

# SerpentStar

Newsletter for the Australian and New Zealand members of OBOD

**Alban Hefin, December 2003**

## **FROM the CHAPTER: SUMMER**

*Dancing  
in the morning sunlight,  
two leaves are caught  
on a passing breeze –  
or, are they  
golden butterflies  
shimmering  
from flower to flower?*

**"SONGS OF THE SEASONS - a collection of Zen  
POETRY AND PAINTINGS" BY Stephen Cassettari**

### **THE POWER OF AWEN**

Vyvyan

1

In the mystic blooming of my soul  
are brooded, hatched and fed my fledgling dreams.  
I watch their petal wings like skies unfold  
to take swift flight through rapturous cosmic streams...

2

In vision-cradling caverns of my mind  
wild dragons fleshed of thought and reason dwell.  
Explosive power in every revelation -  
they guard a wisdom too profound to tell.

3

And in the soaring magic of my spirit  
breaths are words, words names, names powers great.  
Fleet the image, sure the manifestation,  
quick and light as thought, yet fixed as fate.

4

In the scintillations of my body,  
crafting the fine molecular weave of flesh,  
mountains are my ribs, my blood is stars -  
light is the weft and radiant life the mesh

5

I am the soar of spirit, the magic of mind,  
I am the starry flesh, the shimmer of soul,  
I am the breath, the fire, the flow the form,  
I am the fleeting gleam, the eternal whole.

6

Somehow it means something, some vital thing,  
somehow to enhance, to heal, recharge, renew,  
by the touch of a hand, a gesture, a word of love?  
Power of AWEN in everything we do!

## **6<sup>th</sup> Australian Annual Assembly Group Photo**



**Back row, l-r:** Dwayne, Vyvyan, Murray (aka Moonfox), Ann, Susan, Lesley  
**Front row, l-r:** Ngaire (aka Stormwolf), Heather (aka Elkie), Keira, Aysha, Cherry, and Helen



### **BEALTEINNE**

**Renew  
Start again.  
Fires that purge  
But beware  
Of that urge  
Or stripped to the bone  
You will be.  
Open and new  
For all to see,  
Good times come  
Promise much  
Live the good life, now  
It means so much.  
Bask in the warmth  
Rejoice in the sun  
For soon a time  
Will be to run**





## StormWolf's Ramblings



Hello everyone!

I am writing this four days after returning from the Assembly weekend, and what an amazing weekend it was!

Vyvyan and Helen kindly let us into their little piece of paradise for a few days, where we caught up with old friends, made new ones, meditated, celebrated, feasted, sang, laughed, cried, hugged, and more! The weekend was full of love – love of the land, love of each other, and love of Druidry. Surely love is the greatest magic of them all!

Moonfox has written a wonderful report of the weekend, turn to page 3 for that, and there is another article in Vyvyan's 'Credible Druidry' series.

Also, 'Southern Echoes', the book of Druid poetry from the Southern Hemisphere is now available. Details after Moonfox's report.

Below is a piece I wrote the day I came home from the Assembly. It might give you an idea of the power of the weekend.

### After Camp

I can feel the experiences of the weekend  
Slipping away into the realm of memory  
I don't want them to go  
I want to hug them close  
Have them shield me from the mundane world  
I have found myself thrust back into.  
Emotions swirl, tears fall  
I feel empty, lost  
But then I remember the laughter  
The songs, the companionship, the love  
And I don't feel so empty anymore  
For even though my memories will fade  
I will hold them all in my heart.

Take care everyone, and enjoy the festive season with your families and friends. Let the mabon in you out for a day as you unwrap presents and share this magical time.

StormWolf



## Websites

[www.druidry.org](http://www.druidry.org) - Website of the Order of Bards, Ovates, and Druids

## The Dream of The Old One

\*\*\*\*\*

The old one painted the dreaming  
on the trunk of the wandoo in the spring  
when the bark was fresh and clean;  
orange butter yellow, cloud grey.

He painted with bold brown.

Snake and possum.

Galah and magpie.

Emu, kangaroo and lizard.

He painted the people:  
hunting, singing, dancing,  
making the peoples rituals.



His paintings never portrayed  
machines and poisons,

nor the death of the forests  
and the forests children.

He never showed the people suffering  
alienated from hill, tree, feather and stream.

He painted the land  
with a forgiving heart

and he painted all the people the same  
they were all brown to him;  
guardians and stewards  
partners with echidna, marri and cockatoo.

He painted his dreaming  
on the bark of the wandoo.

Now he sleeps  
waiting for the people to heed his call.

Moonfox



### Disclaimer

Opinions published in this newsletter are not necessarily the opinions of the editor or the Order.

### Submission/Subscription Details

Subscription is \$10 per year for four issues, or free via email. Email format is Adobe Acrobat (.pdf). Please let me know if you require a different format.

Submissions can be sent via email:

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or snail-mail:

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## The Australian Druid Assembly 2003 by Moonfox

This is one story, there are many others.

The 6th Australian Druid Assembly was held at Wyeuro Grove, near Swan Reach 130kms from Adelaide in South Australia. Wyeuro is aboriginal, translating loosely as "kangaroo spirit place". Our hosts Vyvyan and Helen have been its keepers and guardians for the past 24 years. Without the conveniences of electricity, mains water and sewerage that we take for granted they live in the druid retreat all year round that most of us struggle to manage for one week a year. They produce most of their own food; they keep chickens and goats, 5 cats and a dog and grow a range of fruit, vegetables and herbs.

Fourteen OBOD members made the journey from as far afield as Western Australia (2600kms) and Queensland (1500kms) though the award for extraordinary commitment in travelling goes to tutor coordinator Susan Jones and her husband Ian who made the trip of over 16,000 kms from the UK. As an indicator of the solitude of Wyeuro grove this gathering was the first visitors in well over three months!

A number of hardy souls erected tents whilst others opted for the comfort of cabins at nearby Punyerloo caravan park on the banks of the Murray river. Most of the Wyeuro land is on an ancient sea bed and the limestone rock is very close to the surface not allowing the placement of tent pegs; finding a spot to pitch a tent was a job for an Ovates dowsing skills. Vyvyan directed us to a place which was once an ocean blow hole and where the soil was deeper. Despite some worry, and much joking, no tents were blown away through the night.

For the first time ever all the Australian tutors were gathered in one place and they had their own mini-convention sitting on straw bales in the shade of the orchard. Whilst the tutors were meeting a Bardic grove was held, we shared the talking stick, spoke of everything from our druid journey to past lives, death and reincarnation. Then we joined hands in the centre of the Wyeuro grove and chanted the Awen and sang chants to the Goddess and to the land.

Lunch was a gourmet affair cooked in the home built cob oven, Helen has amazing culinary skills and her banana cake is the best in the world. After lunch there was a raffle of three wonderfully hand crafted bears by Queensland member Cherry, the bears were named Gandalf the Grey, Sedda the Qanuk & The Dream Weaver and came complete with poems of their mythology. The bears were donated by Cherry to raise money for the RSPCA the lucky winners were Jenny, Aysha and Vyvyan.

The Assembly also held the launching of Southern Echoes, an anthology of druid writings from the Southern Hemisphere. The anthology was launched with a reading of the introduction written by Philip Carr-Gomm and readings from Ngaire, Vyvyan and Murray and high commendations from Susan who had read it on her flight over.

The afternoon was spent in the Bardic grove. We called and welcomed the spirits of place, the spirits of the dreaming. The spirits and powers of the quarters in Wyeuro format; Eagle, Kangaroo, Murray-Cod and Wombat. Four new bards were welcomed to the Order including the youngest bard initiated into OBOD, Aysha Gentilin, who is nine. There were few dry eyes by the time the ceremony was complete, and I am glad to report that the future of Druidry is alive and well and walking the circle with pride and confidence.

In the evening we gathered around the fire. Lesley was the Bardic anchor of the ceileidh with a repertoire of songs to touch and inspire us all. Vyvyan showed herself to be a capable singer/songwriter and musician and her duets with Helen were a favourite, their years without



television had obviously been put to good use. Every-one joined in with spontaneous percussion and singing, assisted no doubt by the application of some Wyeuro brewed Elderberry wine.

We rose early Sunday morning, the wind was still blowing strongly though we were grateful for the cloud cover- quite a few of us were looking a sun burned from the day before. The Bardic grade members gathered once more around the campfire for a discussion group whilst an Ovate grove was held. Whilst there were no Ovate grade members present, we took the opportunity to celebrate the Ovate grove, and rejuvenate our connection to its energies, to connect deeper with the land of Wyeuro and to send healing where it was required. Wyeuro has had compassionate guardians and it responded in kind to the Ovate grove; the wind swept sun hardened circle is a powerful place to vision seek and to work healing magic.

After morning tea the Druid grove was opened for two very special ceremonies- a Druid initiation and a naming ceremony. Initiations are special events not only for the candidate but for all who participate where they can reconnect with their own initiation and receive the initiation again. It was our honour and privilege to welcome Stormwolf, Serpentstar's dedicated editor, to the Druidic grove. It was also our honour to bear witness to the naming of Vyvyan Ogma Wyverne and hear her commitment to the land and to the tradition in her naming rite.

Helen and Lesley again worked wonders around the fire producing a lunch of ingredients grown on the property- a remarkable feat when you consider that the average annual rainfall in the area is around 10mm/year. After lunch was a free time filled with spontaneous discussion groups, and lazing in the shade. A few of us made the trek the half a mile to see the Wyeuro office, a small hand built limestone building about the size of three telephone booths and big enough to hold the telephone, a chair and a bench for the laptop where Vyvyan and Helen come to make contact with the rest of the world.

We closed around the hearth fire which had been our centre for so much of the weekend. Thanks and blessings were offered and a few tears shed in honour of the new friendships formed. We had come together across vast distances and for many of us this will be our only physical contact with other Druids until the next assembly. Cherry has offered to host the next assembly at her property in Queensland, I am sure she will appreciate every-ones support in bringing that to fruition!

Our thanks go to every-body who attended bringing their warmth, friendship and wisdom. Thanks to Susan and Ian Jones for making the journey from the Lakes District in England to outback Australia, Susan your quiet eloquence, your grace and your enthusiasm contributed to every-one and has made a lasting difference to Druidry in Australia. Lastly, and most importantly, our warmest thanks to the Assemblies hosts Vyvyan and Helen and the Wyeuro grove, your generosity of spirit, dedication to the earth and commitment to the path is an inspiration and a blessing to all of us.

**Southern Echoes** can be ordered from mid December onwards by sending a cheque or money order to-

C/- Southern Echoes  
24 Torquata Blvd  
Helena Valley WA 6056

Cheques should be payable to Murray Barton.

Cost is \$12.50 Au + postage of \$3/copy in Aust. \$6/copy international

Part proceeds go to the Wilderness



## Sharing

*Someone to share the first glimpse of sunrise;  
Someone to share the fleeting moments of sunset;*

*Or just to sit together in quiet reflection;  
No words needed to express our thoughts;  
No words needed to share our feelings;  
Sometimes, just to chat over a cup of coffee;  
Just sharing small talk;*

*Enjoying a joke – a real hearty laugh;  
Holding hands and jumping the waves;  
The simple joys in life –  
shared with a friend  
bring joy, contentment, peace and happiness.*



# Enchantment, Charms and Glamourie.

Vyvyan Ogma Wyverne

When we enter our magic circles we leave behind the enchantment of the apparent world and move into one of our own making. We know at least some of the elements that have gone into the making of the enchantment of our circles. We have chosen their locations according to the ambience of the place, the natural enchantment cast by the trees, bushes and herbage, and birds and animals surrounding them, the rocks and stones and soil, taking into account the presence or absence of buildings, roads, and people nearby.

We may have planted a grove or garden around it, choosing each plant for its ability to contribute to the atmosphere we want, whether of holiness, of wildness or of magic. We will have invoked certain mentalities to inspire and share with us in the work of creation, and to infuse it with their own nwyfre – gods, nature spirits, Aborigine spirit beings, Maori ancestors, devas, elementals, faeries...

We will have introduced friends and fellow pagans into the circle, admitted or excluded pets, neighbours and children, and each of these will have effected our enchantment. And we will have worked magically in the circle, performing everything from the elaborate rites of the eight festivals of the year to brief meditations, divinations, healings or consultations with the inner and sacred groves.

Everything from the fleeting thoughts of ritual participants and the logistics of the rite to the climate, the disposition of the stars, and the tidal pull of the moon will be working upon our enchantment and modifying it for better or worse as we create it.

The same of course is true of any enchantment: that of a supermarket, for example, of a TV soft drink ad, the design of a car, the decor of a room, the disposition of fauna and flora, stones and water in a landscape or garden, of an item of dress, a piece of jewellery, or the tones of a voice, the roar of a jet plane or the song of a bird. Some of these are beyond our control, others we deliberately manipulate to procure just the right effect.

Are some effects magical then, and others not? From some points of view, all effects can be seen as physical, the result of the interplay of energies. From others, all effects are magical, from the mere fact of the existence of the atoms and energies of the material world as it is manifested magically out of pure spirit, to the senses by which perception is possible, and the consciousness that allows us to know we are

From the first viewpoint, there is no magic; and from the second, since all things are magical, there can be no effective discourse upon it, since it can have no specific meaning. You might just as well call the whole lot 'reality' and have done with it. If enchantment is just the possession of attributes that contribute to the fullness of a reality, why bother to denote it?

Yet there is a third way of looking at the question. We live in a universe that is made of a single, richly complex fabric of interacting enchantments, and we engage perceptually with a narrow selection of them from which we construe what we call the apparent world. Our selection criteria are genetically determined, determined by the interfaces we create via the molecules of our being – like being tuned to a particular TV station, except that this is the cosmic holograph with its infinitude of possibilities from which we make that specific selection which locates us in and indeed creates for us our apparent world of matter, energy, idea and attitude.

Science deals with events occurring within this selection, with the manipulation of the perceptible attributes of the materio-energetic world. Magic deals also with the invisible worlds, with the attributes of the universe beyond the range of perception, deliberately bringing into manifestation forces and attributes not normally selected by human perception.

When we dress we choose colours, textures and symbolic elements to create particular impressions. Some people go to great lengths to create false impressions of youthfulness, beauty and health by the artful manipulation of visible signs and of other applied attributes. This is the casting of a glamour.

An interior decorator creates an enchantment by manipulating colour, shape, character etc to produce effects that are primarily aesthetic, effecting mood and feeling through the sensoria in a simple, scientifically intelligible way.

There's no doubt that these effects are themselves magical, but in addition, accidental magical of a higher order may be employed or engaged unintentionally. For example, a furniture design may incidentally capture runes, permanently or momentarily, in the angles of design or in the intersecting edges of light and shadow, but these are not magically activated. A rune or ogham deliberately carved on an anchor stone in a magic circle is awakened, its magic invoked, its metaphysics manipulated by



more power than a lagu or huath formed accidentally in the lines of a chair.

Enchantment can be seen then as the 'singing in' of magical attributes. But who has sung in the magical attributes that create the enchantment of the apparent world? We all do, of course! Birds do. Flowering plants feed back conditioning energies into the worlds, fish constantly 'sing' the water they swim in, in intimately magical ways. The chemical properties of stone constitute a 'singing' of the air, of the elements and of the cosmic radiances in which they have their being.

Everything charms everything else around it. That is how the universe evolves. Everything wishes, wills and works our surroundings this way and that, for its own comfort, though each one's effects may seem to be lost in the cumulative effects of all, which we call nature. The magician studies these natural techniques of charm and enchantment and learns to use them for healing, divination and for magical acts, for the raising of a glamourie, and for the casting of spells, under the supervision of the Gods of the Sacred Grove.

Be it for the good of all beings!

/I\

/I\

/I\

### Some words from Vyvyan regarding the Assembly!

*Thanks to everyone who attended the Sixth Annual OBOD Assembly at Wyeuro last month. Everyone contributed so much to make the event the success it was. In the aftermath, Helen and I were truly impressed by the respectfulness everyone had shown for our place - not a stone out of place, not a glass broken, not a single piece of litter left behind - and it took us only a couple of leisurely hours to get the place back to normal after everyone had gone.*

*Special thanks to Kiera and Aysha for the love and healing they gave to Dora, the little newborn birth-injured kid. They might be pleased to know that by Monday afternoon, she was standing and walking normally, and by Wednesday she was running and jumping just like any normal kid, with both front hooves, perfectly straight.*

*In the Peace of the Grove*

Vyvyan /I\

This poem came to me the morning after my magical Bardic initiation at our recent Assembly. I was staying at the caravan park, on the banks of the river and was drawn to an enormous ancient willow, whose giant branches and roots straddled the banks and overhung the water. I sat in the centre with a canopy of fresh green surrounding me and drew in the blessed energy. The figure of Old Man Willow stood clearly before me, his legs in the water, his gnarled face full of wisdom, regarding me with interest. He spoke to me, calling me Earth Child and said that he was my connection to the element of water.

### Old Willow Man

Willow, water, new born child,  
Blessed by the wisdom of the past,  
Bending supple as willow wands,  
Yet strong and on her guard,

-

Willow, water, growing girl,  
Learning all that age can bring,  
Searching still among the reeds,  
Beneath Old Willow Man,

-

Willow, water, woman now,  
But learning still the ancient ways,  
Harking to Old Willow man,  
Relying on his eyes,

-

Willow water, woman old,  
But green beneath her weathered skin,  
Working gently with the Earth,  
Still searching for her truth,

-

Willow water, child reborn,  
Smiling at Old Willow Man,  
All complete, the circle joined,  
She starts her search once more.

Cherry Carroll

'The Willow Tree' -  
?? Edwards





'St Stephen' – Giotto c.1320

## St Stephen's Day and the Hunting of the Wren

### By StormWolf



You may be wondering why a Catholic saint is being mentioned in a Druid newsletter. A strange ritual is held on his feast day that is not at all Christian! I first came across this ritual in a series of children's fantasy books based on Celtic/Arthurian mythology ('The Dark is Rising' series by Susan Cooper). I wanted to find out more so I went a-searching the 'net for more information.

The feast of St Stephen is held on the 26<sup>th</sup> December each year and celebrates the death of St Stephen, the first Christian martyr. He was stoned to death shortly after Christ's crucifixion. Due to being stoned to death, he is now the patron saint of bricklayers!

In Ireland and the Isle of Man, this feast day is a holiday, and this is when the ritual of the Hunting of the Wren takes place. A group of boys search out a wren and then chase it until it they catch it, or it dies of exhaustion. The wren is then placed on a funeral bier decorated with holly and coloured ribbons. The boys dress in old clothing (usually women's clothing) and masks, then they carry the bier on their shoulders from house to house around the village. At each house they sing the Wren Song, of which this is just one variation:

The wren, the wren, the king of all birds,  
On St. Stephen's Day was caught in the furze,  
Although he is little, his family is great,  
I pray you, good landlady, give us a treat.

My box would speak, if it had but a tongue,  
And two or three shillings, would do it not wrong,  
Sing holly, sing ivy--sing ivy, sing holly,  
A drop just to drink, it would drown melancholy.

And if you draw it of the best,  
I hope in heaven your soul will rest;  
But if you draw it of the small,  
It won't agree with these wren boys at all.

Those who gave money to the Wren Boys were given a feather from the wren as good luck. The money collected by the Wren Boys was used to hold a dance for the villagers. After the boys have done their rounds of the village, the wren is taken solemnly to the parish cemetery, and buried with a full funeral rite.

But what is the origin of this custom? One story says that St Stephen, whilst hiding from his enemies, was betrayed by the chirping of a wren. Thus the wren, like St Stephen, should be hunted down. Another legend tells of a Viking raid in the 8<sup>th</sup> century in which Irish soldiers were betrayed by a wren. The wren alighted on a drum upon which breadcrumbs had been spilt. The tapping of its beak on the drum was enough to wake a Viking warrior, who sounded the alarm and the Irish were defeated.

'A Manx story tells of a fairy-girl or mermaid who lured youths into the sea. One of them threw a spear at her and to avoid it she turned herself into a wren, but she was obliged to assume her own shape on each New Year's Day. On that day she was at the mercy of her hunters who, if they were able, could kill her. A wren's feather became a lucky charm to preserve sailors from drowning and no Manxman would go to sea without one. Breton legend says that the wren brought fire from heaven, but on her way back her wings burned and she had to give the fire to the robin, who also burned. Eventually the Lark was able to pick up the fire and carry it to earth.'

So, is this, like many folk customs, the remains of an earlier pagan custom? According to many sources, the wren was sacred to the Druids. It is called Drui-en, Druid bird in Irish Gaelic, and Dryw in Welsh, which is also the word for Druid. 'The wren was considered a most sacred bird. The wren symbolised wisdom and divinity. At New Year it is said that the apprentice Druid would go out by himself into the countryside in search of hidden wisdom. If he found a wren he would take that as a sign that he would be blessed with inner knowledge in the coming year. Finding a creature small and elusive to the point of invisibility was a metaphor for finding the elusive divinity within all life.'

Auguries were taken from its chirping, the direction from which it came being most significant. The wren's nest was said to be protected by lightning, sacred to the thunder god Taranis. The wren was also sacred to the bard



It was said to be unlucky to kill a wren. 'In England, it is supposed that if any one kills a wren or disturbs its nest, he will infallibly break a bone or meet with some dreadful misfortune within the year.'

The wren has long been known as the King of the Birds. The following tale tells why.

### **The Willow Wren – The Brothers Grimm**

Once upon a time 'the birds had their own language which every one understood. Now it only sounds like chirping, screeching, and whistling, and sometimes like music without words. It came into the birds' mind, however, that they would no longer be without a ruler, and would choose one of themselves to be their king. One alone among them, the green plover, was opposed to this. He had lived free and would die free, and anxiously flying hither and thither, he cried, "Where shall I go? Where shall I go?" He retired into a solitary and unfrequented marsh, and showed himself no more among his fellows.

The birds now wished to discuss the matter, and on a fine May morning they all gathered together from the woods and fields, eagles and chaffinches, owls and crows, larks and sparrows, how can I name them all. Even the cuckoo came, and the hoopoe, his clerk, who is so called because he is always heard a few days before him, and a very small bird which as yet had no name, mingled with the band. The hen, which by some accident had heard nothing of the whole matter, was astonished at the great assemblage. What, what, what is going to be done, she cackled. But the cock calmed his beloved hen, and said, only a lot of rich people, and told her what they had on hand. It was decided that the one who could fly the highest should be king. A tree-frog which was sitting among the bushes, when he heard that, cried a warning, no, no, no, because he thought that many tears would be shed because of this. But the crow said, caw, caw, and that all would pass off peaceably.

It was now determined that on this fine morning they should at once begin to ascend, so that hereafter no one should be able to say, I could easily have flown much higher, but the evening came on, and I could do no more. On a given signal, therefore, the whole troop rose up in the air. The dust ascended from the land, and there was tremendous fluttering and whirring and beating of wings, and it looked as if a black cloud was rising up. The little birds were soon left behind. They could go no farther, and fell back to the ground. The larger birds held out longer, but none could equal the eagle, who mounted so high that he could have plucked the eyes out of the sun. And when he saw that the others could not get up to him, he thought, why should you fly still higher. You are the king, and began to let himself down again. The birds beneath him at once cried to him, you must be our king, no one has flown so high as you. Except me, screamed the little fellow without a name, who had crept into the breast-feathers of the eagle. And as he was not at all tired, he rose up and mounted so high that he reached heaven itself. However, when he had gone as far as this, he folded his wings together, and called down with clear and penetrating voice, I am king. I am king. You, our king, cried the birds angrily. You have managed it by trick and cunning. So they made another condition. He should be king who could go down lowest in the ground.

How the goose did flap about with its broad breast when it was once more on land. How quickly the cock scratched a hole. The duck came off the worst of all, for she leapt into a ditch, but sprained her legs, and waddled away to a neighbouring pond, crying, cheating, cheating. The little bird without a name, however, sought out a mouse-hole, slipped down into it, and cried out of it with his small voice, I am king. I am king. You our king, cried the birds still more angrily. Do you think your cunning shall prevail. They determined to keep him a prisoner in the hole and starve him out. The owl was placed as sentinel in front of it, and was not to let the rascal out if she had any value for her life. When evening was come and all the birds were feeling very tired after the exertion of so much flying, they went to bed with their wives and children. The owl alone remained standing by the mouse-hole, gazing steadfastly into it with her great eyes. Then she, too, grew tired and thought to herself, you might certainly shut one eye, you will still watch with the other, and the little villain shall not come out of his hole. So she shut one eye, and with the other looked straight at the mouse-hole. The little fellow put his head out and peeped, and wanted to slip away, but the owl came forward immediately, and he drew his head back again. Then the owl opened the one eye again, and shut the other, intending to shut them in turn all through the night. But when she next shut the one eye, she forgot to open the other, and as soon as both her eyes were shut she fell asleep. The little fellow soon observed that, and slipped away.

From that day forth, the owl has never dared to show herself by daylight, for if she does the other birds chase her and pluck her feathers out. She flies out only by night, but hates and pursues mice because they make such ugly holes. The little bird, too, is very unwilling to let himself be seen, because he is afraid it will cost him his life if he is caught. He steals about in the hedges, and when he is quite safe, he sometimes cries, I am king, and for this reason, the other birds call him in mockery, king of the hedges. No one, however, was so happy as the lark at not having to obey the little king. As soon as the sun appears, she ascends high in the air and cries, ah, how beautiful that is. Beautiful that is. Beautiful, beautiful. Ah, how beautiful that is.



These days either an artificial wren is used, or a real wren is carried around in a cage for the celebrations. Boys and girls can be 'Wren Boys' and the money collected is often donated to schools.

Have any of you out there seen this celebration first hand? I would love to hear of your experiences!

#### References

<http://www.noblenet.org/year/ststephen.htm>

<http://www.geocities.com/Paris/LeftBank/9314/stewwren.html>

## Lord Of The Dance

*When She danced on the water and the wind was Her horn  
The Lady laughed and everything was born  
And when She lit the sun and the light gave Him birth  
The Lord of the Dance first appeared on the Earth.*

*"Dance then, where ever you may be  
For I am the Lord of the Dance," said He  
"And I'll lead you all, where ever you may be  
And I'll lead you all in the Dance," said He*

*I danced in the morning when the world was begun  
I danced in the Moon and the Stars and the Sun  
I was called from the darkness by the Song of the Earth  
I joined in the singing and She gave me Birth*

*"Dance then, where ever you may be  
For I am the Lord of the Dance," said He  
"And I'll lead you all, where ever you may be  
And I'll lead you all in the Dance," said He*

*I dance at the Sabbath when you chant the spell  
I dance and I sing that everyone be well  
When the dance is over do not think I am gone  
I live in the music so I still dance on*

*"Dance then, where ever you may be  
For I am the Lord of the Dance," said He  
"And I'll lead you all, where ever you may be  
And I'll lead you all in the Dance," said He*

*They cut me down but I leap up high  
I am the Light that will never, never die  
I live in you if you live in me  
I am the Lord of the Dance said He*

*"Dance then, where ever you may be  
For I am the Lord of the Dance," said He  
"And I'll lead you all, where ever you may be  
And I'll lead you all in the Dance," said He*

Traditional Pagan version

## Seasonal Recipes



### Mango Sorbet

1½ cups/375ml/12oz sugar  
1 cup/250ml/8fl oz water  
2x 425g/13oz cans mangoes, drained (or 4 fresh mangoes)  
rind and juice of 1 orange  
1 egg white, lightly beaten

1. Place sugar and water in a small saucepan. Heat, stirring, until sugar dissolves and mixture boils. Simmer, without stirring, for 2 minutes. Cool.
  2. Puree mangoes and orange rind and juice in a food processor blender until smooth. Blend into sugar syrup.
  3. Pour into a shallow tray. Cover with plastic wrap. Freeze until just firm.
  4. Scoop mixture into food processor. Process with egg white until smooth. Re-freeze until firm. Serve in scoops with mango slices.
- Serves 4-6

From 'Homemade Icecreams and Sorbets' Ed.  
Margaret Gore

### Lavender Biscuits

115g (4oz) butter  
55g (2oz) caster sugar  
175g (6oz) 75% wholemeal self-raising flour  
2 tablespoons freshly chopped lavender leaves  
1 teaspoon lavender flowers removed from stem

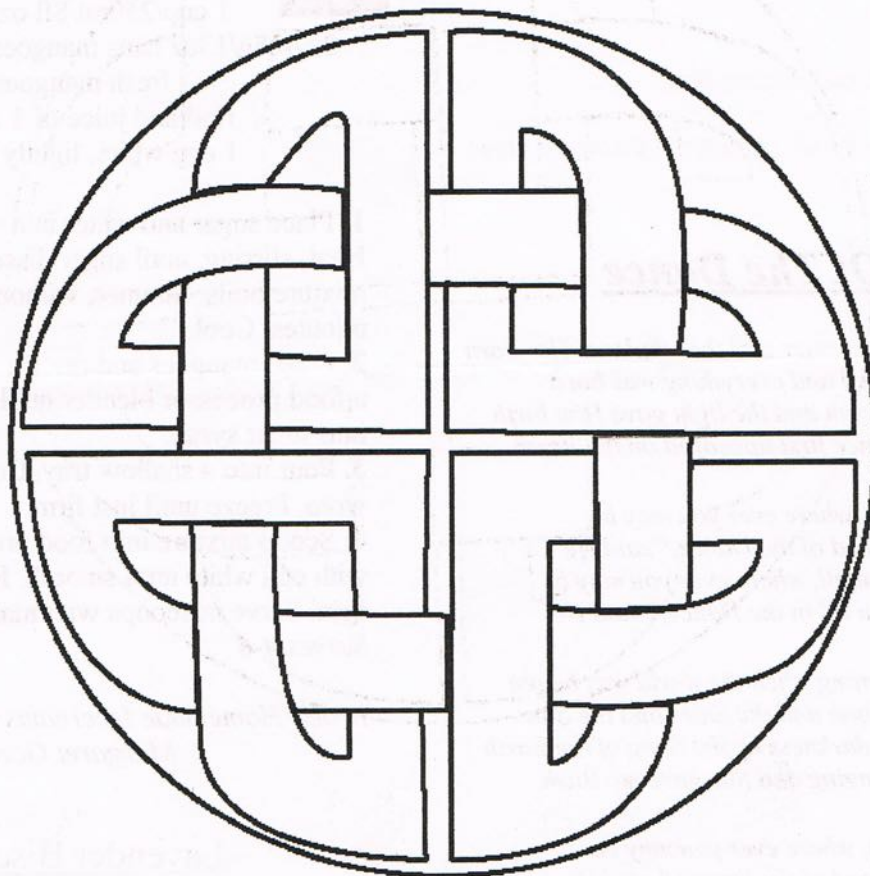
1. Cream the butter and sugar. Add the flour and lavender leaves and knead into a dough.
2. Roll onto a floured board, sprinkle with the flowers and press them into the dough with the rolling pin.
3. Cut into shapes and bake on a greased baking sheet at 230°C (450°F/gas mark 7) for about ten minutes.

From 'Super Herbs' by Michael van Straten





# Children's Page!



From the Celtic Coloring Book  
By [Eliza@sacredspinal.com](mailto:Eliza@sacredspinal.com)

U	E	R	G	S	B	I	L	I	D	O	B	S
K	R	O	E	A	N	G	E	T	A	L	P	H
G	R	P	H	A	G	O	S	S	H	Y	D	R
T	B	D	B	S	A	I	L	L	E	A	I	U
F	S	T	R	A	I	F	U	I	H	E	Y	I
P	N	K	H	C	Q	E	L	D	K	R	S	S
S	B	C	O	L	L	E	E	F	E	A	R	N
H	E	E	I	L	M	B	N	N	L	T	I	C
U	I	N	P	U	U	H	O	O	N	N	R	Q
A	T	U	H	I	I	A	I	R	M	I	K	U
T	H	I	I	S	N	D	R	L	I	S	T	E
H	G	N	N	K	N	H	I	H	P	U	M	R

Color:

ALM	MUNN
BEITH	NGEAL
COLL	NUN
DOIT	OR
EDHACH	ORN
EDHACH	PHAGOS
FEARN	QUERT
GORT	RUIS
HUATHE	SALLE
ICO	STRAIF
IPHN	TUNNE
LUIS	ULEAND
	UP