

Holy Anio

The Isle of Anio is regarded as the focal sacred site for most of the Sophos region, and is under the guardianship of the Lairds of Llum.

It is reached by ferry from the Llumish village of Niofftorp, and each year, especially in High Summer, pilgrim's flock to the island for the Abbot's blessing and to obtain healing through the medium of the founding Saint's embalmed body.

St Locumbin was a high ranking Drù who split from the Sophos Council of Drùids over 350 years ago. Shortly after, the Council fell apart, and was resurrected as two competing sects, each insistent that the other was heretical. High Drù Locumbin erected his chapel on the barren island of Anio, a small island off the southern coast of Llum. The isle was windswept, marshy in the southern half, and only a few treacherous landing sites. Here, the later canonized Locumbin founded a small community of dedicated Drùids, and the famous self-sufficient spiritual centre flourished. The Monastery became famed for its learning, and the saint was consulted by many of the regions leaders, spiritual and secular.

He tried to unite the two sects of Drùidry, but died from a painful canker of the stomach before his mission was complete. His grandnephew, and successor as Abbot, successfully completed Locumbin's mission, and a new ArchDrù was installed as head of Reunited Drùidry.

Later on, tales of miraculous healing began to circulate; laying hands on the embalmed body of the Saint was held to be responsible, and so the great pilgrimages began. Locumbin was canonized by the ArchDrù of reunited Drùidry, ten years after the saint's death.

The island not only houses the great Abbey and Monastery of Locumbin (completed 45 years after the death of St Locumbin), but also a hamlet of some 350 souls, the hamlet of Emeir, where fisherfolk and shepherds provide fare for the monastery.

In the south is the murky waters of the Ferdian Marshes – strange luminescent light flicker there at night, and noisome stenches escape from hidden vents. Birds make this their home, but their calls evoke eerie feelings of total alone-ness, and nearly all avoid this place. The fens are bordered to the south by low, but rugged hills, and in their lee, is a ruined circle of great red granite stones, surrounding a barrow whose entrance is blocked by a huge monolithic rock, placed there by Saint Locumbin to prevent any from entering.

What did the saint find there? It is a secret known only to the Abbot and his chosen successor. For here lies the body and treasures of the legendary Pendragon, Donall O'Trumliff, both villain and hero of the legendary ages long gone over millennia ago. Why was the tomb sealed – again the secret is known to few.

Finally, there are the fabulous seacaves of Felich, where the waves crashing through the sea tunnels, and the plays of the winds make an eerie music that entrances all who take the short journey there. St Locumbin himself wrote a hymn of praise for this nexus of Earth, Wind and Sea.