

DOWNLOAD PDF MOUNTAIN BEHIND THE MOUNTAIN ASPECTS OF THE CELTIC TRADITION

Chapter 1 : Appalachia - Wikipedia

About Mountain Behind the Mountain. Draws together a lifetime's study and experience of Celtic spirituality, to present the resources of Celtic Christianity in a living unity and to open up new horizons.

They had complex and varied groups of societies and religious customs which varied widely from group to group. Because the ancient Celts did not leave many written records, much of our knowledge comes from second hand sources. These include the writings of Greek and Roman observers and Christian sources. These sources brought their own understandings, beliefs, prejudices and explanations to the information they provided. This they may have been, but they were also highly skilled artisans, miners, builders, farmers and merchants. Much of their knowledge was passed down through the oral tradition but they also used many alphabets, such as Phoenician Iberian, Etruscan, Greek, Latin and Ogham a native Irish alphabet which started around the Christian era. Archaeology is finding many inscriptions and artifacts that show that the Celts were a literate society. Celtic religion and mythology intertwined. There are over names for Celtic deities both gods and goddesses. Most were local and tribal names but there are many which were found throughout the Celtic world. Again, much of what we know has been filtered through Greek, Roman and Christian sources. The Celts had many gods and goddesses associated with warfare, hunting, fertility, healing, good harvests and other important aspects of life. Some gods were associated with places. Lakes, rivers, mountains and groves were sacred sites. Animals were held in reverence by the Celts because they displayed many of the attributes such as strength, fertility, etc. Rituals reflected their belief in the sanctity of the natural world. They rarely enclosed their places of worship in temples of stone. This usually only happened if they lived in areas heavily influenced by the Classical world. If they did build structures, they were usually open to the sky or built of wood and thatch. The Celts did not differentiate between the practice of medicine and healing by supernatural means. They placed a great deal of faith in the curative powers of water and springs, wells and lakes were important for rituals. They were usually associated with the cycles of the sun, moon and pastoral and agricultural cycles of the year. They were also magical times when the boundaries between the real and supernatural worlds were believed to be at their weakest. Imbolc an old Irish word February also known as the Festival of Lights was sacred to the fertility goddess. He was a god of life and death, cattle, crops, fire, healing, hot springs and prosperity and the festival was seen as a purification. It was a way of visualizing the Great Father who impregnates the Great Mother. This festival was also to encourage the sun in its annual cycle and to persuade it to return from its seasonal death. Lughnasa, August 1 was also known as Lughnasadh and Lammas. As autumn begins, the Sun God enters his old age, but is not yet dead. The God symbolically loses some of his strength as the Sun rises farther in the South each day and nights grow longer. The eve of November 1, when the Celtic Winter begins, is the dark counterpart of May Eve which greets the summer. More than that, November 1st was the beginning of the Celtic year itself. It was believed that the veil between worlds was at its thinnest and this allowed communication between the two worlds. Some of the other principal gods and goddesses were: Anu was the Irish goddess of plenty and Mother Earth as well as the deity of cattle, health, fertility, prosperity and comfort. Arianrhod was the Welsh goddess of beauty, fertility and reincarnation. She was also known as a sky goddess, Keeper of the Silver Wheel of Stars and her ship carried dead warriors to Emania Moon-land. Badb was the Irish goddess of enlightenment, inspiration, life, wisdom and sister of Macha, the Morrigan and Anu. Her cauldron boiled with the ever-producing mixture that produced all life. Variants of her name were Badhbh and Badb Catha. Brigid was the Irish goddess of agriculture, fire, healing, inspiration, learning divination, occult knowledge, poetry, prophecy and smithcraft. The Celts often referred to her as a triple goddess. To the Irish this meant that the Bridgets were all of the same generation and the distinctions between them were based on their domains of responsibilities. These responsibilities were hearth, forge and inspiration. Much later when the Christian church came to Ireland, they had little hope of making converts if they were to denounce the beloved goddess of the Celts as a wicked

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demon. So, as they did with many pagan beliefs, they incorporated her into their religion. Christians built a monastery on the site of one of her sacred sites. She later became St. Brigid and many of the ancient legends surrounding her became the deeds of a saint. Cerridwen was a Welsh goddess of death, initiation, inspiration, magic and regeneration. She was known as a moon goddess, Great Mother and grain deity. Variants of her name are Caridwen and Ceridwen. He was the model in later Christian iconography for the Devil. Variations on his name were Cerowain, Cernenus, and Herne the Hunter. The Dagda was the Irish god of the arts, knowledge, magic, music, prophecy, prosperity and regeneration. Danu was Mother of the Gods in Ireland. She was the goddess of rivers and wells, magic, plenty and wisdom. She was the ancestress of the Tuatha De Danann, a race of Irish gods. Epona was the goddess of horsebreeding, healing, spring, and prosperity in Britain and continental Gaul. Epona was imported to Britain by the Romans and was the only Celtic deity to appear in the Roman pantheon. In Britain, her cult merged with those of Macha and Rhiannon. Lugh was the sun god of all crafts and arts in Ireland and Wales. He was also the god of healing, journeys and prophecy. In Ireland he is associated with ravens and in Wales he has a white stag by his side. He had a magic spear and otherworldly hounds. Lughnasa was his festival. Macha was the Irish goddess of cunning, death, sheer physical force, war, protectress in both battle and peace and was known as Crow, Queen of Phantoms and the Mother of Life and Death. She was honored at Lughnasa. Variants of her name were Mania, Mana, Mene and Minne. Morrigan Ireland, Wales and Britain was a shapeshifting war goddess of lust, magic, prophecy, revenge and war. She kept company with Fea hateful , Badb fury and Macha battle. Variants of her name were Morrighu, Morrighan and Morgan. Nuada was god of harpers, healing, historian, magic, poets, warfare and writing in Ireland and Wales. He was the King of the Tuatha de Danann. Oghma was the god of eloquence, inspiration, language, magic, music, physical strength, poets and writers. Variations of his name are Oghma, Ogimos, Grainainech and Cermait. Rhiannon was the Welsh counterpart of the horse goddess Epona. She was also known as a goddess of movement and change who remains steadfast, comforting us in times of crisis and of loss. Taliesin was the Welsh god of magic, music, poetry, wisdom and writing. He was a great magician, bard and shapeshifter who gained his knowledge directly from Cerridwen. Animals in Celtic Mythology Animals in Celtic and Welsh mythology are usually tied in with fertility and vitality as well as a connection to the realm of spirits and the gods. Below is a brief list of some of the animals in Celtic mythology Birds were associated with prophetic messages and death transitions. Birds, especially ravens and crows, usually presage bloodshed and battle. Morrigan came in the shape of a bird to warn the Brown Bull. The Irish war goddess were said to call the ravens down to battle field to feast on the flesh of the slain. Lleu Llaw Gyffes was so skilled he could hit birds with a stone without killing them outright. Cuchulainn demonstrated even more prowess capturing birds skillfully, but his son, Connla was still more skilled. He could not only stun them with a stone, but also with only his voice. The boar is a symbol of masculine power. Its meat was served at Otherworld feasts for the deities. The pig is the archetypal symbol of plenty, healing and shapeshifting. The Bull was a symbol of virility, sovereignty and walth. In Ancient Ireland a highly ritualized "feast of the bull" Tarbhfhess bull seleep always preceded the crowning of a new High King. The Cat represents guardianship, detachment and sensuality. The Goddess Brighid had a cat as a companion. Because the cat was associated with the Goddess and the feminine, the cat was sometimes perceived as "unholy". However, the cat was used as a family totem in many Scottish clans. The Crane symbolizes secret knowledg, patience and longevity. Three cranes guard the entrance to Annwn the Underworld.

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Chapter 2 : Celts - HISTORY

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Yet I have glimpsed the bright mountain behind the mountain, Knowledge under the leaves, tasted the bitter berries red, Drunk cold water and clear from an inexhaustible hidden fountain. Bowden Springs had a luminous quality that extended beyond the water we would gather in our tall metal milking cans. There was the journey of climbing slowly up the winding dirt road to the Springs. There was the surprise of finding the overflowing water that seemed to come from nowhere. Most of all, there was the joy of drinking and splashing in the abundant water bubbling over the rocks. A thin place is where the veil that separates heaven and earth is lifted and one is able to receive a glimpse of the glory of God. A contemporary poet Sharlande Sledge gives this description. A thin place requires us to step from one world to another and that often means traveling to a place where we have less control and where the unpredictable becomes the means of discovery. Rugged seacoast like the Cliffs of St. Wandering over the mountains and the valleys, I suddenly realized I was lost and a long way from my destination. The mystery of the thin place was already revealing itself to me. The outward journey was mirroring my inner journey. I was lost but not afraid. There was a peaceful presence in the eternal rocks that seemed to offer me shelter and guidance. In this hallowed space and time heaven and earth for a moment are one. I wanted to sing the song of an anonymous 9th century Welsh poet: Almighty Creator, it is you who have made the land and the seaâ€ All your wonders, O true Lord! The Father created the world by a miracle; It is difficult to express its measure. Letters cannot contain it, letters cannot contain it. We are graced with a new awareness of the thin places in all of life. Having seen the glimpses of glory in those sacred landscapes, we begin to see glimpses all around us. Soon the birds outside our window sing of the mystery we might have passed over in our busyness. Suddenly we see the holiness of places like Bowden Springs and we understand the awe and wonder of the Welsh minister Thomas Jones who exclaimed: Our Lord is great, and great His praise From just this one small part of earth, Then what of the image of His greatness Which comes from the whole of His fine work? One of the beautiful gifts of our understanding of eternal time and space is that when we cannot physically go to these places, we can return to them in our memory and in our imagination. When I have felt dryness in my prayers and meditations, I often imagine that I am climbing the hill to Bowden Springs and filling my spiritual milking bucket with living water. When I am overcome with small tedious details and endless tasks, I close my eyes and return to Iona. I invite you to reflect on the thin places in your own life. Where is a place that refreshes your spirit and opens the door to the threshold of the sacred? Deep peace of the running wave Deep peace of the flowing air Deep peace of the quiet earth Deep peace of the shining stars Deep peace of the Son of Peace. Allen and Unwin, Harper Collins, North-Holland Publishing Company, Prayer O God, when work and responsibility wrap around my life like a woolen cloak, and wonder is closed off from my life, throw aside my protection. Guide me back to those places where my soul lies open to the cool breath of mystery from your Spirit. I ask this for the sake of Your great love.

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Chapter 3 : Celtic Spiritual Beliefs

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Island Culture Islands have a special place in Celtic mythology. Over again in Celtic writings, folk beliefs, burial customs and religious sculpture appears the idea of an Elysium, "a land of youth. This, "the Isle of the Blessed" is a special place, always located to the west, beckoning to all but visited only by a select few. It is an island free from storms and tempests, cold and ice, pestilence and disease, or scorching heat. It is blessed by eternal spring, abundant, always-present harvests, full of flowering trees and delicious fruit. It is a place we long for, a longing expressed in Gaelic as ionndrainn in Welsh by hiraeth. It is a longing expressed unashamedly today by the Welsh, Irish and Scottish in their songs and ballads in whichever part of the world they happen to be. The whole island of mainland Britain had an aura of the supernatural for both Greek and Roman. The Roman writer Demetrius visited Britain in the first century B. He reported that some of these uninhabited isles were named after local gods or heroes. And it was to the islands of Britain that the people of Amorica Brittany were alleged to have conducted the souls of the dead. Nine Celtic priestesses druidesses with magical powers were said to live on the Ile de Sein, off the Brittany coast. Farther north, off the mainland of Scotland, the Hebrides were believed to be the haunt of demons, shunned by mankind in their misty, gloomy atmosphere. Holy Wells Not only islands were regarded as sacred. Britain is full of holywells, many of them in Scotland. It seems that well worship was an integral part of the Celtic religion. Gods and goddesses were thought to dwell in or near wells and springs, which they owned and over which they appointed nymphs or other supernatural creatures as guardians. The magic of wells is one of the most enduring and persistent beliefs of Celtic faith. Their waters could quiet storms at sea, cure diseases and lameness, help the blind to see, the crippled to walk, aid the lovers in their quest for happiness, curse the enemy or the unwelcome neighbor, cure barrenness or toothache, help ensure a successful harvest. Offerings were regularly made to these wells. Iona contained at least three sacred wells: In some instances, expensive pins or brooches were offered to fertility wells. Hazelnuts and twigs ever present in Britain were placed in wells to cure a toothache. White quartz pebbles called fairy firestones were offered to quell storms at sea and to bring home the sailors. At many wells, an offering of a human skull would cure epilepsy and other illnesses. Severed heads were placed into some wells to mingle with the water to increase its potency or fertility. In a tradition that mingles Celtic and Christian practices, some women leave their homes early on May Day to gather wild flowers or bunches of greenery to offer to the wells in their village. In connection with the ceremony, fetes and carnivals also take place. Well dressing has become an important ritual in many villages in rural Britain. The hot springs at Bath, southwestern England, are known the world over; they seem to have been entirely secular. Perhaps the most famous holywell in Britain is that dedicated to St. Winifred in Holywell, North Wales, but in Scotland there are many wells that, like the one at Holywell, were converted into places of Christian worship from their pagan, Celtic origins. Bar Hill is one of these. Located in the ancient kingdom of Strathclyde, the hill has the remains of a Celtic fortified enclosure as well as those of a Roman fort that was part of the Antonine Wall built in the first century A. Within the fort is a sacred well in which many votive offerings have been found. The whole site may have been a center of druid religious practices. To the Romans, it may have been the Medionemeton Central Sanctuary mentioned by an anonymous seventh century cleric who listed countries, towns and rivers of the known world in the time of the Roman Empire. Not too far from the 18th century battlefield of Culloden is St. Many sick visitors come to drink the waters of the spring, leaving behind rags which are placed on nearby tree branches as votive offerings or to signify their cures by casting off the old. Tradition tells us that Burghead is the place "near Inverness" where St. Columba visited Brude mac Maelchon in the sixth century rather than Craig Phadraig at Inverness itself. In addition to its importance to the Celtic peoples, the well "monumental in scale and character," may have been used as an early Christian baptistry. As

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far as the bull symbol is concerned, a tradition survives in the sacred Isle of Loch Maree in Wester Ross. Inis Maree is the Isle of Maelrubha, who most certainly supplanted a pagan deity for whom offerings were made right up to the mid-th century. The annual ceremony that now takes place on the little island has three aspects: The bull or ram-horned god is one of the recurring themes of Celtic iconography. The Celtic peoples were unique in their preference for choosing animals they saw in their everyday lives to represent their gods; all their animals could be gods in disguise, especially the bull. In , the Scottish Presbytery condemned the "abominable and heathenish" practices that took place on August 25, the day of St. Mourie well dressing also formed part of the ceremonies. The island was formerly known as Eilean a Mhor Rìgh Island of the Great King and its festival is closely connected to the Irish Lughnasa, which also featured animal sacrifice. As late as bull killings on the island were still being condemned by the Scottish Church while cures for lunacy were affected at the sacred well into the mid 19th century. In , during restoration work at St. Magnus Cathedral, Kirkwall, in Orkney, a box was discovered containing the relics of Magnus, which had managed to escape the despoliation of the Reformation. The Norsemen had conquered Orkney in the ninth century and the island had become a Scandinavian settlement. It was Christianized two centuries later and one of its early rulers, the son of an earl of Orkney became venerated as a saint a short time after his death. Outer Hebrides While much of the Celtic traditions are no longer extant at Orkney though the Up-Helly-Aa survives as a reminder of the Viking occupation , it is a different matter in the Outer Hebrides. It is here that the remote, archaic, Celtic world endures. It is here that the ancient Gaelic language survives in a kind of cultural and ecological oasis where the people work the soil, fish the waters and weave their cloth in traditional ways. It is here, too, that we still find the villagers meeting together to sing their ancient songs and spend the long, dark winter nights in the tigh-cheilidh meeting-house or house of entertainment under the spell of the seanachadh, the teller of tales. Religion has played a major part in the direction that some of the traditions have been handed down. A detailed description of these traditions has been faithfully set down by Ann Ross, who grew up on North Uist in the home of the Ferguson family of Carinish. Ross expresses her gratitude that the church of today "has ceased to wage war against the secular life of the islands. And, in those northern regions, some of the ancient, pagan-related traditions are still hanging on, zealously guarded in a few proud families, despite centuries of relentless persecution. We are reminded of the Wood family of Gypsies in North Wales who, as church outsiders, preserved so much of Welsh music and the Romany language for posterity. The Gaelic language binds all these traditions together. The Bible was translated into Gaelic in , long after Culloden and in many areas too late to become the book from which generations of schoolchildren would learn to read and write as in much of Wales, for example. But, on the islands of the Hebrides, the language survived and today strenuous efforts are being taken to keep it and the traditions associated with it alive. In the more southern, Catholic islands, though the priests were loyal to Roma and their faith, they were more sympathetic to the preservation of the ancient lore and legends, helping to foster what Ross calls "a sweetness and soft dignity" to balance "the proud archaism of the northern traditions. Thus, we have a blending of traditions associated with the Catholic saints and those connected with the perhaps more-shadowy pagan deities. Ross provides the examples of Brigit being revered as the patroness of birth and the childbed, protectress of the stock as well as the midwife of Mary. Columba, the most-loved of the male saints, is called upon in many of the invocations achaine , used to describe the travails of life on these windswept, rocky islands. It was in the southern islands that the venerated hero, the pagan priest, the early churchman and the local gossip could all co-exist and be naturally accommodated in the spiritual life of the island people. This Celtic predilection for religion and the bonding of the new faith with the old is beautifully summed up by Alexander Carmichael who evocatively captures the whole spirit of the Catholic Hebrides: Roman Catholicism prevails in Benbecula, South Uist, and Barra, and in their dedicatory hymn the people of these islands invoke, besides the Trinity, St. Michael of the three-cornered shield and flaming sword, patron of the horses; St. Columba of the holy deeds, guardian of their cattle; Bride of the clustering hair, the foster-mother of Christ; and the golden-haired Virgin, mother of the White Lamb. As the people intone their prayers on the lonely hill-side, literally in the wilderness, the music of their

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evensong floats over glen and dell, loch and stream, and is echoed from corrie and cliff till it is lost on the soft evening air. However, not all the songs are connected with faith. Many have to do with the routine chores of everyday life, those songs that made labor less burdensome, and one of the richest features of the Gaelic folk tradition is the repertoire of these rowing, reaping, milking and churning songs. And, of course, there are the indescribably lovely lullabies. Perhaps the most important group of songs in the entire tradition are those connected with "waulking" or shrinking by hand the tweed to make it proof against the northern weather. These songs, the drain luadhaidh have remained, even after the heavy work of "waulking" was replaced by electric looms. In them are preserved some of the most ancient historical and mythological material providing a wealth of information on the traditional life of the Highlands that would otherwise have been lost forever. They include ballads, fairy tales, clan lore, songs of love and battle and purely local stories about the idiosyncrasies of purely local characters. Though the communal task of kneading the heavy cloth by the strong hands, or sometimes by the bare feet of the women after it had been soaked in a vat of hot, stale urine, has now been replaced by modern machinery, the "waulking songs" remain. The rhythmic movements of the task were accompanied by the voice of the leader who sang the narrative, with the team, seated around the large worktable, taking up the refrain. The whole process was unique in Western Europe, an extraordinary experience that helped preserve so many rare aspects of the folk tradition. Scottish Calendar Festivals Only a century ago, the ancient Celtic seasonal festivals were still a vital part of the life of many Highland communities. In some areas, they still exist, though vestigially; and in other areas, there have been recent attempts at revival as part of the resurgence of interest in the Gaelic language. Capricious nature always needed propitiating; its malevolent forces had to be tamed; good harvests had to be called into being from the land and the seas; healthy livestock had to be produced; even the weather could be bribed to remain favorable when important work was needed on the land. There was also the need to celebrate successful harvests, to relieve the monotony of long, winter nights, and to enjoy the fellowship to be found in seasonal rituals. These festivals came to be enjoyed during the four quarters of the Celtic year: Earrach, spring; Sambradh, summer; Foghara, harvest; and Geambradh, winter. To these, of course, we have to add the Christian festival of Nollaig, Christmas. Up until the end of the last century, Christmas chants were still very numerous, but only a few survive today. It was customary for the boys of the village, the Gillean Nollaig, Christmas lads, to perform the ceremonies attendant on the chants. On Christmas Eve, chanting the old songs, these boys would go from house to house and from village to village, dressed in long, white shirts and wearing tall white hats. They would enter a house and lift up any child found there. If no child was present, an imitation child, Cristean, the little Christ took its place.

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Chapter 4 : Mountain Behind the Mountain: Aspects of the Celtic Tradition by Noel Dermot O'Donoghue

Get this from a library! The mountain behind the mountain: aspects of the Celtic tradition. [Noel Dermot O'Donoghue].

Expand Margaret Hester photo Corn bread, home grown vegetables that were then canned, biscuits and gravy, stews, rabbit, chicken and dumplings and apple desserts—these are the foods commonly thought to be of Appalachian origin. Ninety-five percent of everything we ate was from the farm. Family farms meant sharing labor. Women and children worked together to pick, snap, boil, and can fresh produce. Neighbors helped each other in tough times. Meals were simple and homemade be there venison, squirrel, rabbit or hog, pies or preserves. Seeking traditional recipes, I asked friends and family members across the region to share those that were dear to them. It was made with our new green leaf lettuce and tiny spring green onions. The dressing was a smoking hot pork fat that sizzled and wilted the lettuce on contact. It was normally served with pinto beans and cornbread. Granny made it in a small wash pan. The region extends more than 1, miles and is home to more than 25 million people. The expansive territory and pockets of cultural influence within gave rise to a variety of foodways and traditions. The Museum of Appalachia in Clinton, Tenn. Even their restaurant utilizes traditional recipes and grows much of the food on site. We would can our sausage, hang our hams in the smokehouse to cure and use the fat to season our vegetables. It has been said that the only part of the hog that was not used was the squeal! Mealtime was a time of sharing and listening and just being together time for busy families. Sohn also was the food and cooking editor for The Encyclopedia of Appalachia. For instance, corn can be served as gritted corn, grits, cornbread, hominy or moonshine. Apples were used in many ways as well. This practice extended to cooking. For example, fine, complex foods served at social occasions were sometimes a cooperative effort. One example, the dried apple stack cake, has remained popular. To make a stack cake, mountain people would donate cake layers to create a stack of six to twelve spice-flavored layers. Common food combinations varied by what part of the world one was in and as people emigrated out of the region they tended to adapt to their new local food traditions. Mountain culture and foods started to lose their identity that native cultures once had shaped. Some 12, years ago or more, nomadic people hunted, fished and gathered in the region, Sohn wrote. As the Native Americans began to cultivate foods, they developed methods for growing beans up corn stalks—a practice still common in many Appalachian gardens and, when grown with squash, called the Three Sisters. As time passed, Cherokee cooking habits combined with European traditions as the settlers moved into the frontier. In the first United States Census in , it showed that 75 percent of those settled in the Southern Appalachian Mountains were of Celtic descent. The Scotch and the Irish agricultural traditions included the infield-outfield method of farming—“heavy farming close to the home, lighter farming and livestock further from the home. They rotated crops for better production and learned the slash and burn method to create fields from the Cherokee Indians. Using heirloom seeds, she cultivates ingredients. It can take up to a year of planning and growing for a class. There are stories that go with the seeds, stories of families and sharing and of handing seeds down to the next generation. Everything one needed had to be nearby: Corn was milled in small batches because it turned bad quickly. At the Heritage Foods Appalachian Storybank, women in their twenties and thirties are collecting stories from previous generations and recording them as oral histories. Discussions focus on gardening, saving seeds, preparing and preserving. Reconnecting with agricultural and cultural history has resulted in a growing interest in serving regional foods in local restaurants. Harvest Table Restaurant in Meadowview, Va. But to many, connecting with Appalachia is about more than the food on the table.

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Chapter 5 : United Nations Geopoetics & Celtic Biodiversity

Draws together a lifetime's study and experience of Celtic spirituality, to present the resources of Celtic Christianity in a living unity and to open up new horizons.

Results Exhibits Scottish and Celtic culture is as rich and varied as its people. Interests range from the practical day to day living of agricultural work to the sheer joy of dancing. Spread around the field, guests are encouraged to observe, learn, and participate in many of the cultural exhibits. Performed round the room or in longwise or square sets, one can see the intricate patterns of the dance unfold as the dancers step in time to the elegance and strength of the Strathspey, or the energy and agility of the jigs and reels, displayed as the couples progress through the dance. Jane and Katherine performs as entertainers on our Performance Stage 3 and as a workshop instructors at the Fiddling Tent. Tartan Forest Located just behind the Country Dance platform is a veritable forest of Tartans, Clan and family crests, and heritage. Andrews Society of Atlanta tends and nurtures this forest of wool so others can see, experience, and explore the world that is wrapped in a Tartan. Scottish Sheepdog As anyone who has visited the Highlands of Scotland will attest, there are vast open spaces where sheep roam freely as far as the eye can see. Since the introduction of sheep as the principal crop of the Highlands, the shepherd has depended upon his faithful sheep dog to assist him in managing his flock. Throughout the ages the fascination of a working alliance between man and hawk has never lost its appeal. The grandest birds, were reserved for Kings and Emperors as only they could afford the time and money necessary to train and maintain them, but lesser hawks of all descriptions were kept by humbler folk to help keep their Larders filled. Falconry demonstrations are presented by members of Georgia Falconry Association. Other exhibits also cover various aspects of the Scottish emigrant experience into North Carolina, specifically their interaction with the Cherokee people native to the southern Appalachians. Visitors can learn about the Scottish emigrants to our area, discover their clan or family tartan, and gain an appreciation for the richness of the traditions surrounding the Scottish National Dress. Scottish Spinning and Weaving Spinning and weaving were essential skills in 18th century highlander life. Clothing was not a luxury, but rather a survival item. Cold wet and unpleasant weather necessitated that highlanders understand how to raise sheep, process wool and fabricate the fibers into wearable and warm items. Come see a demonstration of spinning and weaving at the Spinning and Weaving tent. Today, spinning and weaving are skills done for pleasure and artistic design rather than necessity. Spinning wheels and weaving looms have become portable and available to anyone interested in acquiring them. If you would like to see spinning and weaving as well as a visual display of the many steps involved in wool processing, stop by and watch and learn from experts. Become a Sponsor A major portion of our annual funding comes from our guests in the form in Individual Sponsorship. Please consider joining this select group of visitors. Tickets are now available for online or mail order purchase. Highland Dance Competition Highland Dance forms for the games can be accessed by clicking on the link below. Entries must be postmarked by October 5, After that, entries must include late entry fees.

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Chapter 6 : Stone Mountain Highland Games - Exhibits

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Frost Since Appalachia lacks definite physiographical or topographical boundaries, there has been some disagreement over what exactly the region encompasses. The most commonly used modern definition of Appalachia is the one initially defined by the Appalachian Regional Commission in and expanded over subsequent decades. A landmark survey of the region in the following decade by the United States Department of Agriculture defined the region as consisting of counties in 6 states. Historian John Alexander Williams, in his book *Appalachia: The Name* was soon altered by the Spanish to Apalachee and used as a name for the tribe and region spreading well inland to the north. Now spelled "Appalachian", it is the fourth oldest surviving European place-name in the U. A competing and often more popular name was the "Allegheny Mountains", "Alleghenies", and even "Alleghania. The occasional use of the "sh" sound for the "ch" in the last syllable in northern dialects was popularized by Appalachian Trail organizations in New England in the early 20th century. The earliest discovered site is the Meadowcroft Rockshelter in Washington County, Pennsylvania, which some scientists claim is pre-Clovis culture. Several other Archaic period BC archaeological sites have been identified in the region, such as the St. In the 16th century, the de Soto and Juan Pardo expeditions explored the mountains of South Carolina, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Georgia, and encountered complex agrarian societies consisting of Muskogean-speaking inhabitants. De Soto indicated that much of the region west of the mountains was part of the domain of Coosa, a paramount chiefdom centered around a village complex in northern Georgia. The French based in modern-day Quebec also made inroads into the northern areas of the region in modern-day New York state and Pennsylvania. By the mid 18th century the French had outposts such as Fort Duquesne and Fort Le Boeuf controlling the access points of the Allegheny River valley and upper Ohio valley after exploration by Celeron de Bienville. As lands in eastern Pennsylvania, the Tidewater region of Virginia and the Carolinas filled up, immigrants began pushing further and further westward into the Appalachian Mountains. A relatively large proportion of the early backcountry immigrants were Ulster Scots later known as "Scotch-Irish" who were seeking cheaper land and freedom from Quaker leaders, many of whom considered the Scotch-Irish "savages". Others included Germans from the Palatinate region and English settlers from the Anglo-Scottish border country. Between and , immigrants trickled into western Pennsylvania, the Shenandoah Valley area of Virginia, and western Maryland. Between and , a series of treaties with the Cherokee and other Native American tribes opened up lands in north Georgia, north Alabama, the Tennessee Valley, the Cumberland Plateau regions, and the Great Smoky Mountains along what is now the Tennessee-North Carolina border. Built around during the Cherokee-American wars, it is located just south of Chuckey on the banks of the Nolichucky River. Appalachian frontiersmen have long been romanticized for their ruggedness and self-sufficiency. A typical depiction of an Appalachian pioneer involves a hunter wearing a coonskin cap and buckskin clothing, and sporting a long rifle and shoulder-strapped powder horn. Perhaps no single figure symbolizes the Appalachian pioneer more than Daniel Boone, a long hunter and surveyor instrumental in the early settlement of Kentucky and Tennessee. Like Boone, Appalachian pioneers moved into areas largely separated from "civilization" by high mountain ridges, and had to fend for themselves against the elements. As many of these early settlers were living on Native American lands, attacks from Native American tribes were a continuous threat until the 19th century. Frontiersmen often bickered with lowland and tidewater "elites" over taxes, sometimes to the point of armed revolts such as the Regulator Movement in North Carolina. Two years later, a group of Appalachian frontiersmen known as the Overmountain Men routed British forces at the Battle of Kings Mountain after rejecting a call by the British to disarm. Early 19th century[edit] In the early 19th century, the rift between the yeoman farmers of Appalachia and their wealthier lowland counterparts continued to grow,

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especially as the latter dominated most state legislatures. People in Appalachia began to feel slighted over what they considered unfair taxation methods and lack of state funding for improvements especially for roads. In the northern half of the region, the lowland "elites" consisted largely of industrial and business interests, whereas in the parts of the region south of the Mason-Dixon line, the lowland elites consisted of large-scale land-owning planters. Tensions between the mountain counties and state governments sometimes reached the point of mountain counties threatening to break off and form separate states. The proposed state would have been known as "Frankland" and would have invited like-minded mountain counties in Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama to join it. Virginia and Tennessee show the public votes, while the other states show the vote by county delegates to the conventions. By 1860, the Whig Party had disintegrated. Sentiments in northern Appalachia had shifted to the pro-abolitionist Republican Party. In southern Appalachia, abolitionists still constituted a radical minority, although several smaller opposition parties most of which were both pro-Union and pro-slavery were formed to oppose the planter-dominated Southern Democrats. As states in the southern United States moved toward secession, a majority of Southern Appalachians still supported the Union. After Virginia voted to secede, several mountain counties in northwestern Virginia rejected the ordinance and with the help of the Union Army established a separate state, admitted to the Union as West Virginia in 1863. However, half the counties included in the new state, comprising two-thirds of its territory, were secessionist and pro-Confederate. While there were two major theaters of operation in the region—namely the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia and present-day West Virginia and the Chattanooga area along the Tennessee-Georgia border—much of the violence was caused by bushwhackers and guerrilla war. By 1865, the Chattanooga area and north Georgia and northern Alabama had experienced similar changes due to manufacturing booms in Atlanta and Birmingham at the edge of the Appalachian region. Railroad construction between the 1830s and early 20th century gave the greater nation access to the vast coalfields in central Appalachia, making the economy in that part of the region practically synonymous with coal mining. As the nationwide demand for lumber skyrocketed, lumber firms turned to the virgin forests of southern Appalachia, using sawmill and logging railroad innovations to reach remote timber stands. Appalachian stereotypes The late 19th and early 20th centuries also saw the development of various regional stereotypes. Attempts by President Rutherford B. Hayes to enforce the whiskey tax in the late 1800s led to an explosion in violence between Appalachian "moonshiners" and federal "revenuers" that lasted through the Prohibition period in the 1920s. Such discrimination has prompted some to seek redress under prevailing federal and state civil rights laws. They pitted the men in extended clans against each other for decades, often using assassination and arson as weapons, along with ambushes, gunfights, and pre-arranged shootouts. The infamous Hatfield-McCoy Feud of the 19th century was the best known of these family feuds. Some of the feuds were continuations of violent local Civil War episodes. In reality, the leading participants were typically well-to-do local elites with networks of clients who were fighting for local political power. In 1908, Congress passed the Weeks Act, giving the federal government authority to create national forests east of the Mississippi River and control timber harvesting. By the 1930s, poor farming techniques and the loss of jobs to mechanization in the mining industry had left much of central and southern Appalachia poverty-stricken. The lack of jobs also led to widespread difficulties with outmigration. Beginning in the 1930s, federal agencies such as the Tennessee Valley Authority began investing in the Appalachian region.

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Chapter 7 : Celtic polytheism - Wikipedia

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This raises a number of questions. Who were the Celts? This introduction will attempt to explore some of these issues and, hopefully, provide a way in for those who wish to explore this living tradition more fully. Weighty academic tomes that are scholarly and well researched, popular works that are romanticised and dubious, those that fall somewhere between these two extremes. Modern archaeology, anthropology and palaeontology, together with new studies of ancient manuscripts are slowly beginning to shed more light on the people to whom this generic term has come to be applied; however there are still many difficulties when it comes to interpreting the surviving archaeological and literary materials which can only be resolved by slow and painstaking comparisons. This is particularly true for pre-Christian Ireland where the earliest written sources come from a period when Christianity had - officially - replaced the earlier beliefs and practices. For this introduction therefore I will confine myself to giving a broad outline of what seems to be the generally accepted details of the origins of the Celts gleaned from modern archaeology, anthropology and the early writings available to us. It may be of some relevance at this point for us to remember that history is almost invariably written by the conquerors: The Celts that we speak of were not one race as we would understand that term today, rather they were a diverse group of societies: By about BC a "hypothetical Common Celtic" had emerged from Indo-European and by the 6th century BC the various tribal peoples speaking it were known to the Greeks and then to the Romans as the dominant peoples in western and central Europe. Later on, but still in the prehistoric period this language divided into two branches. Here the earliest sources of information can only be dated to around BC, coming from names recorded by Greek travellers and explorers. It is believed by some, though not all, scholars in this field, that Q-Celtic speakers reached Ireland before BC and that the majority of P-Celtic speakers reached Britain at a somewhat later date. Others believe that the movement, particularly in regard to metal working and pottery, was from Britain to Ireland. These Iron Age peoples, like those of the Bronze Age before them, were skilled and creative artisans as is evidenced by the finds discovered in archaeological diggings. Intricate metal workings, in gold, silver, and bronze jewellery would test many a goldsmith today and their wrought iron work and weaponry was second to none in its time. Their pottery was both functional and beautiful as were their textiles and wood-workings. The discoveries at La Tene in Switzerland; Duchcov in Bohemia; Llyn Cerrig Bach in Anglesey; and elsewhere show a vibrancy of colour and decoration with an awareness of form and decoration that is breath-taking in its structure and complexity. This vibrancy has been carried down to us today through poetry, story and music. A tradition which survived for hundreds of years in its oral tradition and on which many of the early scholars drew for their understanding of this ancient culture when they came to write down the myths, legends and beliefs of the peoples amongst whom they found themselves living and working. Though it also fair to say that these scribes were also the ones who were attempting to eradicate the indigenous belief system and replace it with Christianity. As we have already noted, history tends to be written by the dominant and ruling culture with its own agenda and prejudices. This does not mean, however, that we are unable to draw some general conclusions from both the oral folk cultures, the written records of those who encountered them, and those later scribes and historians. It would seem reasonable to assume that those Celtic peoples who moved into lands already occupied by indigenous peoples assimilated many of the practices and beliefs that were already present and made them a part of their own. Just as the Christian Church later overlaid many of the celebrations and practices of the various religions which they sought to replace, so too the Celtic peoples would have developed a faith system that was a blend of their own and others beliefs. What we can be reasonably certain of is that their religious beliefs and practices would never have been romantic or simplistic. Like many indigenous religions it was simple in the sense that they recognised the interconnectedness of the people and

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the land; the inter-dependence of human and animal. They acknowledged and honoured the underlying unity of all of creation. It was primarily animistic and although the term shamanic does not appear to have been used by the Celts of that time there are many similarities, for example: At the heart of religious life and practice were the Druids and Vision Poets, men and women of great learning and discernment, who fulfilled a wide range of functions within a distinctive class of people². They were also seen as the intermediaries between the people and the gods with the power to excommunicate individuals, barring them from attending sacrifices and putting them outside of normal society. It was not romantic because physical life was hard and uncompromising. Disease and death continually walked alongside everyone and demanded the attention of both individuals and the wider community; the realms of the dead and the living overlapped, the threshold was close by and the veil between them thin and permeable. It was therefore important to acknowledge and venerate the ancestors, not least because they held much knowledge and wisdom that could help the tribe. The Celts believed in spirits of place so certain sites and places: We see also this sacredness in certain times and occasions: These threshold times and boundary places required rituals, prayers and invocations of great power if goodwill was to prevail and misfortunes were not to befall those present. Many of these were later adopted and adapted to include Christian saints and seasons. It was not simplistic because the Celtic tribes were creative and close-knit people with a love of study and learning, music and art, along with a complex system of laws and codes of conduct. Rulers and those in authority, with the advice of the various Druidic Orders, gave judgement and dispensed justice upon a strict code of moral behaviour which was hung upon the twin hooks of repentance and reparation. This covered everything from the code of conduct in battle, e. In Ireland, if there was full battle, as opposed to the contest of champions, and a chieftain was killed then the tribes would leave the battlefield - the fighting ended and both sides went home[€]. The death penalty did exist, but in Ireland at least, seems to have been rarely used within the tribal context - banishment from their homeland was considered to be a kind of death - understandable when one takes into account the closeness of the tribal family. Care of the sick and the provision of hospitals were the responsibility of each local tribe³. Pre-Christian religious faith and practice of these regions "had at its vital centre a deep and constant sense of an invisible world continuous with the visible world - sometimes indeed showing through it - and a world of the dead which had its own quality of life. It was a consciousness, and invocation and a celebration of a hidden dimension that alone gives meaning to human longings and to that which is most specially and poignantly human, the tears of things, that great ocean of pathos which is the stuff of all our greatest poetry and music. There is a degree of disagreement amongst scholars as to the status of women in Celtic society but most of the evidence seems to point to the fact that, in general, women were the property of their male relatives: There is archaeological evidence of them holding property, material wealth, and of being of great status and leadership, but this seems to be the exception rather than the rule, at least in the times of which we have written evidence. They were held in high regard in relation to spiritual matters and by the time of the early Christian missionaries were being consulted as Soul Friends and spiritual guides of distinction by many of the monks and bishops. Modern Druidry, Wicca, Shamanism, and certain types of Christianity. All have their own distinctive traits and individual understanding of what these terms mean to them as well as a number of meeting and cross-over points. Some of these would be familiar to the men and women of those earlier times. Many would have seemed quite alien to them. As indeed would the term Celtic itself. It is in a lowering of the barriers of separation and in a sense of openness to possibilities, to connections and relationships. It is also about memory, the spiritual memory that we all carry within us, and which links us to the memory of all that has been, since the beginning of time. It is a willingness to journey within and without time, and outside the structures of dogma that hold and restrict the imaginal world of possibilities, to find a deeper truth, no matter what the cost in terms of personal comfort and security. Celtic Spirituality can offer, to those who are willing to accept the challenges it offers, a spiritual guidance and a depth of meaning, to many who are struggling to come to terms with modern, secular lifestyles. Women were not only the hearth-keepers the first altar, and responsible for every aspect of the home and daily life, they were also the keepers of the lore, custom and

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belief. They were the repository of the accumulated wisdom of the family and the community. Nowhere is this more beautifully expressed than in the collected works of Alexander Carmichael known as *The Carmina Gadelica*; painstakingly collected over many years from the highlands and islands of Scotland and first published as a five volume set in It contains prayers, rituals, and blessings which show the inter-connection of the practical and the mystical. The juxtaposition of the sacred with the mundane! Today it is being recovered as a treasury not only of an earlier and more holistic way of life, but as a handbook for those who seek to bring back the sacred connections and the power and wisdom of the feminine in the everyday tasks of living. There are many people, organisations and religious communities that are exploring ways in which people in the twenty-first century, can make relevant for their lives now, a way of being and living in the world that is healing and affirming. A way of recovering and renewing a faith that is rooted in the goodness of the whole of creation and in the One who is a living and vibrant presence within it. As with all matters spiritual it behoves the seeker to find a wise and trusted companion or Soul Friend to walk alongside and to guide and support them in their journey. There are many pitfalls for the unwary and there will be times of both joy and deep darkness when such a companion is worth more than their weight in gold, for the soul is precious and should be treated with care, compassion and love. In both the Pagan and the Christian aspects of Celtic spirituality rhythm and seasons are considered to be of great importance in the way one lives ones life, and this can be summed up very well in that wonderful text from Ecclesiastes: There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heaven: The Celts knew and honoured this in all aspects of faith and belief. They did not make distinctions between the secular and sacred as we are apt to do, so the life of the individual was integrated in the life of the tribe and tribes life was integrated with the earth and the whole of creation, and all three were celebrated in the rituals, poetry, story, music and law. One of the critiques made is that the term itself is anachronistic for the periods in question! Charles Thomas - *Celtic Britain*, p. Information regarding early Irish law. ISBN 0 95 2. Part of the Early Irish Law Series. Reprinted by Dundalgan Press Ltd. The main aims of Old Irish law appear to be: The death penalty was available but appears to have been used only in those instances where the above did not, or could not, take place. It was the exception rather than the rule. The authors of the Old Irish law-texts seem to envisage that payment can atone for almost any crime. There are particular difficulties in paying for the crime of kin-slaying. In this respect Irish law contrasts with many other early law-codes, where death or mutilation is the normal punishment for a wide range of offences. For example in the Indian Laws of Manu, crimes punishable by death include treason, murder, arson, adultery, theft and harbouring a criminal. The form of death is often based on the crime: For his first offence, a thief loses two fingers; for his second offence, a hand and a foot; and for his third offence he is put to death *ibid*. In the law-code of King Hammurabi of Assyria, the death penalty is prescribed even more widely, being the punishment for sorcery, rape, kidnapping, receiving stolen goods, threatening a witness, falsely claiming ownership of lost property, etc. See *The Mountain behind the Mountain*. Clarke, Edinburgh 6.

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Chapter 8 : Grandfather Mountain Highland Games Return July for the 63rd Year | High Country Press

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Boasting bagpipes, Scottish athletics, Highland melodies, Celtic cuisine, crafts aplenty and tons of tartans, the Games harken back to the rich cultural traditions of Scotland in a setting not so different from the mountains and glens some 3, miles away. Guests often bring dinner or purchase concessions at the field to enjoy a picnic at the opening ceremonies. Friday, Saturday and Sunday are filled with competitions in traditional heavyweight Scottish athletic events, highland dancing competitions, bagpipe band parades, piping, drumming and harp competitions, shepherding demonstrations by Scottish border collies and concerts, featuring a colorful soundscape of Celtic music. The sheaf toss challenges athletes to loft a pound sack of hay over a bar more than 20 feet high. Other ancient tests of strength await the contestants, including highland wrestling, the hammer throw and various weight throws. For the wee ones, the Games will again host youth highland wrestling clinics and competitions, foot races and tug-of-war battles. For more information, call , or email gmhginfo yahoo. History in Action Throughout the weekend, visitors can learn about their own Scottish ancestry and genealogy at clan tents or browse the open-air market for Gaelic and tartan gift items. Guests can take a taste of tradition with a variety of concessions, including Scottish meat pies. The Scottish Cultural Village will also return, hosting experts to discuss or demonstrate numerous aspects of Scottish culture, including blacksmithing, weaving, spinning, athletics, piping and drumming, dancing and more. Presentations will take place every 30 minutes throughout the weekend. Tickets cover all activities in the meadows, which last from early morning to midnight Friday and Saturday. This does not include admission to the Saturday Games activities. Four-day passes are also available by calling Parking is available at the Games on Thursday and Friday on a first come, first served basis, with overflow parking at shuttle lots in Linville Friday only no shuttle buses run on Thursday. Public parking is not available at the Games on Saturday and Sunday. Shuttle service is provided for a fee between MacRae Meadows and satellite parking areas in Linville, Newland and Boone. For more information about the Games, visit www. For lodging and travel information, contact the High Country Host visitor center at or highcountryhost. Kelly Nickalson, of Ft. Concert-only tickets are available for the July evening performances. The Games return for their 63rd year July Photo courtesy of the Grandfather Mountain Stewardship Foundation A tactful border collie corrals sheep during one of the many shepherding demonstrations at the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games, returning to MacRae Meadows July

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Chapter 9 : Appalachian foods: Defining generations - Smoky Mountain Living

The Traditions of the Northern Celts Peter N. Williams, Ph. D. Island Culture. Islands have a special place in Celtic mythology. Over again in Celtic writings, folk beliefs, burial customs and religious sculpture appears the idea of an Elysium, "a land of youth."

Visit Website Galatians Several tribes made up the larger population of the Celtic people. The Galatians occupied much of the Asturias region of what is now northern Spain, and they successfully fought off attempted invasions by both the Romans and the Moors, the latter ruling much of present-day southern Spain. Evidence of Galatian tradition remains in the region today. Descendants of the Galatians still participate in ancient outdoor dances, accompanied by bagpipes, an instrument that is often associated with more well-known Celtic regions such as Scotland and Ireland. The Galatians also settled in nearby Galicia, a region on the northwest coast of Spain. Britons Britons and Gauls settled in the northwestern corner of present-day France, the region known today as Brittany. Celtic tradition survived in the region as it was geographically isolated from the rest of France, and many festivals and events can trace their origins to Celtic times. This incursion effectively pushed the Britons on the island west to Wales and Cornwall and north to Scotland. The wall was designed to protect the conquering Roman settlers from the Celts who had fled north. Celtic Languages In Wales, called Cymru by the Celts, the native tongue "Welsh" is a Celtic language, and it is still widely spoken in the region. Similarly, in Cornwall the westernmost county in England, and near Wales, many residents still speak Cornish, which is similar to Welsh and Breton. Of course, the bagpipes, the musical instrument for which Scotland is arguably best known, can also trace their origin to Celtic times. This enabled the Celtic tribes that had settled there "namely, the Gaels and the Irish" to survive, and allowed their culture to flourish. When Christianity arrived in Ireland with St. Patrick in A. In addition, many Celtic folklore stories, such as the legend of Cu Chulainn, are still told in Ireland. Like Welsh, the Irish language of Gaelic is a Celtic language. Gaelic largely disappeared in the 19th century, when the English colonized Ireland, but the language is still spoken in the western part of the country. Celtic Designs Across Europe, the Celts have been credited with many artistic innovations, including intricate stone carving and fine metalworking. As a result, elaborate Celtic designs in artifacts crafted from gold, silver and precious gemstones are a major part of museum collections throughout Europe and North America. Sources Who were the ancient Celts? Blood Iron and Sacrifice.