

Protests and Tribulations

Draft, Tuition, and ... Druids?

Reformed Druids of North America

- Founded Spring of 1963, at Carleton College, in response to their religious requirement
- If you can tell whether I'm serious, I'm not living up to the RDNA culture
- A friend of mine at Carleton was one of the founders of the RDNA, and kept bugging me to join.
- I joined in 1964.

Reformed Druids at Purdue

- I arrived at Purdue in January, 1967, to work on an MS in Mathematics.
- At first, I spent all my time on math.
- By 1968, I was not only hanging out in the CS department, but spending more time outside, including concerts at Slayter Center.
- That fall, I started holding Reformed Druid services.

Vietnam-era Draft

- Young men (ages 18 – 25) were drafted and sent into war.
- The main escape was deferment: being in college, or being in graduate school or an occupation in a scientific or technological area.
- Hey! That's us!
- The escape clause was gradually tightened.

Lesser-known Draft Exemptions

- In addition to deferments, there were exemptions.
- One of the grounds for exemption was being a minister (or equivalent, in other sects).

Samhain

- In the RDNA version of Celtic history, one of the main holidays is “Samhain”, the ancestor of Halloween.
- This seemed to be a good time to really publicize the Druids at Purdue.

Samhain Celebration at Purdue

- On the evening of October 31 (Halloween), the 10-15 congregants met in the wind tunnel, then trooped down the stairs to the hall outside the Machine Room.
- We all stood looking toward the little-known, little-used graphics console.

Graphics console



Druid symbol

- After suitable incantations, I drew the Druid symbol in the air,



while facing the graphics console:

Magic!

- My accomplice, watching my reflection in the nearby controller's cabinet face, started the console's drawing program by pressing the button on the controller.

Graphics console with sign



Post-magic

- There was a satisfying gasp from the crowd.
- We then trooped back up the stairs, and drove to the banks of the Wabash, where we had a religious-themed ceremony and bonfire.

Bonfire at the Wabash



Bonfire at the Wabash

