

Witches keep diaries of spells

Each witch keeps her own personally handwritten book called a grimoire. In it she enters spells, rituals, incantations and other things she learns during her training. Later, as she gains knowledge, she continues to enter notes in this book.

Witches often collect and trade such notes, much as housewives collect and exchange recipes. When she becomes more practiced, a witch may invent a few spells and incantations of her own, just as an experienced cook might invent a recipe.

In fact, you might describe the grimoire as a witch's recipe book.

SOME WITCHES enter thoughts in their grimoires as one might in a diary. Others keep theirs strictly for formulas and rituals. Some decorate the covers with runes and talismans, while others write them, prefer to keep theirs very plain. No two grimoires are alike.

Some witches go to great lengths to make their books out of virgin parchment, hand sew the binding and cover it with red satin or black velvet. But would you believe that some modern witches use spiral notebooks?

Traditionally, each entry was penned with a quill using dove's blood or

some homemade ink brewed by a witch or her coven.

Even though a modern witch may choose to use a ballpoint pen, there remains one tradition that she would never break. It is that no one—but an initiated witch—is ever allowed to read from that book.

If a witch knows she is dying, she either burns her grimoire herself or she gives it to another witch, one she truly trusts (usually her son or daughter), to copy what they wish and then destroy it by fire.

If a witch dies suddenly without opportunity to dispose of her grimoire in the proper manner, it is the duty of the others in her coven to find it and burn it before it falls into the hands of those who might misuse it.

Each coven also keeps its own book which records rituals, songs, dances, coven activities, and the births, deaths, initiations and the like of its members. This is sometimes known as "The Book of Shadows." The high priestess of the coven is entrusted with the care of the book, but it belongs to the group and is quite different than a personal grimoire.

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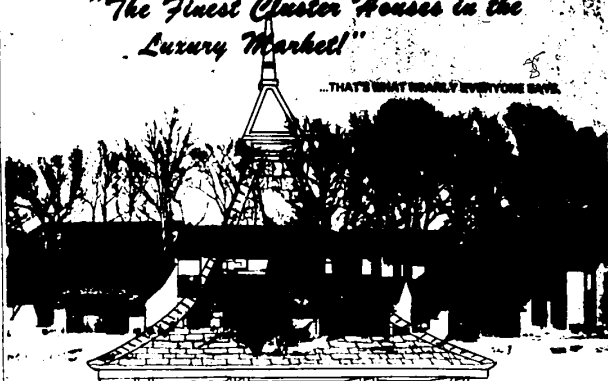
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