

Minutes of the Heathen Freehold Society of British Columbia

Online: Date commencing: 29 January 2018

Old Business:

1. Society Reports

1.1. Guild & Council Reports

1.1.1. Council of Guilds

1.1.1.1. Men's Guild

Nothing to report.

1.1.1.2. Women's Guild

Nothing to report.

1.1.1.3. Brewer's Guild

Nothing formal to report. My wife's brewing experimental (we need to check those) and otherwise ...

I need to get back to being public that this exists!

1.1.1.4. Craftsmen's Guild

Nothing to report.

1.1.1.5. Skald's Guild

Heathen Stage Plays :

Is frankly behind, there are a number of strong works that can/should be adapted. Some of which I have already done, but lost on dead computers. I will require more time than I have at present to bring this work to a stage where it is publishable. I would aim no earlier than Jul for this project.

Skald's works of the Freehold have been well received and published in Idunna and elsewhere as sought after material, so the word fame of the Freehold Skalds is still strong, and world wide. Not bad for a largely forgotten corner of Heathen North America.

1.1.1.6. Warrior's Guild

Nothing to report, Warrior's Guild remains consisted of veterans and serving members of the CAF; junior NCMs and SNCOs.

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1.1.2. Ritual and Lore Council

Serpent's Lake Kindred has been going strong this year, offering six rituals throughout the year in the Okanagan. Aaron and Graeme have been doing a great deal to further our lore knowledge, and to put together practical systems that can be used Freehold-wide - not the least of which is an event calendar. I'll let further details of their activities come from their own report.

Our Facebook Group (Freehold Ritual and Lore Guild) has been active as well, with article shares and documents from Aaron, Teunis, and Graeme.

Looking forward, I aim to try creating a "Hammer and Lantern" (working title only) study group with my coffee group here in Victoria. It is not yet certain whether we will begin with the Eddas or with rune study - that will be determined, along with whether there is even interest in such an endeavour, Saturday 20 January. This will afford us a regular reason to gather, as well, to try to create our own group in the area.

1.2. Kindred Reports

1.2.1. Serpent Lake Kindred

The SLK completed a year of regular ritual events with an average of 6 to 12 participants. The Kindred has grown sufficiently with active members of the Freehold to divide into two separate Kindreds, located in the Shuswap area and North Okanagan respectively. New members continue to join, and the transition from Kindred member to Freeholder has been established.

1.2.2. Njord's Nook Kindred

Njords Nook Kindred formed in August 2016. It has now been over a full year since I started. I am reporting for the time frame of 2017 only. It has been a crazy year. I have been tested in ways that I was hoping I wouldn't have had to deal with in being a new leader in the community. I had to kick out and ban someone from my Kindred and the Freehold as she was leaning towards white supremacist beliefs and actions by joining Soldiers of Odin (SOO). I couldn't get through to her and I needed to protect my people. I lost two members who started their own group because I was told I was too political and should not concern myself by fighting SOO. Not long after they left, the leader came to me as he was banned from holding blots and Heathen gatherings because they could have been seen as white supremacist gatherings and that goes against what his line of work stands for. He approached me about it and we are dealing with it behind the scenes in hopes to change the view of Heathenry in that particular line of work. He now sees why I fight so hard and our groups will be collaborating in the future as we now see eye to eye. I held a few blots all with small turnouts. It has been hard trying to find a core group. I think a lot of it is scheduling conflicts. I attended Pagan Pride Day with a booth and Keith was there representing the Freehold. We were presented with a gorgeous viking ship wooden wall hanging. I attempted to run the Yule Ball again this year but the Wiccan group I teamed up with bailed on me last minute and let me down and I had to cancel and remove

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my involvement from the event. I am unsure if I will work with them in the future. Probably not. I also gained two members and they are super promising and wonderful people. I am currently working on 3 members to get them to be probationary Freeholders. It has been an eventful and rocky year.

My plans for NNK. For starters we have decided that the whole island is NNK. We have divided the island in half. I am NNK north and Keith is leading NNK south. It works easier that way since we are all spread out and now everyone can feel included in activities. Keith has been successful holding coffee moots. I am unsure what blots he has done. W Keith Baldwin IV can probably give a quick rundown on what's going on in the south. :P I have a vehicle now and once I get my N I will be able to travel all over the island hosting blots and workshops and activities for our members. I am in the process of opening my own online Heathen store so locals (Canada in general but targeting BC) can buy the things they want or need. And at an affordable price with quick shipping! The shop will be called Njordrs Nook to get our name out there more and a percentage of sales will be donated to the Freehold. I also want to offer a discount for Freeholders to encourage people to become members. I am hoping to have a soft rollout by April as gathering stock takes time and a lot of money. I am planning a sweet ass summer gathering. I am bringing over Curtis for a couple weekends. He has a falconry business and I will be dedicating the blots to Freya and Frey. Each day will consist of the Falconry classes, a BBQ and a Blot. I attended a spirit fair and a craft market as NNK last year and will be doing more of that this year. It's a great way to get my name out there and start building relations with the public in regards to products. I always have my info pamphlets with me so I can also answer questions about the faith and my group. Those are probably the biggest plans for the year. I'm sure there's more, but that's a start at least.

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1.3. Witan Reports

1.3.1. Freyr

The Heathen Freehold's wedding ceremony continues to be pretty much the gold standard, and I have now had the honour of performing it at Trothmoot to wed a lovely long US couple as part of the last Trothmoot. On that front, two of our local Heathens, who are looking at joining their Heathen of the Nine Realms to the Freehold as our Vancouver shire are looking for me we wed them this summer using the ritual as well.

Pastoral work has been pretty much the order of the day for the last year, with more focus on individual work to deal with pain, depression, loss, and pending death. I really think that we are developing the resources the community needs, but do not think they are accessible enough for those who need to access them, and really don't think we have the proper training to deliver all we need to. I guess that is more we need to develop, since no one seems to be rushing to fill that gap before us.

Put on various rituals at local events, assisted in others, generally just the usual sumbel and feast, but the chance to play Jul father at the last Heathen of the Nine Realms was a very nice addition.

Administration of oaths at SLK function over the summer, but there is more work at various of the Shires that needs to be done in this, so we need to put together a schedule of who will be available when, so I can administer the outstanding oaths in a timely fashion.

1.3.2. Treasurer

Kindertales remains our largest revenue stream. With membership dues being a distant second. We have not yet established our print-on-demand store, it is expected to be another significant revenue stream.

1.3.2.1. Financial Records

BMO balance \$557.80

PayPal balance \$742.97

1.3.3. Secretary

1.3.3.1. Correspondence

Contact from VS: they have a new person in the position of the last contact person, and we are still waiting.

1.3.3.2. Membership Count

1 new Member.

Bringing the total at the start of the Althing to

Witan: 7

Members: 4

Probationary: 8

Friends: 8

1.4. Event Reports

(suggested format/questions below)

- was it held? where? when? who held it?
- what did it cost us? what did it earn?
- what did we learn?
- would we do it again?

Nothing to report.

1.5. Project Report

1.5.1. Kindertales

Ten stories in now, one more in the works. I think that we will need to look at illustrations and editing within two months for publication by the end of June. Any more contributions are welcome.

I invite anyone who is interested in illustrating to have a look at the Google Docs Kindertales III folder, or let me know if you need access, and then see which stories you would like to take a hand at illustrating.

1.5.2. Ritual Guide

Nothing to report

1.5.3. Website

Hosting is on my wintersgift.com server for now. Activity is low but not nonexistent. However, most functionality is broken with the loss (due to repeated hacking) of email capabilities.

Hosting all of the domains costs me US \$25/mo currently.

however. Not just hosting freehold. It's maybe ~20% of space use though in actively used space. Fairly low bandwidth.

I could get real stats I think, but suffice to say it's nonzero cost to me still ;) but it should be moved somewhere that I don't pay for some time in the future. I'm not panicked, but I do eventually want to shut that virtual server down. linnode's a bit expensive these days.

I set up a google app system to get this moved over there, potentially, as it's a lot easier to transfer but haven't done more than get bare essentials (account, initial repository) poked at. I keep not getting time and energy to explore wordpress.

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2. New Business

2.1. Proposal to add the following paragraph to the Freehold By-laws Section 1: Statement of Purpose

“The Heathen Freehold Society will neither support nor tolerate the use of Heathen belief, lore or symbols to promote racism, sexism, homophobia, or ableism. The Heathen Freehold is a frithful community that holds sacred the principals of the equality of all peoples, and will never allow race, gender, affectional preference, or physical ability to affect eligibility for membership, election, or treatment within the Freehold, unless a given physical disability precludes the performance of a specific titled positions where alternatives are not practical.”

Vote results:

For: 8

Against: 0

Abstain: 8

Motion Passes

2.2. Proposal to use Freehold funds in the amount of up to \$150.00 annually to pay for a Premium WordPress site to replace the current aging Freehold website

Vote results:

For: 7

Against: 0

Abstain: 9

Motion Passes

2.3. Proposal to change membership dues from \$20/year to \$40 for a lifetime membership and cease renewing as a Society in British Columbia.

Having all memberships be lifetime memberships will streamline administrative support to Members of the Freehold and will not significantly affect Freehold coffers.

Vote results:

For: 7

Against: 0

Abstain: 9

Motion passes

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2.3.1. Amendment to specify the way in which dues will be divided

Vote results:

\$10 as a Probationary Member, with balance due on acceptance as a Full Member: 6

Full membership dues upon joining as a Probationary Member: 0

Abstain: 10

New Probationary Members will owe \$10 upon joining with the remaining \$30 of their lifetime membership fee due upon acceptance as a full Member.

- 2.4. Proposal to advance Njord's Nook Kindred from Provisional Kindred to Kindred status, with Laura Cooper acting as Jarl until a Kindred Moot can be held to establish Kindred Thews and elect a Jarl. NNK has celebrated more than 3 rituals for Freeholders and other Heathens on Vancouver Island. Three Freehold members belong to NNK namely: Laura Cooper, Venessa Vallese, and W. Keith Baldwin. The prerequisites for advancement to Kindred status are met.

Vote results:

For: 8

Against: 0

Abstain: 8

Motion passes.

2.5. Nominations for awards

- 2.5.1. Lifetime Achievement Award-for those who have contributed to the growth of heathenry through their lifetime work as organizers, as authors, artists, leaders, or simply by their works in any form. Is not mandatory each year.

No nominations this year.

- 2.5.2. Tyrbold Award: for those who have exemplified the virtues of Tyr in standing steadfast for what is right. Is not mandatory each year.

No nominations this year.

- 2.5.3. Shield Maiden Award: To recognize an outstanding woman in Heathenry. Is not mandatory each year.

Laura Cooper nominated by Kate Brookes and seconded by Venesa Vallese.

No other nominations, Laura Cooper wins by acclamation.

- 2.5.4. Wyrð Spinner Award: to recognize exceptional contributions to the development and practice of Heathen magical techniques. Is not mandatory each year.

No nominations this year

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2.5.5. Freeholder of the Year: to recognize the Freeholder who has excelled the most since the last Althing. Must have at least one nominee.

Laura Cooper nominated by Keith Baldwin, seconded by John Mainer.
No other nominations, Laura Cooper wins by acclamation.

2.5.6. Frigga's Loom: to recognize an individual who has rendered exceptional service to the creation or maintenance of Frithful environments. Is not mandatory each year.

No nominations this year.

2.5.7. Volund's Forge: to recognize an exceptional Heathen Crafter. Is not mandatory each year.

Aaron Brookes nominated by Laura Cooper, seconded by Kate Brookes.
No other nominations, Aaron Brookes wins by acclamation.

2.6. New business as put forward by members

2.6.1. Motion to discontinue paying the annual Societies' Fee to the Province of British Columbia, by John Mainer, seconded by Keith Baldwin. Incorporated into Item 2.3.

2.6.2. Creation of a Sexual Misconduct Policy for the Freehold, as introduced by John Mainer Freyr of the Freehold. Motioned to accept by Aaron Brookes and seconded by Laura Cooper.

Votes:

For: 6

Against: 0

Abstain: 10

Motion passes.

2.6.3. Creation of a Social Media Policy for the Freehold, as introduced by Aaron Brookes.

Discussion was inconclusive, no motion.

2.6.4. Re-establishing the Althing of the Freehold as a physical gathering of our folk, suggested by Laura Cooper with details fleshed out in discussion. Motion that Freehold holds the next Althing in the Freehold Shire of the Lower Mainland as a four day event on the BC Day long weekend, with the Witangemot finding a suitable location, by Aaron Brookes, seconded by Laura Cooper.

Votes:

For: 9

Against: 0

Abstain: 7

Motion passes.

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3. Elevation of Probationary Members to Full Members

3.1. Anthony Steeves

Votes:

For: 6

Against: 0

Abstain: 3

Anthony Steeves was accepted as a Full Member of the Freehold

3.2. Laura Cooper

Votes:

For: 6

Against: 0

Abstain: 3

Laura Cooper was accepted as a Full Member of the Freehold

3.3. Venesa Vallese

Votes:

For: 6

Against: 0

Abstain: 3

Venesa Vallese was accepted as a Full Member of the Freehold

3.4. Nina Mikulin

Votes:

For: 6

Against: 0

Abstain: 3

Nina Mikulin was accepted as a Full Member of the Freehold

3.5. Christine Mainer

Votes:

For: 6

Against: 0

Abstain: 3

Christine Mainer was accepted as a Full Member of the Freehold

3.6. Alyssa Mainer

Votes:

For: 6

Against: 0

Abstain: 3

Alyssa Mainer was accepted as a Full Member of the Freehold

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3.7. Sheldon Ingvisman

Votes:

For: 5

Against: 0

Abstain: 4

Sheldon Ingvisman was accepted as a Full Member of the Freehold

4. Open nominations for Witan

4.1. Open nominations for Freehold Officers

4.1.1. Treasurer

Aaron Brookes was nominated by Kate Brookes, seconded by Keith Baldwin.

No other nominations, Aaron Brookes wins by acclamation.

4.1.2. Secretary

Laura Cooper nominated by Aaron Brookes, seconded by Keith Baldwin

No other nominations, Laura Cooper wins by acclamation.

4.1.3. Ombudsman

Keith Baldwin nominated by Aaron Brookes, seconded by Teunis Peters.

No other nominations Keith Baldwin wins by acclamation.

4.1.4. Open nominations for up to three Thanés

No nominations for Thane this year.

4.2. Guild & Council elections to be opened by the Guild or Council members on their own forums and results reported to the Witan.

5. Motion to conclude the Althing by Aaron Brookes, seconded by Venesa Vallese.