

SerpentStar

A newsletter for members of
The Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids

Samhuin 2010



Samhuin Visitor.

Photo by wyverne

G'day, Southern Hemisphere OBODies!

Welcome to the 2010 Samhuin Issue of SerpentStar.

The wheel of the year is turning, and the light of the summer is dimming in lands far from the equator. Is it still significant to people up north? What does Samhuin really mean to us as unique, 21st century people?

If SerpentStar is a little late and a little thin this time, it's because during the past couple of weeks everyone was busy preparing for, enjoying and recovering from the weekend of magic and ceremony, friendship and connection with the land of the Druid Assembly at Cockatoo. This by all accounts was a magnificent success. I was deeply disappointed that I wasn't able to be there and meet up with you all, having to cancel my flight at the last minute for personal reasons. Fortunately, all went brilliantly well without me and you can read about it inside, and we'd love to have more about for next issue please!

Have a BLESSED Samhuin,

wyverne/|\

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SerpentStar comes out four times a year at each of the Fire Festivals, Imbolc, Beltane, Lughnasadh and Samhuinn. **Subscriptions ***** Free on-line as a pdf file from: www.serpentstar.wordpress.com .

For a paper subs. send \$10.00 (in Oz), \$12.50 (NZ & Pacific) \$15.00 (rest of world) in Australian dollars made out to v o wyverne to PMB2 Angaston SA 5353 Australia or use Paypal.

PLEASE DO NOT MAKE OUT CHEQUES TO SERPENTSTAR. Nellie can't bank them without a lot of explaining.

Contributions are eagerly sought at above addresses. Please make sure your contributions do not violate copyright laws. **Opinions** expressed in **SerpentStar** are contributors' own and not necessarily the opinions of the editor or of the **Order of Bards Ovates and Druids**. Printed at the Swan Reach Area School library with a lot of very kindly help from school librarian Leanne.

Deadline for next issue: Tuesday, 27th July 2010

DON'T MISS IT!

FREE OFFER

IT'S YOUR BIG OPPORTUNITY!
 See your work in print!
 You can become a contributor to Serpent Star, **work in print** and gain valuable experience—all for **!!!!!!FREEEEEEEE!!!!!!** *Poems and Stories, Artwork and Photography, News and Links of Interest to SerpentStar readers.*

Children's work especially welcome.
 If it's not your own work, make sure it doesn't violate copyright laws.

Tirant & the Hermit

I Father may it please Your Reverence to tell me his thoughts?’

N The hermit replied: Dear child, I am pondering a knight’s duty to uphold the noble code of chivalry.

S ‘Father,’ Tirant said, ‘I beg Your Reverence to tell me if he is a knight.

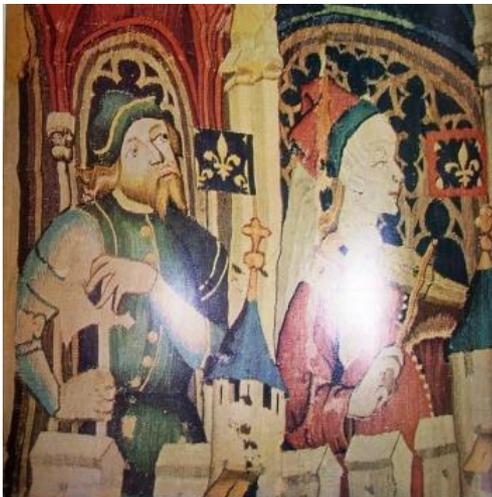
P ‘My child,’ replied the hermit, ‘it is fifty years since I was knighted before a great battle with the Moors.’

i ‘Lord and knightly father,’ Tirant said, ‘I hope you will tell me, since you have served the knightly order for so long, how one can best uphold that order, which our Lord has placed in such high degree and dignity.’

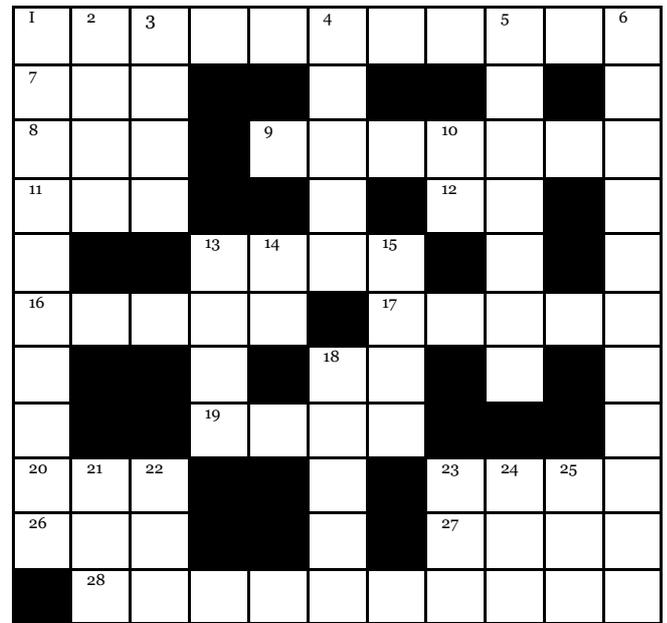
a ‘But really!’ cried the hermit. ‘Do you not know the code of chivalry? How can you seek knighthood if you are ignorant of its duties?’

t No knight can uphold a code of which he is unaware, for a bad knight is he who knights another but cannot explain his obligations.’

(from Martorell, Joannot & Marti Joan de Galba, *Tirant Lo Blanc: spellbinding adventure of chivalry, courtship and war*. Trans. David H. Rosenthal. Picador Press 1984)



Crossword Puzzle



ACROSS

1. Mythical aquatic beast
7. Wrath
8. Pasture
9. Seeker
11. Water storage
12. Preposition of place
13. Fashion
16. Bird of prophecy
17. Move expressively
18. Mesmeric force
19. Hindu god
20. Egyptian god.
23. Seers
26. View.
27. Defame systematically
28. Chaucer’s *The . . . Tales*.

DOWN

1. Unspoiled natural land
2. Expanse.
3. Group of co-workers.
4. Magician.
5. Obtaining.
6. Where Aurora Borealis is.
10. South America, Africa, or Australia.
13. Stables.
14. Preposition of place.
15. Collection of Norse poems.
18. Celtic natural philosopher.
21. A European organization.
22. Leaves for brewing.
23. Recede
24. Second person in grammar
25. Make a mistake.

Contributions sought for Anthology & CD .

It’s seven years since our last anthology, *Southern Echoes*, appeared. It’s still a refreshing read - we Southern Hemisphere Bards have vital, vivid voices. There are more of us now, and our talents are developing, so let’s give them an airing in a new Southern Hemisphere anthology. This is also a call to singers, song-writers and musicians, story-tellers and actors for our first ever CD. Send a selection of your best mp3s, cassettes, CDs or whatever of music, poetry and performance to me, wyverne, at wyeuro@bigpond.com, or send it on snail-back to SerpentStar C/- Wyeuro, PMB2, Angaston, SA. 5353, Australia.



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A
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A little of the spirit of last weekend.

Poetry and poetic prose say it all!

Majestic mountain ash,
 myst held in eucalypt fingers,
 walking,
 smelling,
 feeling
 and sensing,
 the blessing of water trickling through
 heart-shaped clay

The spirit of Cu
 Welcoming warm faces,
 the sound of chanting,

the sound of song poetry and kindred
 spirit, bardic tales and celtic dreams

Spirit of this time and spirit of this
 place
 shine upon us in this circle of common
 understanding
 of shared paths, of warm hearts and of
 quiet reverie
 shine on this hearth-fire within each of
 us,
 shared country, shared time, shared
 journey.

Steve Pitman.

Strength of Purpose

The time has come for us to part
and go our separate ways.
Left to contemplate alone
the last few heart felt days

we know that we are not the same,
something deep inside has changed,
our soul has been uplifted
in so many different ways.

Companionship and fellowship
from new friends to old,
the sharing of our family
so precious to behold.

The strength of standing heart to heart
is community at best
it brings out all the good and bad
and puts us to the test.

Resilience, perseverance,
examining our goals
to make our path a real one
a journey true and whole.

Humility, appreciation,
letting judgement fall
to give way to the greater good
that benefits us all.

Inspiration, decision
then action to bring forth
our purpose and our reason
answering the call.

Dedication and self discipline
to take each important step
that becomes a meaningful moment
that builds from one to next.

Compassion, love and kindness
to ourselves as life unfolds -
the journey isn't easy
but we must dare to be bold.

To reach out, to reach in,
to let go and laugh out loud,
to celebrate life's mysteries,
to feel good and then allow

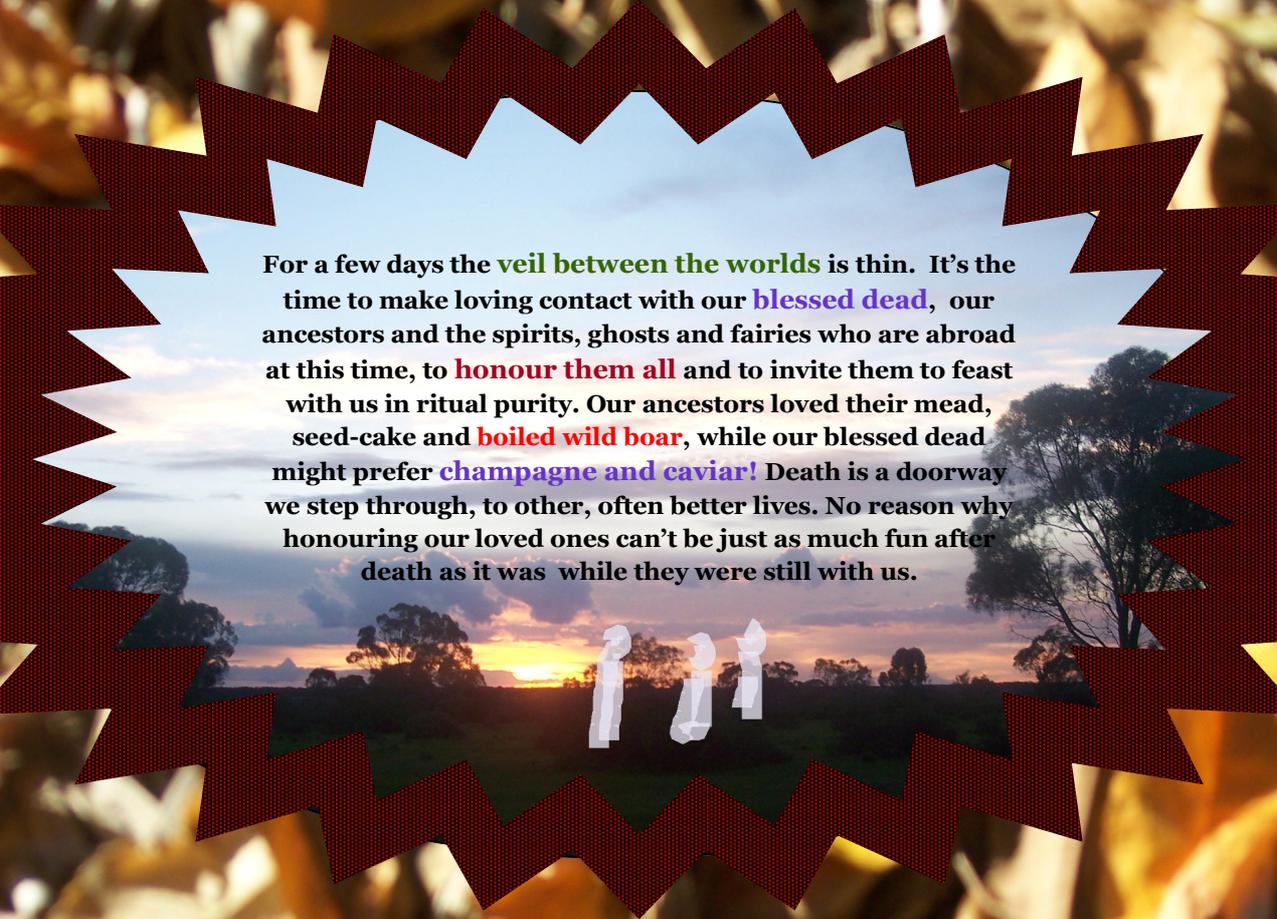
ourselves to move forward
as we travel the wheel of time
understanding deep our sense of place,
our clarity of mind.

and so we leave each other with words of
hope
a family of friends
to remember one another
until we meet again.

Rafayard 26/04/2010



Samhuin Blessings! The long summer has brought its abundance of fruits— Samhuin is about saving that abundance to see us through the winter. The rousing energies of summer are ebbing at last, and time is coming for rest and appreciation over the long winter months. The days are slowly shortening and the chilly evenings and long nights are just right for reading and studying and watching tv, hobbies, dreaming, and planning the way ahead...



For a few days the **veil between the worlds** is thin. It's the time to make loving contact with our **blessed dead**, our ancestors and the spirits, ghosts and fairies who are abroad at this time, to **honour them all** and to invite them to feast with us in ritual purity. Our ancestors loved their mead, seed-cake and **boiled wild boar**, while our blessed dead might prefer **champagne and caviar!** Death is a doorway we step through, to other, often better lives. No reason why honouring our loved ones can't be just as much fun after death as it was while they were still with us.

Samhuin

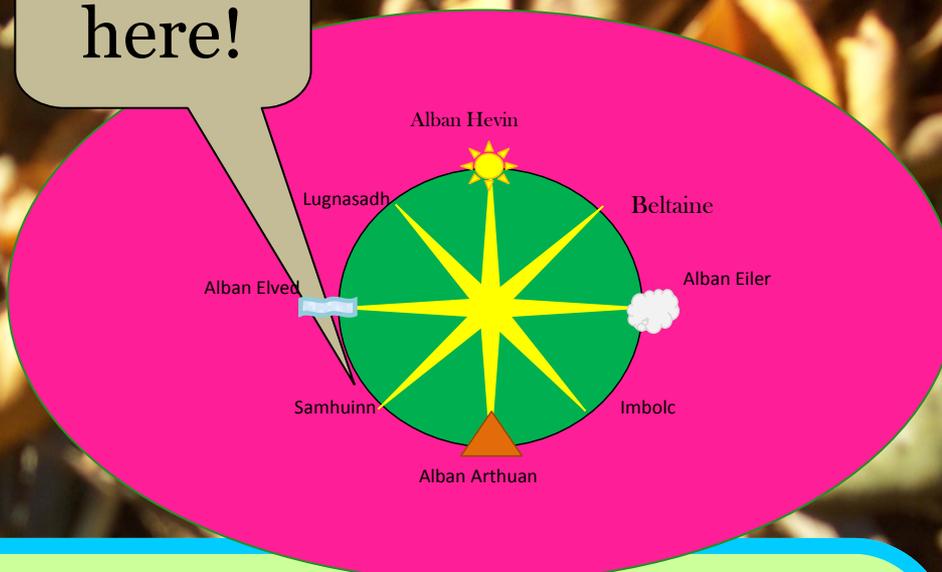


It's the last rose of summer.

We are here!



Wealth in store



Masquerade is fun at Samhuin. You can make traditional costumes or get your inspiration from modern sources. Dress up as witches and wizards, ghouls and ghosts and scare everyone on the block!

Candle magic for the lost souls, and for displaced spirits will help to guide them on their way to their safe haven.

Use a white candle, surround it with fruits, berries, nuts and herbs, and a few flowers, and with an invocation to the powers of the west and the element of water dedicate it for the succour of the souls of those who have died but not yet found rest.



to

honouring the dead

saving

sharing

Round the Web

Links well worth visiting, to stay right up to date with what Druids are doing world-wide.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/earthnews/7560815/Prehistoric-skeleton-can-stay-in-museum-despite-Druid-anger.html>

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/wildlife/7610389/Bat-species-found-in-Britain-for-the-first-time.html>

http://www.sfexaminer.com/opinion/columns/melissa_griffin/Griffin-Supe-faces-math-problem-90905389.html

Rec and Park makes amends with druids

<http://northern-times.whereilive.com.au/news/story/pagan-couple-wedded-to-a-current-affair/>

http://news.bbc.co.uk/local/somerset/hi/people_and_places/nature/newsid_8623000/8623460.stm

Cranes' eggs due for collection for Great Crane Project

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/england/wiltshire/8606323.stm Druids reburial appeal rebuffed

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/england/wiltshire/7854134.stm Druids in row over boy's skeleton

These links were sent in by Debra Annear

Letters to the Editor

A few words for SerpentStar

As hosts of the 2010 Assembly here in Cockatoo we were all somewhat anxious about how we would manage and would everyone get along. How foolish. Pete, myself,

Maggie, Puppy and Laird are thrilled that such a wonderful group of people have spent time in our home and felt they could make it their home for four days.

In so many ways we are all so different in age, lifestyle, careers, life passions but all bound together with our love of this magnificent earth we live in, our spirituality and our differences.

For me it has been a privilege to meet all of you and to feel I have found a new family.

It was wonderful to have those who are just starting their life's journey already so bound to the Druid lifestyle and emanating such strength in where they are going.

Perhaps on a more personal level on and off I have mulled over the idea of a spiritual name and while I can't remember who first gave it on the weekend, and it is not a name for the outside world: "Lady Cu" it is, Lady of the Hounds - so often we miss what is right under our noses. This is just one of many gifts I received over the time of the Assembly here at Cu.

We would just like to say thank you to all and for you to know there is always a place for any of you under our bit of sky.
Vicki, Pete, Maggie, Puppy and Laird

Dear Vyvyan,

Just sending you a quick photo for SerpentStar of our closing ceremony from the Melbourne assembly as taken by my partner. Very sad to hear that we missed an opportunity to meet our wonderful editor of Serpentstar! It would have been great to have you at the assembly, but sometimes the tides and flows of life draw us to other responsibilities. Maybe we will get to meet at another gathering.

I have read about 3 chapters of your book on fairies. You evoke the landscape of both your outer and inner worlds in almost poetic language. It is an amazing journey for you to share with us and I look forward to reading the rest.

The assembly was a wonderful event. The Melbourne grove were so welcoming, and they showed us many of their sacred and special places. I am an OBOD member who has never met fellow members before, so it was a great opportunity for me to talk to others about my journey through Druidry without having to explain myself too much, or without having odd looks from my audience. There was much poetry, ceremony, singing, music and dancing. I look forward to the next Serpentstar!

Kind regards,
Steven Pitman

CROSSWORD PUZZLE ANSWERS

1	W	2	A	3	T	E	R	4	D	R	A	5	G	O	6	N		
7	I	R	E					R				E				O		
8	L	E	A					9	Q	U	E	10	S	T	E	R		
11	D	A	M					I				12	A	T		T		
	E					13	M	14	O	D	15	E		I		H		
16	R	A	V	E	N					17	D	A	N	C	E			
	N				w				18	O	D			G		R		
	E					19	S	I	V	A						N		
20	S	21	E	22	T				A			23	E	24	Y	25	E	S
26	S	E	E						T			27	B	O	R	K		
		28	C	A	N	T	E	R	B	U	R	Y						

the silkie

The powerful, massive rhythms of the ocean's mighty roar provide a perennial lullaby for the rocky coasts of Scotland, and many and strange are the beings, human and other, who have emerged from the wide, wild ocean to confront the people brave enough to make their homes there.

They are sea-wise people, reputed to be fey, and accustomed to wresting their living from that huge devouring sea. Their food comes from the sea, their prosperity too, and where the mountainous terrain of the hinterlands makes access by land impossible, their contact with the rest of the world is also via the vast, mysterious, many voiced, multifariously haunted sea, especially in the past, before flying was an option.



But these people too were Celts, and they kept their assignations with their appointed lovers as other Celts did. This ballad occurs in many forms. Just Googling it for an hour or so is an education in Celtic myth and magic in itself. At the bottom of it is a historical tradition of marriage, in which the assignation was a 'one night stand' although in ritual purity, and the resultant child a sacred child, because of being so conceived.

An 'earthly nurse' is probably a 'Norse', with 'earthly' referring to the element of earth. Her 'grumly' (grim) guest has come from the wild sea and, in the wild way that meanings shape-shift in such wild places, nature, mythology, some sixth sense, or second sight—some or all of these, who can say? - have changed him into a Selkie, a being sometimes seal and sometimes human. This shift happened a long time ago. It is already complete in this beautiful ancient song, preserved like a fossil in

amber in the haunting tale of the shape-shifting lover from Sules Skerrie.

*An earthly nurse sits and sings
And nigh she sleeps a lily wean
"And it's little ken I my bairn's faither
Far less the land where he dwells in."*

*Oh he came one night to her bed feet
And a grumly guest I'm sure was he,*

Saying, "Here am I, thy bairn's faither

Although I be not comely!

I am a man upon the land

I am a Silkie on the sea

And when I'm far and far frae land

My hame it is in Sules Skerrie."

And he has ta'en a purse of gold

And he has placed it on her knee

Saying, "Gie tae me my little young son

And tak' thee up thy nurse's fee.

"And it shall come tae pass on a summer's day

When the sun shines bricht on ilka stane

I'll come and fetch my little young son

And teach him how tae swim the faem."

And ye shall marry a gunner guid

And a richt fine gunner I'm sure he'll be

And the very first shot that e'er he shoots

Will kill baith my young son and me.

You can hear the melody for free at
<http://tinyurl.com/2c9pwfy>

Links

contribute
please!!!



<http://www.paganawareness.net.au/>

Another comprehensive site with all you need to keep up to date. It's a good place to advertise your up-coming events or to find out what pagans are doing in your town.

http://www.witchvox.com/lx/lx_druidic.html

A place to list your druid website and to access druid websites worldwide. Well worth the time perusing this very well constructed, very informative site.

<http://www.myspace.com/gaypaganpride>

A beautiful website for gay and lesbian pagans—not druid, but with much in common.

<http://www.druidry.org/>

The OBOD website—everything you need, including a wonderful message board, with quarterly eisteddfods and all.

<http://druidspace.ning.com>

OBOD's official members-only social website set up by our own Chosen Chief, Philip Carr-Gomm. Druidspace is not replacing, but

extending the established OBOD site at www.druidry.org, which is open to all. There's a lively OBODies-only discussion board for meeting and greeting and exchanging news and views, and in addition each member gets a blog, photo album, and mp3 player, and more! Get on, discover each other and really start to

evolve as a druid!!!!

<http://thearchdruidreport.blogspot.com/> 888 subscribers agree that this topical blog is one of the best. John Michael Greer is The Grand Archdruid of the Ancient Order of Druids in America (AODA)

<http://www.sam.paganfederation.org/> (**Pagan Federation International - South America**) A large, quasi-official, well constructed site, from a major international organisation.

<http://www.natalpagans.com/index.html>

Get Married the Way YOU Want to.

At last both Gay and Straight people can get married without prejudice because of their sex or their religion. We offer everything from simple paperwork only right up to full traditional Pagan Handfastings with everything in between.

<http://druid.meetup.com/>

Meet other locals interested in the ancient pagan religion that is currently enjoying a revival of interest. Get together and seek the Druid path together!



Pagan Federation
of South Africa

<http://www.pfsa.org.za/>

The objectives of the PFSA shall be to facilitate the interests of Paganism in South Africa

The Pagan Federation of South Africa was formed by concerned and caring people, who dreamed of serving Pagans.

Let's do it

Coming up!

Event

Gathering of Druids of Oz

Where: Mylor in the Adelaide Hills

When: Saturday 15th May, 12 midday

Email: Lynne Sinclair-Wood at brigid@chariot.net.au



Description: This year in May, once again our local Adelaide Pagan community honours our moving into winter in southern hemisphere with 'The English Ale' at Mylor in the Adelaide Hills.

Share your news here!!!!

Moon Festival

Where: Jamieson Park, Narabeen, NSW

When: 8th May, 6pm

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/event.php?eid=111263652238082>

Email: julie_mills23@hotmail.com This e-mail address is being protected from spam bots, you need JavaScript enabled to view it

Order of Wisdom Learning &

When: Full Moons, New Moons and Sabbats

Where: Temple in Belgrave Heights, Victoria

Phone: Lizzy Rose & Peter 03 9323 1230 or 0424 666 277

Email: owll@live.com.au

Full Moon Learning Circles

Where: Our property near Gympie

When: Close to each full moon.

Phone: Kerriann 0438155867

PAN Inc Public Full Moon Circle Melbourne

Where: Eltham Soccer Ground, Wattletree Rd Eltham North. (park at the club house, and we will be just a few paces from there)

When: Every Full moon 7pm for prompt 7:30 pm start. Arrive early. Please contact Seline for exact dates.

Cost: Gold coin donation

Phone: Seline on 0438 078 613

E-mail: seline13@hotmail.com

Pagan Families at Play

When: Sundays starting at 9.30am. This event will continue monthly, please contact Michlele for dates.

Where: Coogee Beach, Perth, WA.

Contact: Michele minchelly@bigpond.com.au

Past and gone!

Druid Assembly at Cockatoo

April 2010. This was a through success!

SerpentStar readers would love to hear more about it!



Kids Page

Junior Bards:



Paper **doylies** are easy to make and they're **useful** too. You'll need a **square** of paper – **recycle** some gift-wrapping **paper**, or a small paper serviette and a pair of **sharp** paper **scissors**. To make it perfectly square, fold it **diagonally** from one of the corners and **cut off** the rest.

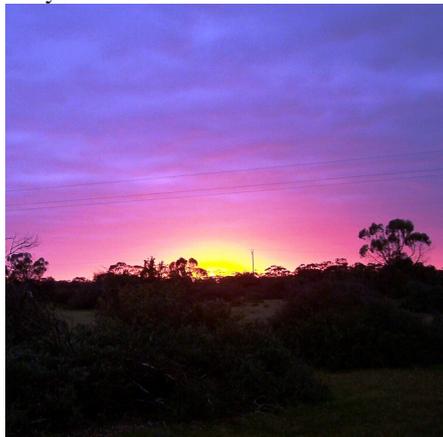
Then **fold it again** through the centre, **pressing** the folds down sharply, and then again, and if the paper is **thin** enough, **once more**. Then you'll have a long, thin **triangle**, eight or sixteen layers thick. **Trim** the bottom edge in a curvy or **zig zag** pattern.

Cut pieces out of **the sides** of this **triangle** and cut the tip off at a **sharp angle**. This will become a **star** when you open it out, while the other cuts will make **lacy patterns** all around it!

Young Ovates:

*Red sky in the morning,
shepherd's warning,
red sky at night,
shepherd's delight.'*

Ovates learn by **observing the sky**. A ring around the moon means there's **cooler weather coming** in three or four days, and there might be rain. You'll see **cirrus clouds** in the sky too, about the same time. They're called **horse-tails** because they're so fine and wispy. Next time you see cirrus clouds in the sky, **watch the weather** over the next few days. You'll be able to **predict** that the **drift of air** will change direction, there'll be more cloud and perhaps even **rain**. If there's rain coming, **the ants** will know. They will make **extra chambers** to shelter in and pile up sand around their holes. **Flying ants** will swarm before rain, too. **Pelicans** bring rain when they **fly in formation**. When you see them **circling**, you can predict that there'll be a high **likelihood of rain** in about ten days.



Budding Druids:

What makes **wishes come true**? Many magicians say it is **the will** of the person who does the wishing, or of some helper who carries out the wish, like the **Genie of the Lamp** in the story of Aladdin, or Cinderella's **Fairy Godmother**. This means a human being can **train their will** to make their wishes come true. Not many people can do this, but people **still keep believing** it is possible. This is because it is **the destiny** of the human species to learn to use our wills for **magical purposes**.



When you decide to become a magician, you place yourself magically **in the forefront** of the great progress our species is making towards **magical awareness and ability**. When **you choose** a wand for your magical tool, you choose a sound, strong, handsome stick full of the vitality and energy of its **own spirit nature**. In the same way, when **nature chooses** a magician to channel her magic through, she looks for a sound, **healthy**, strong and virtuous person who is honest, sensible, **responsible**, self-respecting and respectful of all beings, who **thinks deeply** about the important things in life. When such a person wishes good wishes with **a whole heart**, for the good of all, that's when **wishes come true!**