holographic universe? Perhaps it's all of the above, or something else entirely.

I personally like to think of it as the result of a holographic universe. In high school, I attended a magnet school one summer and we actually got to make holographic images with a laser. The thing about holographic images is that they are three-dimensional and if you have any part of the image, you can peer in and see the rest of the picture. Years ago I remember reading that some scientists think the universe also works this way. If you have a grain of sand, you can peer into the entire universe. If you have one part of the picture, you can "divine" the rest. This idea seems like it would work for all forms of divination (Tarot, Astrology, Ogham, Runes, etc.) and even seemingly random "signs." In Paganism, we believe in the idea that "As above, so below." If we can see what is happening in the microcosm, we can extrapolate that to the macrocosm.

Gay Gods and Spirits

Odin: Seer in a Dress

by Mel Mystery

Image by Victor Villalobos
from the Wikimedia Commons



Odin is the Norse and Germanic god of wisdom, knowledge, sorcery, runes, poetry, battle, the dead, and a number of other things. Other variations of his name include *Wōden*, Wuodan, and Wuotan. He is sometimes known as “Allfather” as he is considered father of all the Norse gods.

Odin is usually depicted with a beard, one eye, and wearing a wide-brimmed hat and cloak. He is a trickster favoring both rulers and outlaws. Odin wields the spear Gungnir, which was crafted by dwarves and said never to miss its target.

Odin’s animal companions include the wolves Geri and Freki, the ravens Huginn and Muninn, and the eight-legged horse Sleipnir. The ravens bring him news and information from Midgard - the human realm. Sleipnir takes Odin on rides across the sky and into the Underworld.

Odin is chief god of the Æsir - a tribe of Norse sky deities associated with war and power. Their counterparts, the Vanir, are fertility and nature deities. Odin is king of Asgard - one of the Nine Realms in Norse mythology. Midgard and Asgard are connected by a rainbow bridge known as Bifröst.

Odin is married to the goddess Frigg. His many sons include the popular gods Thor and Baldr. Odin presides over Valhalla, a great hall dedicated to those slain warri-

ors. As a god of battle, Odin receives half the dead slain in battle (collected by the valkyries) with the other half going to the goddess Freya.

One of Odin’s primary motivations is the search for knowledge and wisdom. He often wanders alone across the various realms to further this aim. He often travels in disguise. Odin sacrificed one of his eyes in order to drink from Mimir’s well of knowledge. Odin often consults the disembodied head of Mimir for advice and secret knowledge. In another story, Odin discovered the Runes by hanging himself on the World Tree, piercing himself with his spear, and fasting from food and drink for nine days and nights. The moral of such stories is that no price is too high to pay to gain knowledge and wisdom.

Odin has some connections to the berserkers and other shamanic warriors who embrace bear and wolf totems and an ecstatic mental state as part of their battle practices. This form of warrior shamanism was considered socially acceptable to men of the times.

Odin also practiced a form of feminine shamanism known as Seidr. This practice was especially associated with the goddess Freya. This form of shamanism involved going into a trance state to interact with the spirit world. In such a state, one could divine the future, learn secrets, bring blessings and curses, heal the sick, control the weather, journey out-of-body, and perform other acts of divination and magick.

During the Viking Age, Seidr wasn’t considered a fitting activity for men. Those men who practiced this form of shamanism were branded as “argr” or “ergi” (effeminate). The term “ergi” also has associations with homosexuality. It usually denotes someone who has taken the passive role in homosexual intercourse. Some sources suggested that Odin may have cross-dressed as part of this Seidr practice.

Ulfhednar, Vargr, and Berserkers

From **The Gay Guy's Guide to Werewolves and Other Beasts**

The Norse wolf warrior bands were called the Ulfhednar and also the Vargr - meaning wolf coated men and wolf warriors respectively. These Norse warriors wore wolf skins when they entered battle.

More well-known than the Ulfhednar and the Vargr, were the Berserkers. These were Norse warrior bands who wore bear skins into battle and took on the bear as their totem. Often these bands consisted of twelve warriors who took on names related to bears, such as Bjorn. They were said to fight with an uncontrollable rage and fury, which may have been trance induced. Their state of mind was said to be frenzied, wild, and deranged and this is where the term "berserk" comes from. They were said to be very strong and highly resistant to pain. Some theories suggest that these berserkers gained their inhuman powers from psychoactive drugs or the ingestion of bog myrtle, which was one of the main spices used in Norse alcoholic beverages.

These warrior bands are closely related to the Norse God Odin. Initiations into these warrior bands may have involved a mock battle where the initiate fights and subdues a wolf or bear and drinks its blood to take on its power, as well as learning to live in the wilderness as their wolf or bear totem (such as in the story of Sigmundr and Singfjotli). Some have suggested these initiations may have included ritual homosexuality between warriors and initiates. This could have been similar to Greek homosexual military and civic rites or it may have been an initiation into the cult of Odin or into the practice of Seiðr which have both been alleged to include homosexual rites.

A blood brotherhood initiation rite known as the Jaldarmen rite may have involved initiatory homosexuality between Norse elders and youths similar to ancient Greek rites. This rite was used to initiate members into Norse warrior bands such as the Vargr. As such it could provide a direct link between the homosexual ergi and wolf / bear warrior clans. In the ceremony, young male initiates passed through raised strips of turf, known as "earth torques". Instead of being a metaphor for the vagina or womb, it has been suggested by at least one scholar (Margaret C. Ross) that the "earth torques" may have symbolized anal sex and that the initiates might have participated in communal sodomy to ritualize their entry into adulthood and warriorhood. In Norse culture, torques came to be a symbol of ergi behavior. The gesture of forming the hands into the shape of a ring or torque suggested that the person making the symbol had the power to cause an on looking male to submit to anal intercourse. Odin is alleged to have made this gesture toward Thor implying he could have Thor any time he wanted.

The Terms "Ergi" and "Argr"

The terms "ergi" and "argr" are terms used in insult to suggest someone is effeminate or unmanly. Ergi is a noun for an effeminate man and argr (sometimes ragr) is an adjective to denote someone who is effeminate or unmanly. These terms also suggested that one was the passive or receptive person in homosexual anal intercourse. Similar to Greek customs it was generally considered taboo to be on the receptive end of homosexual anal intercourse between men of otherwise equal status. It was okay, even worth bragging about, to be the active partner in such cases. It was less of a taboo to be the receptive partner in homosexual relations between men if one was lesser in age, rank, or social status.

The Gay Guy's Guide to Werewolves and other Man Beasts can be purchased from Amazon or my store (linked below).

<https://www.lulu.com/spotlight/melmystery>

Between the Worlds

A Spiritual Gathering for Men Who Love Men

September 13-17, 2021

Pomeroy, OH

www.betweentheworlds.org

Poetry and Art



My Hero

by Mel Mystery

You were always my hero
From the moment we met
All those years ago.

You touched my heart
I felt a cosmic connection
From the very start.

Our time together was fleeting
You wrote yourself on my soul
From our very first meeting.

Were we twin flames
Not yet ready
To play the game?

Separated by time and place
My love for you transcended all
Longing again to see your face.

To reunite
To make amends
My shining knight.

All good things end
Perhaps in the next life
Our love will transcend.

In memory of Justin, 1974-2020.



Photos

This page:

"Signs"

Model: Paul Aiono

Opposite Page:

"Board Game"

Model: Ivan D'Ville

"Still Life"

Model: Skull prefers to remain anonymous

Images from Distilled Images - <http://www.distilledimages.net/>

Haunt You

Lyrics by X Lovers

Loved you from the first time that I saw you
In the kitchen with your hair under a baseball cap
Couldn't find the words to say one single thing
Oh, I never knew someone could make me fall like that

Now I can't picture my life
Without you by my side
Can't let you go
I'll never let you go

Someday when I die
And I close both my eyes
You should know that I'm coming back to haunt you
Someday when I go
And I turn into a ghost
You should know that I'm coming back to haunt you
'Cause I don't want nobody else to have you

And I'll stay waitin'
To feel your cold on my skin
And I'll stay hopin', prayin'
That you'll be with me 'til the end

Now I can't picture my life
Without you by my side
Can't let you go
I'll never let you go

Someday when I die
And I close both my eyes
You should know that I'm coming back to haunt you
Someday when I go
And I turn into a ghost
You should know that I'm coming back to haunt you
'Cause I don't want nobody else...

Someday when I die
And I close both my eyes
You should know that I'm coming back to haunt you
Someday when I go
And I turn into a ghost
You should know that I'm coming back to haunt you
'Cause I don't want nobody else to have you



Queer Pagan Resources

Queer Pagan Men's Groups

Brotherhood of Arcadia — The Brotherhood of Arcadia (BOA) is a spiritual organization created from the fusion of Hellenist and Pagan beliefs and practices with an emphasis on queer and sexuality positive beliefs, practices, and deities. BOA membership is open to men who love men regardless of whatever personal labels one chooses, and who are also over the age of 18. No one – male, female, or trans – who feels called to join will be turned away.

FMI: <http://www.melmystery.com/index.php/brotherhood-of-arcadia>

Brotherhood of Cernunnos -- A Brotherhood of UK Gay Pagan Men. FMI: <http://www.brotherhoodofcernunnos.org/>

Brotherhood of the Phoenix — A Neo-Pagan order for Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender men who love men. We celebrate the Spirit of the Divine within and build community with men who seek positive transformation of self, community, and the world. Together we work to weave the magick that changes lives.

FMI: <https://fellowshipofthephoenix.org/>

Cern'osia -- An eclectic Neo-Pagan faith which focuses exclusively on the veneration and worship of the Celtic Horned God, Cernunnos. Although it could be adapted by anyone who worships the Horned One, it was designed primarily with the needs of a solitary Pagan man in mind. FMI: <https://cernosia.webs.com/>

Ecclesia Antinoi — Devoted to the worship of Antinous, the lover of the Roman emperor Hadrian. Antinous was deified after his death and is worshiped by modern practitioners as a god of gay spirituality, youth, and beauty.

FMI: <http://www.antinopolis.org/>

Gay Druid Brotherhood — An international network for homosexual and bisexual men on the Druidic and Keltic inspired Pagan paths. FMI: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gaydruidbrotherhood/>

Green Faerie Grove — A brotherhood of queer men in Columbus, Ohio. FMI: <http://greenfaeriegrove.org/>

The Minoan Brotherhood — A men's initiatory tradition of the Craft celebrating Life, Men Loving Men, and Magic in a primarily Cretan context, also including some Aegean and Ancient Near Eastern mythology.

FMI: <http://www.minoan-brotherhood.org/>

Radical Faeries — Generally we are gay men who look for a spiritual dimension to our sexuality. Many of us are healers of one kind or another. Our shared values include feminism, respect for the Earth, and individual responsibility rather than hierarchy. Many of us are Pagan (nature-based religion). FMI: <http://www.radfae.org/>

The Unnamed Path — The Unnamed Path is a shamanic path for men who love men. The path focuses on four main parts—Magic and Prophecy, Shamanism, Energy Healing, and Deathwalking. FMI: www.unnamedpath.com

Brotherhood by the Bog

Virtual Retreat for Pagan Men

April 22-25, 2021

<http://www.olympuscampgroundresort.com/index.php/events/brotherhood-by-the-bog-pagan-men-s-retreat>

Upcoming Retreats and Gatherings

April 22-25, 2021 — Virtual Brotherhood by the Bog. Pagan Men's Retreat usually held at First Landing State Park in Virginia Beach, VA, but this year it's virtual! This year's theme is "Metamorphosis."

FMI: <http://www.olympuscampgroundresort.com/index.php/events/brotherhood-by-the-bog-pagan-men-s-retreat>

May 7-9, 2021 and May 13-15, 2021 — Gay Spirit Visions Spring Retreats at the Mountain Retreat and Learning Center in Highlands, NC. FMI: <http://gayspiritvisions.org/annual-gatherings/>

September 20-25, 2021 — Between the Worlds at Wisteria in Pomeroy, OH. A spiritual gathering for men who love men. FMI: <http://www.betweentheworlds.org>

October 7-10, 2021 — Arcadia Camp OUT at Arcadia Campground in Buchanan, VA. This year's theme is "The Distance Between Us: Making Connections Across the Void." The Patron deity this year is Hermes. A camping retreat for Queer Pagan and Hellenist Men. FMI: <http://www.olympuscampgroundresort.com/index.php/events/arcadia>

Blogs and Podcasts for Pagan men who love men

A Path through the Woods — Blog by a gay, Pagan, polytheist who lives in Chicago — <https://www.adrianmoran.com/>

Discovering the Male Mysteries — Official webpage for Mel Mystery and the Discovering the Male Mysteries podcast for gay and bi Pagan men. — <http://www.melmystery.com/>

Enfolding.org — A blog by Phil Hine to discuss interests including Tantra, Queer Theory, Gender, History, and Occult Practice. — <http://enfolding.org/>

Faehaven — Based in Harrisburg, PA the community is forming in order to create a space where queers and their advocates can explore spirituality of all sorts and have a safe space to share among like-minded independent individuals. — <https://faehaven.wordpress.com/about/>

Horns — A NSFW magazine where erotica meets Queer occultism and Paganism. — <http://www.hornsmagazine.com/>

Transfaith — An online journal for Trans spirituality. Includes a Trans Pagan section. — <https://www.transfaith.info/pagan>

Walking the Unnamed Path — Discusses the teachings and techniques given to us by their Ancestors of MWLM, and laid out by their late founder Hyperion. They also discuss topics and ideas pertaining to queer Pagan men in general. — <https://www.blogtalkradio.com/walkingtheunnamedpath>

Witches Betwixt — Witches Betwixt is a collective of queer witches representing a wide variety of magical practices and spiritual paths. We release a 45+ minute episode bi-weekly in which we discuss various topics relevant to the experience of a queer witch. — <http://witchesbetwixt.buzzsprout.com/>

**Looking for a speaker for your next gathering, retreat, or other event?
Check out the Queer Pagan Speaker Directory online!**

www.melmystery.com/index.php/links/queer-pagan-speaker-directory

Mysterious Ways

The Mysterious Ways newsletter is produced and published by Mel Mystery.

Mel Mystery is host of the Discovering the Male Mysteries Podcast for Gay and Bi Pagan Men. He is also author of the book, "The Gay Guys Guide to Werewolves and other Man Beasts" and the upcoming book, "The Gay Guys Guide to Druidry."

You can find out about Mel, listen to his podcast, and find out more about his books at: www.melmystery.com

Archive copies of this newsletter will also be kept on the site.

We need your support!!!

This paper is a community-based project. We're not charging for subscriptions. We're not accepting paid advertising. Those writing articles are not paid for their work. This paper is for the Queer Pagan Men's community and by the Queer Pagan Men's community.

If you think this paper is worthwhile, please consider helping us to thrive. We need folks to submit articles, artwork, poetry, reviews, and other content. We need folks to share this in Queer Pagan groups and social media groups. We need folks to print copies and share them in LGBTQ and Pagan spaces in their local communities.

Thank you for doing your part!!!

Next Issue: Love and Lust Magick

How do we incorporate love and lust into our spirituality and our practices? What deities and spirits can help bring love and sex into our lives? What are your personal thoughts on using magick to bring in love and lust. Feel free to share your favorite love and lust spells.

Please send articles, reviews, original poetry, and other submissions to Mel at knightsofmatrix@gmail.com by May 15, 2021. Be sure to put "Mysterious Ways Submission" in the subject line.

Submission Guidelines:

1. All submissions should be of interest to Queer Pagan Men and fit at least two of the criteria—Queer, Pagan, and Men.
2. All submissions (especially photography and artwork) should be rated PG-13 or less. Since this newsletter will be shared in social media groups and in Pagan shops where minors might have access, we'd rather err on the side of community standards—not that we necessarily agree with them all.
3. Most articles should be a typewritten page or less. We may consider longer articles based on relevance and content.
4. You retain ownership and/or copyright of any articles or artwork you submit. We are only providing a venue to share your work with the world.
5. We reserve the right to refuse any content for any reason; to make minor edits such as spelling, grammar, and formatting; or to send the content back to you for revision.
6. We will not accept content that is explicitly racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, ageist, body shaming, or that otherwise spreads hate, negativity, or misinformation about any population or subculture of people.