

*where others walk*  
**Greetings From Belgium**  
 by tribal member *Freida Marie Taylor*

**When In Rome Do as the Romans** by *Freida Marie Taylor*

I am sure we have all ventured out on a bright sunny Saturday or Sunday, looking for that little something different to spice up our intellectual and culinary lives. After browsing through the entertainment section of the local newspaper we stumble across one of those intriguing festivals. We are tempted with the promise of a peek into another way of life, a gastronomic tickle for our taste buds and a musical melody that will haunt us on some other another day.

Thus prepared for our peeks and tickles, we enter one of the oldest archeological environments in the country of Belgium. Near Beloeil and Aubechies (pronounced be-loiy and O bi she) in the French speaking part of the country, lie two vast Roman archeological sites and a reconstructed time park dating 5000 years before Christ!

Unfortunately, while studying the Roman period in school my mind must have been elsewhere. My stereotyped picture in my mind of the Roman time-period looked no different from the movie Ben Hur. When we think of Gaelic or Celtic our geographic imagination goes to Ireland or Scotland. The ancestors of these stoic Roman men and women in flowing robes and togas wore furs and robes woven from the creatures and plants in the area at that time!

Serious artisans make the timepark at Aubechies a real adventure. The roofs of the houses are made of straw. With age and weather, ferns and long sprouts of grass have taken root in the straw blending into the lower hanging branches of nearby trees. Inside the reconstructed houses we find darkness and smoke that burns our eyes. A young guide dressed in coarse woven pants, leather sandals and smears from the ashes of his fire, tells of the interior of his home. Barely at arms' length overhead are heavy wooden logs lashed together with thick woven grass thongs. The smoke permeates through the rafters to treat hanging leg quarters of pork and goat, some with the fur of the hide still attached. The smoke also treats the straw roof from the inside to prevent mice and bugs from setting up housekeeping.

Outside the home, an artisan makes arrowheads fashioned after the types found in the European archeological sites. They are long and slender, made from a dull black stone similar to limestone. On the central fire inside the house, pine sticks were slowing seeping their sap out into clay pots. The sap is then used to seal the sinew thongs tied around the arrowhead attached to long straight sticks.

Inside another home we find the central fire covered with an earthen dome of clay with a primitive chimney that allows the smoke to go up into the rafters. The livestock share the living quarters here but are confined by a half wall so their warmth can be utilized in the cold winters. The family here makes a special flat bread on their hearth that you can sample. The origin of the bread was found in the archeological diggings. The sealed clay pot still had pieces of the bread inside. It was analyzed for the ingredients, which consisted of four types of grain, elderberries and blackberries.

Between the homes, a community cooking fire has been made. Over this fire hangs a massive iron kettle filled with potatoes, leeks, onions, large pieces of pork meat and goat, bunches of fresh parsley, wheat kernels and laurel leaves simmering in water.

In yet another home, we find the beginnings of the use of the stone grinding wheels. Small and mounted on a flat table,

the out of round flat stones are operated by hand with a long stick that is tied to a pivoting point in the rafters. The ground wheat and oats have all the outer fibers still mixed in with the coarse flour that is being made. Since leavening as we know it did not exist, the bread balls are heavy and have to be chewed thoroughly and carefully. Kernels and hard bits have to be picked out as you eat it. Some of the bread is baked in loaves and served at the house next door with slices of the smoked meat from the rafters. It is definitely not something you would find on the dinner table nowadays, but it is fascinating to try and just imagine the diet of those times!

Wandering minstrels play lively tunes with a Celtic melody. The instruments and costumes step right out of paintings found in history books. There is much merry making and the audience participates in little circle dances. Chickens and roosters are running loose along the foot paths and scurrying little chicks follow their mothers underneath the picnic tables set up in a central square for the modern visitors.

In an open field nearby, demonstrations of military maneuvers are being re-enacted by legions of Roman soldiers. A centurion, or the leader of the legion, has under his command 100 soldiers. That was a little mathematical trivia for me, to piece together century, cent, centurion and 100 soldiers, get it? Armor and chainmail clink, and swords pound against metal shields to create adrenaline. Military commands, left! right!, swords! or spears!, ring out across the field (in Latin of course). Demonstrations of long range archery skills and gladiator movements takes place one right after the other.

A peaceful looking Roman villa has been reconstructed from original structures found in the archeological site. A Roman wedding ceremony is in progress with the two heads of household arranging to join families, wealth and power. This wedding happens to be between a centurion of power and a wealthy senator. The families meet for a casual stroll while business is discussed and the bride and groom will meet for the first time. At the birth of a child, he or she is given a necklace. When he is older, he gives it to his bride to be. She places her necklace from birth on the altar of a certain goddess and the necklace from her husband is given to their first child.

A re-enactment of a sacrificial goat takes place after the wedding. The future of the coming life and success or failure of the rulers, and the village is told by reading the entrails of the goat. Once read, they are ceremoniously carried into the temple to be offered to the gods.

Artisans working around hot fires and clay ovens fashion pottery by hand. Ancient designs of oil burning lamps are brought back to life in stone-carved molds. Celtic circles of life necklaces, rings, and other revived jewelry pieces are created and sold while you wait for your treasure, straight from the crafter's hand. Ancient roman helmets are hammered out and etched with beautiful designs while you watch.

When dusk begins to fall the simmering stews are shared by the artisans and the time-park slowly settles down to banking fires and discussing the day's activities. Into the quiet night murmurs around campfires and storytelling of centuries ago is relived. No electricity brightens the darkness and one lets their imagination wander through the simple life of long ago. Plans for getting back to reality on Sunday might be discussed but they seem unreal and from a future life in the village of the Romans.



**Celts** Photo by *Freida Marie Taylor*

**NOTICE**  
**The Rap Department is Taking Requests For Lawn Care Assistance For Elders And The Handicapped**

**ELDER ACTIVITIES**

**May 9, 2012**

Elders are encouraged to attend the monthly Elders Advisory Committee Meeting to be held on Wednesday, May 9, 2012 at the Sac and Fox Multi-Purpose Center in Stroud 10:00am to 2:00pm. Potluck, bring a covered dish.

**May – Tuesdays and Wednesdays at the Elders/Veterans Building, Stroud**

**Plastic Canvas Classes.** Stella Wilson and Shirley Wakole have been practicing and developing new patterns with plastic canvas and yarn. They have made 2-styles of Kleenex holders, various refrigerator magnets and coasters with Native American designs – and now they are wanting to teach others how to make them. Materials are provided (unless you want specific colors).

**Quilting**

The elders received several bags of material from a generous donator and are wanting to start making quilts out of some of the material. Elders are encouraged to come in and cut quilt blocks and/or sew quilts together. Stella is wanting to learn how to make "Star Quilts" so come in and everyone can learn together.

All elders are invited to come in and share this time together in good fun and fellowship. Come to work and/or learn something new. Spend a couple hours or all day, whatever you can manage.

For more information or questions, contact Stella Wilson, Elders Building Manager, at 918-968-2583 from 8:00am to 4:30pm on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Please call in advance – we've been having tribal activities occurring on these days and Stella is having to change days she is at the building on occasion.



**Musicians** Photo by *Freida Marie Taylor*

**Happy May Birthday Elders!!**

<i>Cathleen Dolores Mikulski</i>		<i>Ida Louise Parish</i>
<i>Carmon R. Falls</i>		<i>Barbara Jane Harshberger</i>
<i>William Francis Thornton Jr.</i>		<i>Katherine Sue Higgs</i>
<i>David Edward Meek</i>		<i>Elizabeth Ann Maclas</i>
<i>Carmelia Ketcher</i>		<i>Edith Verlayne Wilson</i>
<i>Gwendolyn J. Switch</i>		<i>Jo Anne Gilman</i>
<i>Theresa Sue Ferguson</i>		<i>Elvita Louise Jefferson</i>
<i>Vada Rose Meek</i>		<i>Michael David Gibbs</i>
<i>Debra Elaine Wakole</i>		<i>Ronald M. Bemo Sr.</i>
<i>Rebecca Jeanne French</i>		<i>Shalah Louise Grass</i>
<i>Edgar Thomas Butler</i>		<i>Imogene Haley</i>
<i>Monty Eli Tasier</i>		<i>Ricky Dean Brice</i>
<i>Harry Dewynne Wood</i>		<i>Bobbie L. Shawn</i>
<i>Rex D. Watts</i>		<i>Robert David Chaney Jr.</i>
<i>Joan Josephine Thorpe</i>		<i>Ms. Lena Leota Clark</i>
<i>Mary Sue Truitt</i>		<i>Carla Dean Honeyestewa</i>
<i>Patricia R. Yarbrough</i>		<i>Rosalyn G. Clinkenbeard</i>
<i>Judy K. Stephens</i>		<i>Gloria Gay Williams</i>
<i>Maxine Carol Wakolee</i>		<i>Judy Anita Baggett</i>
<i>Janice Lee Riche</i>		<i>Reginald Ashley</i>
<i>Edward L. O'Brien III</i>		<i>Timothy H. Dean</i>
<i>Richard Wayne Phillips</i>		<i>Odell M. Dowd</i>
<i>Barbara Ladon Hale</i>		<i>Robin Gaye Brown</i>
<i>Melva Ladawn York</i>		<i>Pauline Sue Webb</i>
<i>Robert Alexander Whistler</i>		<i>Sammy Lee Bass</i>
<i>Gail Ruth Marez</i>		<i>Monty Bass</i>
<i>Michael John Pimley</i>		<i>Billie F. Berry</i>
<i>Joy Ellen Walklin</i>		<i>Betty Taber</i>
<i>Peggy Ann Dixon</i>		<i>Alden Gene Blanchard</i>

Myra K. Bohannon  
 Spelling correction for April birthdays  
 Happy Birthday Carrol Patterson

