

Hermaia Enodia Festival:
A festival honoring Hermes of the Roads
Hyporborean Proto-Demos of Hellenion
Friday, December 28, 2007

This modern festival was created to honor Heart-Delighting Hermes, focusing largely on His role as patron of roads and travelers.

Glossary

temenos: ritual area

khernips: spring water and sea salt

nator: baking soda and salt

theoxenia: a feast where mortals and the Gods eat together

Supplies for this ritual

khernips

drink for libations

nator

basket of barley

charcoal, matches, & lighter fluid for fire

loose incense or aromatic herbs

grill or fire pit

a small pile of stones

poem to the Olympians

celebratory feast

drinking goblets for each participant

eating utensils

Procession & Purification of People

All participants process to the edge of the temenos. Here each person says, “Far off, far off even to the profane,” while khernips is poured over his or her hands. They may then enter.

Purification of the Temenos

A participant calls for solemn silence and then walks around the temenos, sprinkling it with nator. After this, the fire tender lights the fire, saying, “I conjure You, sacred fire whose mother is Hestia and whose Father is Hephaestos.”

Hymnodia to Hestia

Participant: Hestia, You who obtained as Your lot in the lofty abodes
Of all the immortal Gods and of humans who walk on the earth
A seat that forever endures as the honor due to Your age,
Possessing a beautiful portion and honor – for not without You
Are banquets held by mortals, where he who begins pours out
No wine as sweet as honey for Hestia first and last.
– Homeric Hymn 29: Hymn to Hestia and Hermes

First libation

Herald: Sponde! Hestia, guardian of hearth's fire, Yours is always the first as well as the last.

Everyone pours a libation to Hestia and then drinks.

Hymnodia to Hermes

Participant: Hear me, Hermes, messenger of Zeus, son of Maia;
almighty is Your heart, O lord of the deceased and judge of contests;
gentle and clever, O Argeiphontes, You are a guide
whose sandals fly, and a man-loving prophet to mortals.
You are vigorous and You delight in exercise and in deceit;
interpreter of all, You are a profiteer who frees us of cares
and who holds in his hands the blameless tool of peace.
Lord of Korykos, blessed, helpful and skilled in words,
You assist in work, You are a friend of mortals in need,
and You wield the dreaded and respected weapon of speech.
Hear my prayer and grant a good end to a life
of industry, gracious talk, and mindfulness.
– Orphic Hymn 28:to Hermes.

Litany to Hermes

Going around in a circle, each participant has an opportunity to serve as herald.

Herald: Hermes Of Intersections,
You untangle confusion in the roads,
Guiding the twists and turns that we take.

All: We praise You! We honor You!

Herald: Hermes Translator,
You watch over dialog with strangers,
Ensuring that we understand our fellows.

All: We praise You! We honor You!

Herald: Hermes Guide,
You advise our intuition and accompany our hearts
When our road is not yet clear.

All: We praise You! We honor You!

Herald: Hermes, Busy One,
You fly in swift winged sandals across all realms,
Your fingers in many pots.

All: We praise You! We honor You!

Herald: Luck-Bringing Hermes,
You gift in benevolent chance
And rejoice in the happy turn.

All: We praise You! We honor You!

Herald: Keen-Sighted Hermes,
You scope the road ahead of us
And protect our homes while we are gone.

All: We praise You! We honor You!

Herald: Gracious Hermes,
You delight in kindly hosts
And good-natured companionship.

All: We praise You! We honor You!

Herald: Hermes, Giver of Joy,
You share with us wondrous places
And the magnificence of our wide world.

All: We praise You! We honor You!

Herald: For these we thank You,
for these we adore You,
for these we honor You.

Libation to Hermes

Herald: Sponde! Hermes, glorious protector of travelers and roads. Precocious baby of shy Maia and Gracious Zeus, You walked in swaddling clothes, stepping grandly into the world the very day of Your birth. Many-Turning Hermes, messenger of the Deathless Ones, You are everywhere. Your sharp eyes guard roads and doors, and share with Zeus a delight in hospitality. As we lay in vulnerable sleep, You guide our dreams, and at the end of our lives, You escort us to the Lands of the Dead. Splendid Hermes, we call upon You by whatever name pleases You to give praise and honor, Heart-Delighting Theos.

Everyone pours a libation to Hermes and then drinks.

Hymnodia to the Olympians

A devotional poem to the Olympians is read aloud by a volunteer, such as Hearthstone's *A Shorter Devotion*.

[<http://www.geocities.com/hellenicdevotions/general-p2.html>]

[Hearthstone. Devotion: Prayers to the Gods of the Greeks. United States of America: Lulu, 2005, p.119.]

Libation to the Olympians

Herald: Sponde! Immortal Olympians, come join our host.

Everyone pours a libation to the Olympians and then drinks.

Sacrifice

At the conclusion of the libations, barley is passed from person to person. Everyone takes a small handful and tosses it into the fire.

Next, incense or aromatic herbs are passed. Participants take a pinch and toss them into the fire while praying to Hermes aloud or silently.

Devotional

This devotional is preferably done outdoors, where participants will gather at either a crossroads or in front of a participant's front door. Have a small pile of stones at hand. Each participant will take one or a few stones and hold them close, meditating or reflecting on the important and life-changing journeys they've taken throughout their lives. When the participants have done this, they devotionally set down one stone at a time so that they as a group eventually create a pile. As they set down their stones, participants may speak aloud or in their hearts about these meaningful journeys they've taken and their gratitude to Hermes for what they've learned and how they've changed because of them. If this activity is done indoors, participants may wish to make the herm with marbles instead of stones, and place them in a potted plant or ceramic pot. This pot can be kept by the front door along with a bowl of stones or marbles so that residents may make devotionals to Hermes as they set out on important travels.

When each person has laid the stones they wish to, a participant says the following.

If the herm is built at a crossroads:

Hail, Hermes, giver of grace, guide, and giver of good!
– Homeric Hymn 18: Hymn to Hermes

If the herm is built in front of a participant's front door or in the home:

You, the Slayer of Argos, Zeus and Maia's son,
The blessed ones' messenger, Giver of Good with rod of gold,
Being gracious, bring me Your help with her, revered and dear
Hestia. For You both inhabit the beautiful homes
Of humans on earth, being lovingly disposed in mind
To each other; beautiful props, You attend on thought and youth.
– Homeric Hymn 29: Hymn to Hestia and Hermes

Feast

As participants feast together, they may take turns telling stories of travel, whether biographical or outlandish, poignant or goofy. If any of the group is versed in magic tricks, they may entertain the group with them.

Set up a theoxenia altar for Hermes during the feast, fixing a plate of food for Him. After the festival, burn it in the fire.

Closing Libations

Herald: Sponde! Immortal Olympians, thank You for joining our host.”

Everyone pours a libation to the Olympians and then drinks.

Herald: Sponde! Mighty Hermes, Giver of Good Things. Please bless our travels, Glad-Hearted Theos, and protect our homes. Guide us to paths that reap joy, and when we walk unsteadily or unsurely, Strong Hermes, please lead us to hope, good company, and delight. Lover of humankind, we praise and honor You.

Everyone pours a libation to Hermes and then drinks.

Herald: Sponde! Hestia, guardian of hearth’s fire, Yours is always the last as well as the first.”

Everyone pours a libation to Hestia and then drinks.

All toast: Be brave, for all good things have come to pass!