

SerpentStar



Alban Hervin

Newsletter for the Australian and New Zealand members of OBOD. Volume 4 No 1 Dec 2000

NEXT ASSEMBLY

During the 4th Assembly 2 suggestions were put forth for the next one.

Place: The Centre - i.e. - Uluru.

Time: Winter Solstice - at the time of the Eclipse.

During the Summer Solstice in the Northern Hemisphere, in June 2000 there is a total solar eclipse. This eclipse is at the exact longitude of Stonehenge, but is taking place here in the Southern Hemisphere. This event is viewed by some as the passing of the light of Arthur from the Northern Hemisphere to the Southern Hemisphere.

Since I was on my way to Uluru, following the Assembly and Healing Intensive at Ganieda, I offered to check out whether it could be done within a budget of \$150.00 for 4 days.

I suspected that it would be difficult because everything is expensive at the complex, where all must stay, and because the nights are below zero in winter tenting is not really an option.

Anyway here is an outline of the most viable situation.

If 8 people are committed to going, we could book 2 cabins, (Back to Back). You would not need to bring anything with you as pillows linen and blankets are supplied.

The cabins can be heated and there are cooking facilities and utensils, a microwave oven and a refrigerator in each cabin.

Outside there are free gas barbecues, a large communal kitchen and designated places for campfires.

Also toilet, shower and laundry blocks close by.

Food can be purchased at the local supermarket at a reasonable price.

Here is a cost breakdown for 8 people:

\$132.00 per person for 4 nights in a cabin

\$19.00 per person for the hire of a mini bus for the 4 days

\$16.25 per person for a 3 day pass into the National Park (Everyone must have a pass to go to the Rock and Katajuta)

Approx. \$60.00 for food, etc. We could purchase what we need from the supermarket, as a group.

This adds up to approx. \$220.00 per person for the 4 days plus your airfare.

Finally there are discrete places at the Rock where we could gather for a small private ceremony, and this a perfect spot to view the night sky.

I need to know ASAP if you want to do this. I must book 6 months in advance with a deposit.

So write to me if you want to come and in the next SerpentStar I will provide a definite "Yes" or "No" for this project based on your response.

Heather Whitelk, 17 Anderson St. Ferntree Gully 3156 or whitelk@bigpond.com

PS thanks Kennan, Anjuli, family and friends for hosting another wonderful Assembly. That was the best Sweat Lodge I have ever done and it meant a lot to me.

Heather



Stop Press

Because the Newsletter is late Heather will need to know ASAP if you would like to book for the Uluru trip.

Please contact Heather quickly so the cabins can be secured

Carole/\

Correspondences for the Blue Mountains New South Wales Australia.

Sunset Garden Grove

Sunset Garden Grove is a private grove in the Blue Mountains of N.S.W. just west of Sydney. It is approximately 15m back from a cliff edge, & faces west The grove is approximately 1050m above sea level.

This is a small insight into the grove as the year turns. I hope it will convey to those living elsewhere an idea of this place as I walk around it, & of the local associations I have given the festivals. This is how it is when the festivals are celebrated in this small part of the world.

April, May and June will be covered in the next issue.

Bright Blessings ,Kathy

January.

Spectacular sunsets, black cockatoos fires.

Weather
Days 25-32oC
Nights 16-20oC

Wildlife
Bees, ants, crickets, snails, flies grasshoppers, spiders, wasps possums birds and more birds.

Vege Garden.
Peas, beans, corn, tomato, silverbeet, squash, pumpkin,. Celery, cabbage, apples cherries, plums.

Flowering
Lobelia, personnia, phlox, cosmos, marigold, gerbera, zinnia, gardenia, geebung, damperia, gladiolus, grevillea, verbena carnation, buddleia, potato vine, fuchsia, christmas bush, lavender honeysuckle, iris eucalyptus, lomatia, tee tree, heath, crinkle bush.

Lughnasadh

Adult-Earth Festival
1&2nd or waning moon 'on Tuesday their reaping "- Breas to Lugh: Battle of Moytura

February Direction NW
Weather
Hot days 22-32oC
Warm nights 16-25oC
Brief but violent storms



Herb Echinacea purpura Flower correa reflexa Tree Grasstree (xanthorrhoea media

Animal Grasshopper

Colour Bronze Stone Amber
Incense Grasstree resin

Food Corn chips

Drink Whisky

Animals Cockatoos, parrots, rosellas, wasps, grasshoppers, possums snails snakes, spiders

Vege garden

Capsicum lettuce carrots pumpkin Silverbeet zucchini cabbage beans Peas corn apples plums

Flowering

Fuchsia, correa, damperia, heath tansy, montbretia, Christmas bush, calendula, hydrangia, agapanthus, goodenia, gladiolus sunflower hawthorn & cotoneaster berries

Alban Elued

Solar Festival-Maturity-Balance - born of age & wisdom-21st-Sunset.

March West

Weather
Days 15-22oC
Nights 8-15oC
Occasional dew & Drizzle

Herb-Yarrow Flower -Crowea
Tree - Lillypilli

Direction West Element Water
Food Apples Drink Cider
Stone Kyanite Incense
Rose Colour Orange

Animal Platypus.

Flowering Fuchsia, virburnum, daisy, Rose, abelia, peace lilly, crowea, catkins, berries, phlox, damperia, heath.

Vegetables
Cauliflower, beetroot, squash, beans, spinach, broccoli, carrots, tomato, lettuce

Fruit
Apples, nectarines, plums honey.

Life is becoming more relaxed, more settled & flowing; less agitation in the air.

The garden has another burst of energy, due to the cooler weather & gentle soaking rain.

Bards Corner

The Druid's Farewell

I have come from the East to the West
and my heart is full of sorrow.
No more shall I greet the morning sun
on the downs morrow.
My beard is long, my hair is gray,
my staff is twisted and old.
The time of reunion is close to hand
on this weary Elban day.

Many years I have walked the paths
that twisted strange and fey.
Many years I have healed the sick
or blessed them on their way.
I've charted over the course of stars,
that wander the heavens over,
And now at last my time has come
to merge with yew and clover.

Time was once my greatest joy
yet now it bids me "haste".
I fondly farewell Birch and Oak
and moments do I waste.
The forests deep, the flying hawk,
such memories I've kept,
Yet all will be forgotten soon
as I drift from now to next.

Sandra Gosley

SUMMER

Hot sun sears my skin.
Elementals dancing in the heat haze.
Willy willys stir up the dust as air-conditioners hum
away.
Cooling the occupants of heat encased buildings.
Dogs pant in the shade of trees,
Not much cooler than the sun drenched earth.
The leaves hang limply,
The heat has silenced the birds,
The only sound, flies swarming on the flat lizard on
the tar-melted road.
The swimming pool, centre of the universe
Children splash in the water,
Parents chat under umbrellas,
And I walk in the sun,
Melting away as the sweat drips from me.

With magic,

Sionnach

BRIGHID

Soft and gentle
White feathers stroke my soul
With silvery grace of the moon
Watching me unfold.

Subtle presence, she brings
Light into my day,
Her smile beaming deep within
Mere words cannot portray.

My hands aflame with a ball
Tenderly burning bright.
At the centre of my fire
Stands Brighid in all her might.

Keeper of the hearth fires,
Healer of pain,
Goddess of the bards,
Spring bids you welcome again

Kirsty Roberts :-)

Hello everyone!

"My name is Ngaire Egan (Sionnach)
and I am taking on the job of Sacred
Grove Planting Program co-ordinator
for Australia and New Zealand.

I have been in OBOD for about five
years and am in the Ovate Grade.

If you have any information or
queries about new or old Groves in
Aus or NZ, please contact me

By email (negan@tpgi.com.au),

Snail mail (PO BOX 316, Uralla,
NSW, 2358, Australia)

Or phone (0412 529 435).
I look forward to hearing from you!



With magic,
Sionnach

Mabon

Out of the darkness
You grow.
Like a seed in the soil
Nothing can keep
Your light from spreading.

You reach out and stretch.
You come alive from slumber.
She knows when it is time
For your parting.

Leaving the womb of the Mother
You follow the path
That is always your way....

To grow stronger and better
Until you have reached
"adulthood."
Yet mirth is still heard
In your laughter.

You reign as King,
Giver of life.
Yet you will always be
"Cerridwen's Child".

"It is the solstice of Summer",
Say those who are
Seekers of truth.

Today you are crowned,
Now a Man, is
the youth.

Your brilliance is radiant,
Your passion is real.
'T is as if this one day
We can stop the Wheel.

Yet we know that tomorrow
Will bring the change
That is subtle, to show us
How you will fade.

Ever so slowly
Your light will grow dim,
Until back in Her Ocean
You meet again-
Those hands that carry
You home to Her heart,
Within Her dark womb
You must await you rebirth

But today we celebrate
With gaiety and joy
And shout
"Hail SunKing!
You bring us life!"

Bran-wen

You Do Not Have to be Good

You do not have to be good.
You do not have to walk on your knees
for a hundred miles through the desert, repenting.
You only have to let the soft animal of your body
love what it loves.
Tell me about despair, yours, and I will tell you mine.
Meanwhile the world goes on.
Meanwhile the sun and the clear pebbles of the rain
are moving across the landscapes,
over the prairies and the deep trees,
the mountains and the rivers.
Meanwhile the wild geese, high in the clean blue air,
are heading home again.
Whoever you are, no matter how lonely,
the world offers itself to your imagination,
calls to you like the wild geese, harsh and exciting -
over and over announcing your place
in the family of things.

Reconciliation

In December, Carole and I attended a ceremony on a beach here, on the south coast of NSW, that was celebrated by the local aboriginal owners of the area. The ceremony was to heal the area after some public works had desecrated parts of the escarpment and beach, that were important to the local aboriginal community.

The celebrants of this ceremony were people from the local aboriginal community, people from environmental groups and from Reconciliation groups.

It was a beautiful day, and about 100 or so people gathered to take part in the healing ceremony. After a ceremony of cleansing with sacred fire, we walked up to a small rock pool, with the ashes of the sacred fire and each person threw some of the ashes into the healing pool at the foot of the cliff, to cleanse the area of the pain and bitterness, generated by the protracted fight to save the area.

Then a Rainbow Serpent was woven down the beach as a celebration of the healing and the summer solstice.

In this area the Rainbow Serpent comes from the rivers and waterways from the top of the escarpment and the Southern Highlands and down to the sea.

A lot of the participants were children, who, very seriously, cast the ashes on the water in a respectful and thoughtful way. It was wonderful to see people coming together, especially children in this way. After some chanting and story telling, involving mythical dreamtime figures, important to the Tharawal people, of this area.

We then retired to eat and sing by fires on the beach and share sacred space.
It was a very special time indeed.

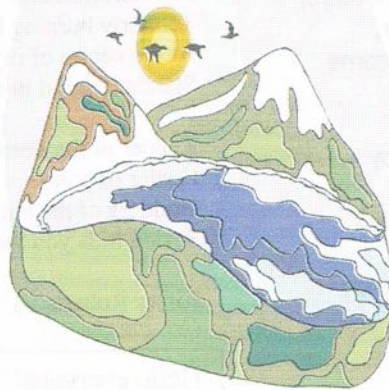
Wayne

In the last edition of *SerpentStar*, Rosemary Wade sent me a poem called *Reconciliation* which, because of the variances of email, was not reproduced in the correct way.

Apologies Rosemary

Could email senders please close lines with the <> symbols, so correct meter etc can be maintained.

Carole/\



Circle of Belonging

eyes flit
from
rock
to
branch
bird call
to
earth scent

the
sun
sharpens
its blade
upon
my
shadow

dew
bubbles
burst
grasses
carress
the
breeze

a soul
searching
for
solitude
finds
a crowd
in
the embrace
of wilderness

illusions
buffeted
blown
away
by
the
pause
of
acceptance

Murray.

In Quest of the Green Fire.

Since fire is generated from the mouth of the Dragon, it seemed reasonable to me to begin my quest for the meaning and nature of the Green Fire of the ancient Druids by baling up a dragon and requesting enlightenment upon the subject.

This of course meant that I had to find (a) a dragon and (b) its mouth before I could start. The following is an account of that quest.

So what exactly is a dragon? To my understanding, it is a soul. It is perceived as long and thin and structured within like a serpent because, at any given time, it is manifested as a being or an interconnected network of beings, or a conglomerate of inter-related beings, which has a past, and which is flying into the future.

If that describes a human being, that's hardly my fault, and anyway, it's subtly different from the normal conceptions of a person, and people are only dragons when perceived in this way, while dragons are dragons which ever way you look at them. (I did ask Ceridwen for help with this. Was she sleeping in or something?)

The difference is that a dragon occupies time as well as space, instead of just passing through it, as we humans perceive ourselves as doing. Perhaps for this reason it is not possible to perceive a dragon without becoming one, if only as a result of the conceptual shift involved.

Its body is its past, its passage through time, when every moment and event and element of experience are conceived of as co-eval, from its origin in the (perhaps remote) past to its emergence into 9or as) the present.

It is 'flying' because, as a transcendental being, it has no ground except in its own imagination. No one element in its context attracts it more than any other, as gravity attracts us, because its entire context consists of a multitude of other dragons all flowing with it (not necessarily in the same temporal direction) through the matrix they just form in which our time/space continuum and the infinite number of other possible contingent continua that it implies have their being.

Each dragon devours by experiencing, internalizing and incorporating into itself everything it encounters, masticating via its senses and intelligence, and digesting it in its many levels of consciousness, and thereby growing in wisdom,

complexity and experience of life. It gains power, which is not necessarily violent, and will, which is not necessarily mischievous.

Its tail tapers gradually to a point, symbolic of both the effect of distance on apparent size and the 'thinning' of memory as time passes, but it's also a real result of the dragon's having been small in the past as all babies are.

Dragons don't seem to be merely symbols, or even just archetypes. They seem to be physical and metaphysical beings, having a kind of multi-dimensional biology which is not the less real for being hard to imagine.

When a complex system of forces and ideas assume an independent status and become sufficiently self-sustaining, you have a dragon's egg.

Perhaps a certain rock formation captures cosmic or star radiance in such a way as to resonate with some archetype or idea held in the planetary mind. This resonance is the fertilization of the ovum, which is then awakened by the response to it of the planetary and cosmic mind, and by its own constantly complexifying resonance with its own and contingent 'dreamings', to life, passion, and awareness.

A modern example of a dragon's egg is seen when a Druidic circle is established and used in a focused way, its stones and subtle structure affirmed again and again in ritual and ceremony.

After a while the energies start to flow and the circle begins to take on 'a life of its own', as most of us will have experienced, even in the early stages of the bardic grove work, and it becomes a veritable evolving beast.

Dragons of legend have a barbed or arrow-headed tail, with perhaps a venomous sting in the end, and the body coils this way and that, not fixed in time, but moving. Time is not the straight line we've been seeing it as, nor is it the simple curved surfaces that physicists theorize about. It is as structured and multi-dimensional as your own back yard, and the past is as full of movement, alive and changing, evolving, full of life and death as any forest.

Dramatic events resound in all temporal directions that would boggle the minds of our best computers (but then so does Earth's meteorology!) and which nevertheless as Bards and Ovates and Druids we must be brave enough to explore. And the remote past of a dragon's event-sequence may sometimes strike and pierce the living flesh of



anything in its present or future that may confront or challenge it.

The curses of the pharaohs are examples, and so is the curse at the end of the Biblical book of Revelation of St John the Divine, which seeks to preserve the integrity of the text. Both types had a treasure within their coils, in true dragon fashion.

These belong to dragons mediated into existence by human beings, but such dragons are generated in accordance with resonance's from dragon forms that have their beings beyond the range of human experience, beyond our ken, and perhaps beyond imagining.

But then, so do atoms.

Dragons bodies have scales, and considering the metaphysical nature of dragons, it isn't out of the way to observe here the creative, poetical and actual force and form that words have especially when they pull two meanings together as puns do.

The Irish Gaelic word for story or legend is sceal, pronounced shkale, almost exactly like scale. It's an engaging thought that the 'skin' or system of interfaces that delineate a dragon's form might consist of events or experiences which are structured in time (i.e. stories), laminated in meaning, as stories are, via symbolism, analogy, allegory and so on, and in other metaphysical ways, such as by means of resonance's set up in the layers of energy systems, the parallel universes and contingent ideational systems in which all things are embedded, and from which all things are carved.

This brings us to the business end of the dragon: its head, its sensory organs, its mouth, its now-experiencing end. We've seen it devouring the present and digesting it as it converts it to its past which is its ever-lengthening body and its soul's resources, and now we see it sometimes many headed, long necked, its claws gripping its vital, predeterminative precedents way back into the past, ready to slash and seize if it senses a threat, its tail twitching ominously, its mouth agape.

Fangs it has in plenty: facts, charms and death-threats and maybe even venom, and it may tear apart with its fierce avidity whatever you throw it, human souls not excluded, which it can win to its will by every weapon of the mind and passions it possesses, which are all those it has ever experienced - or invented.

Only people secure in their integrity should ever approach dragons without the protection of the MOR Righan or the gods.

From dragon's mouths, the legends tell us, proceeds fire, the scorching flames of their breath and that fire is the subject of this quest. Dragons are not immortal; they can be slain. Neither are they always evil, though the 'evil' dragons have always tended to attract human attention more than the other kinds, and have been remembered because they required champions

to destroy them, and humans have always made much of their champions.

Good dragons abound, wrapping their mystical coils around our best-loved traditions and institutions and around natural and supernatural traditions or our planet as well, to incubate, cherish and protect them; and as I've implied, no real magic can happen in a magician's circle without one. In these cases the nurturing is reciprocal, and the dragon's benignity is assured by our own.

But to understand the fire it breathes, we must understand how its mouth is manifested, and for simplicity's sake, let's look at a circle dragon, which I suppose is a kind of earth dragon. Simplistically, we can see its geometry as that of the circle, its length being measured in the fourth dimension (so-called), time.

When you stand in your circle and meditate, think thoughts, pray or send peace out into the world, you generate specific experiences, which are your dragon's nourishment. (You might refer to it as the 'spirit of the circle', but if you see it in the context of our expanded model of time, it is definitely a dragon, conscious and alive, sensitive and emotional.)

As it feeds it complexifies and grows. You might find that it begins to call you when it needs you, as freely as you might seek it, to take refuge in its protective coils, or to avail yourself of its energies and power as you need it, for ritual and healing, entering into a give and take relationship with you that at best becomes like a friendship. It might ask you to move a stone, or plant a tree, or add something or change it in some way, and as you work with it you may become aware of these levels of your relationship with it, recognizing its influence on your behavior in the circle. These relationships and interfaces are part of the 'face'. In a sense, you are a part of it; it has devoured you (and you it), and so you are a part of its now-experience, its mouth, its senses and its brain.

But your circle is made of material things such as stones, the grounds and they are around it, and each of these has its own specific nature. It also contains organisms such as plants, animals, insects, and a vast multitude of soil-borne and air-borne microbes, and each of these, too, has its own nature. There are also transient visitors such as birds, mammals and reptiles and as well as these there are the people who use the circle on a regular or occasional basis. Each of these contributes over the course of a day or a year or longer, to the experiential reservoir or soul of the dragon.

There will also be invisible but not less physical things (in that they too exert forces and deal in energies) such as astral and aetherial structures and the beings of the other planes and the Sacred Grove, who might be resident, or regular participants in your circle rituals, and each of these will contribute to the dragon's soul. And in addition to all these skeletal things there will be the metaphysical,

Something moves in deep dark ponds.....

symbolic, poetical and magical reality that is generated by their interactions, as flesh on the bones.

A stone is a stone. Twelve stones are twelve stones but if you arrange them right, they are a stone circle, and if you awaken a stone circle in ritual and ceremony they become the sacred space of the fane, the Druids magic circle. The whole is much more than the sum of its parts.

Of course this can be carried to the minutest levels where subatomic particles can be thought of as dragons comprising the relatively vast dragons that atoms are. That way we find in all beings, the inner dragons whose interweavings are the web of life itself. And at the other extreme the being whose tail (origin) is called by scientists 'the Big Bang' and whose body is billions of eons long and millions of light years in three dimensional cross-section (i.e. its present extent) and whose completion is unthinkable billions of eons into the future (all of course according to our one poor thread of the multi-dimensional fabric of time) is another dragon, embracing all lesser ones in its own being

And contrary to current scientific opinion there's no earthly reason to imagine that our little finite, or even infinite, cosmos isn't just one of uncountable billions of similar or dissimilar cosmoses that together form the atoms, which form the cells, tissues and organisms of a whole new order of magnitude of existence, the second of maybe billions.

So that's our dragon, and a very sketchy account of it, it is, and anyway, maybe I'm wrong about the whole thing. But I've come all this way, and you've been patient enough to stay with me, and we came to ask about the fire, and in particular the fire that the ancient Druids called Green Fire. Yet I can't help thinking that we've spent the last few hundred words in the belly of the beast without properly registering the features of its mouth about which we came to inquire. It owes us an explanation, which I hope to extract from it in the next issue of SerpentStar.

To be continued!



Whispers, tremble ferny fronds.
Something gathers through the air,
Pain like lightening - cutting glare....

Cauldron bubbles,
Dragon stirs.

Shuttle stops, the loom has failed
On the mast the past is nailed.
Seen before and seen again
Different time and time again, then.....

Future dances, shimmers there
Dancing spirit, not a care
Slips away and circles back
Laughter floating down the track.....

Cauldron bubbles,
Dragon stirs.

Ancient songs rush up to weave
And spin with futures thread,
To lead me back to where I am
Right now
Which is where I was and will be...

How

The mist can cloak the forest floor.
Spirit please show me a door,
Show me my strength, to take the step,
And courage to at last accept
My power, which you gave to me.....Like:

The surging of the sea

And gentle waves that stroke the sand,

A breeze that takes me by the hand,

Or hurtles me across the sky

A hurricane.....and me the eye.

The fire, bubbling through the earth

The cataclysmic wrench of birth,

The murmur of a lullaby

Warmth of touch from you and I

And all I was and am and will.....

I am your vessel now to fill.

Cauldron shatters .
Dragon flies.

Carole/||\

