

Lugh, jack of all trades!

I was prompted to find out more about Lugh after I answered a few questions about myself on one of those trivial quizzes on Facebook and he was pronounced 'my Celtic God'!

The early harvest sabbat of Lughnasadh (later called Lammas) was named after the Celtic God Lugh, an Irish deity represented in mythological texts



Lleu rises in the form of an eagle.

Image from *The Mabinogion*,
Charlotte Guest, 1877.

as a hero and 'High King' of the distant past. The Welsh equivalent is considered to be *Lleu Llaw Gyffes* who appears most prominently in the Fourth Branch of the Mabinogion.



Lugh

Lugh appears as the god of many aspects of Celtic life and claimed to have many skills including blacksmith, wheelwright, musician, scholar and bard as well as possessing highly valued talents on the battlefield. In Ireland Lugh is called *sam iildanach*, meaning he was skilled in many arts simultaneously.

Lugh's association with harvest time is said to come about as he organised the first *Aonach Tailteann*, a fair held by the High Kings of Ireland in County Meath believed to have originated during prehistoric times. It was a combination of political assembly, marketplace, and games of skill and strength. He held the gathering as a tribute to his late foster mother, Tailtiu, and it took place during the last half of July, so that it would culminate in a giant feast and celebration on Lughnasadh, August 1. This day ties in with the first grain harvest in agricultural societies in the Northern Hemisphere. In fact, in Irish Gaelic, the word for August is *lunasa*.

Lugh is honoured with corn, grains, bread, and other symbols of the harvest so it great to have these things on your altar and included in a celebratory meal at this time. As I have written before nature deems that August 1st is an approximate day to celebrate the first harvest and we have been enjoying our personal harvest from the garden over several weekends already. However, our neighbouring wheat field is due to be cut on or very close to the day.

So take the opportunity at this time to raise a glass to Lugh and a good harvest.

Tomy