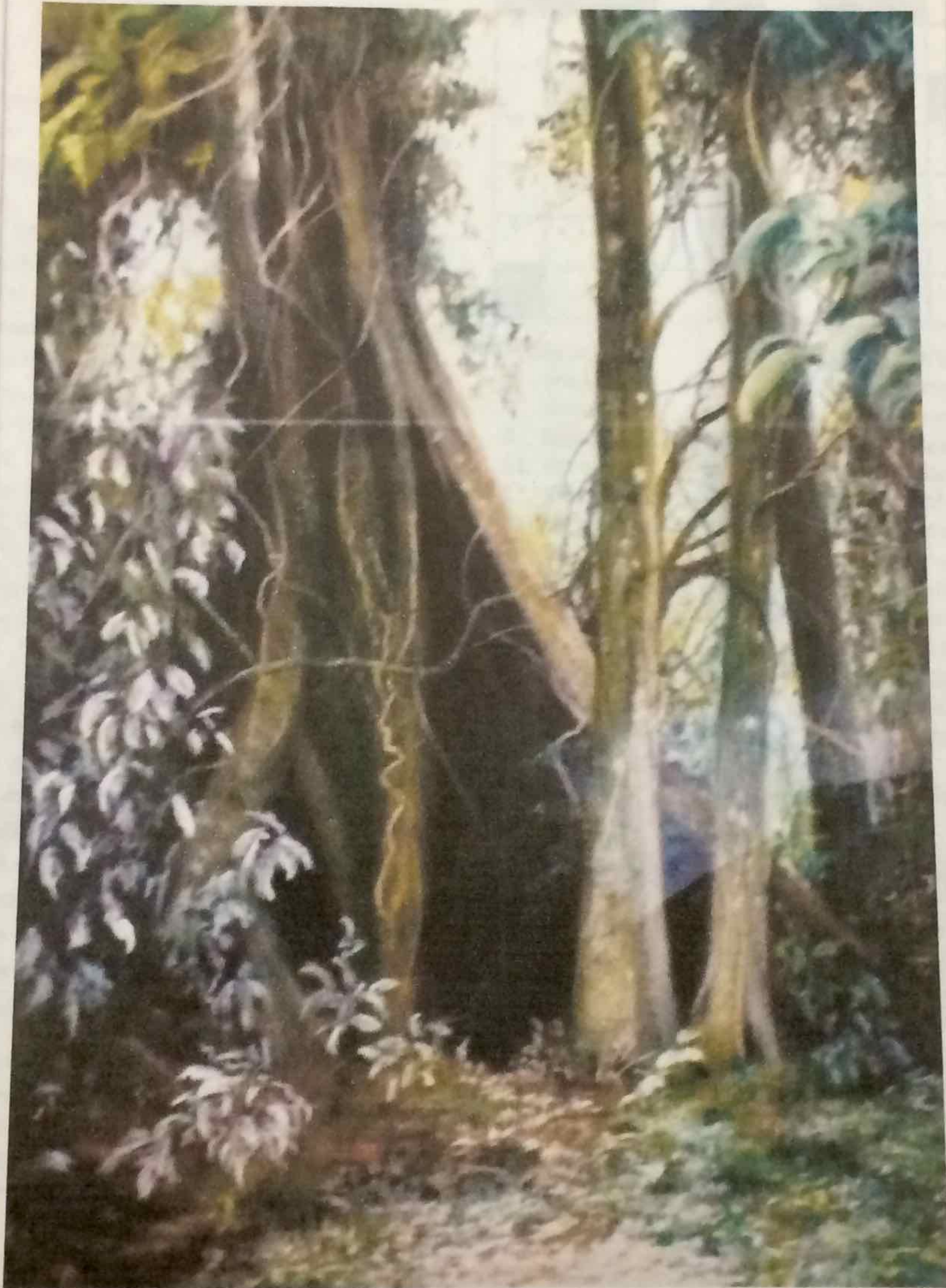


SerpentStar

Newsletter for members of
The Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids
in the Southern Hemisphere.

Samhuin 2008



Our cover picture is 'Bunya Mountain' by Queensland artist Cherry Carrol.



WYVERNE'S WORDS

G'day, Southern Hemisphere OBODies!

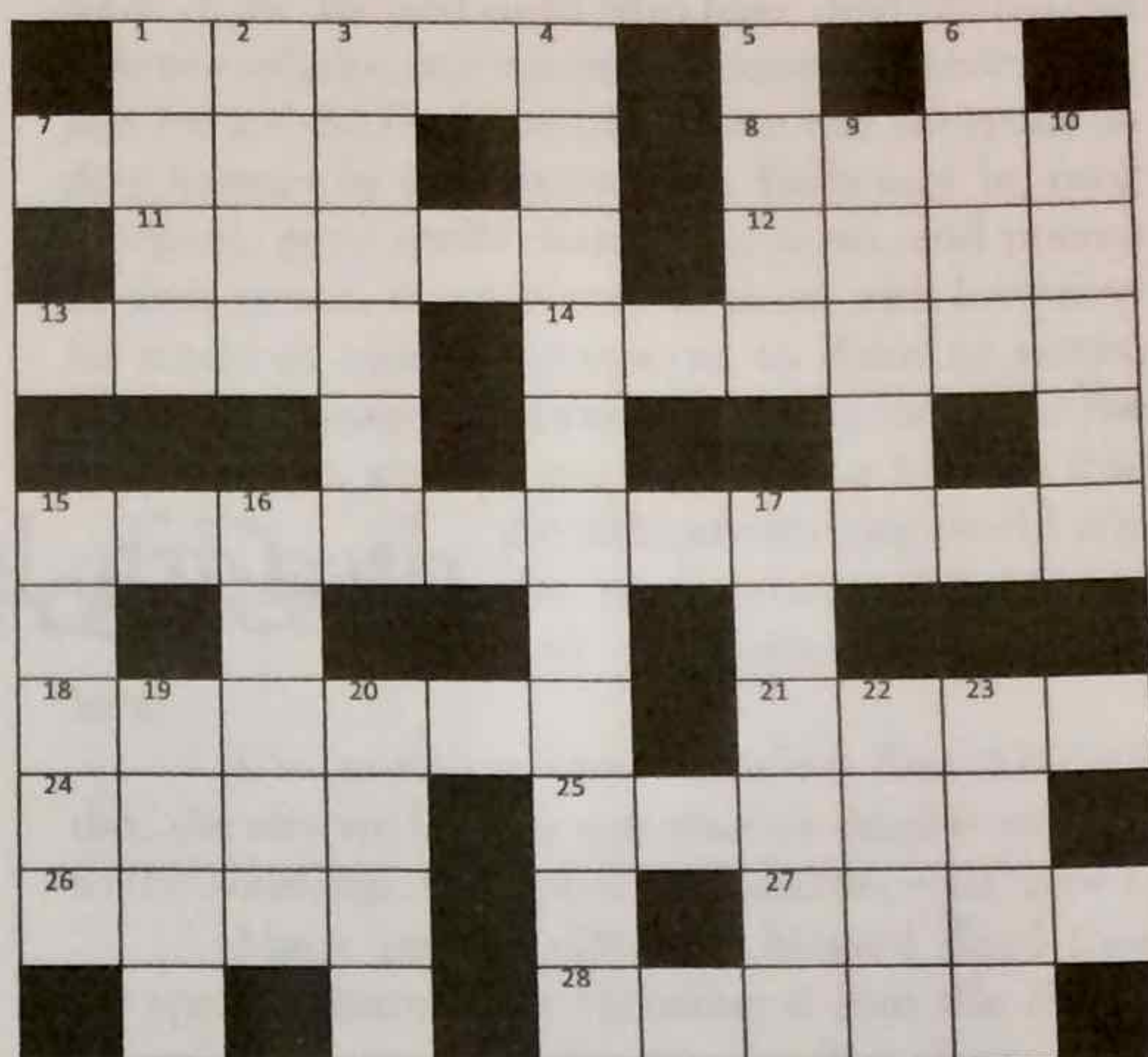
Welcome to the Samhuinn issue of *SerpentStar*, and a dry, dusty Samhuinn it is in this part of the world, where the drought-stricken Murray is in a critical condition. It could easily survive such droughts, which have always occurred cyclically, were it not for the pollution - but many positive changes are happening in our land and resources management, and the many improvements, are worth contemplating. Worldwide it seems to me, especially at the community level, where much greater tolerance exists among groups of people with widely differing opinions about land-use, people seem to me to be getting better at getting along with each other. And I don't think I'm looking at the world through rose-coloured glasses...

Samhuinn is the beginning of the old Celtic Year and a time to take stock and look over our resources, count our blessings, farewell the past, deliver up our blessed dead and prepare to face the darkness and coldness to come. Turning inwards, along with the energies of the earth, we are ready to contemplate the blessings and beauty of the night time of the day, winter of the year, which is now almost upon us. Spiritually we appreciate the cold, dark, still beauties of our mental, emotional and spiritual life as well. May yours be a blessed Samhuinn, with loads of good Halloween fun!

SerpentStar is proud to present a fine array of reading for us all again this issue: poetry and ritual wisdom from New Zealand, a splendid long poem to stir your soul, magnificent cover art, a ballad from the deep, dark past; news, scientific and sacred, interesting articles, all the regulars, and a Samhuinn feature, all full of the right spirit. So get stuck into it, and I hope you enjoy reading it as much as I enjoyed putting it together!

SerpentStar comes out four times a year at each of the Fire Festivals, Imbolc, Beltane, Lughnasadh and Samhuinn. **Subscriptions:** By email, free - just email me at wyeuro@bigpond.com. By post, send \$Aus10 made out to V O Wyverne to PMB2 Angaston SA 5353 Australia. **Contributions** are eagerly sought by email or post. Please make sure your contributions do not violate copyright laws. **Opinions** expressed in *SerpentStar* by contributors are their own and not necessarily the opinions of the editor or of the Order of Bards Ovates and Druids.

Crossword Puzzle #3



CLUES ACROSS

1. Magician.
7. Moroccan.
8. Sign.
11. Wise ones.
12. Ireland.
13. Early English historian.
14. Giants.
15. Factuality of an account.
18. Suave and sophisticated.
21. Use teeth.
24. Require.
25. Scattered remnants.
26. Sacred site of Ireland.
27. Ages.
28. Threads.

CLUES DOWN

1. Hemisphere
2. Carriageway.
3. Very important.
4. Twistedly.
5. Writer of poems.
6. Shade-loving plant.
9. City in the US.
10. A monster's nickname
15. Frequent.
16. Serious-minded.
17. Close friend.
19. Genuine.
20. Man's name.
22. Metal.
23. Containers.

What do the Forest Spirits Sing?

They sing of the sky, sun, earth, nutrients
of strength deep down,

They sing of the birds, animals, insects
of abundance of love.

They sing to humans and we don't hear,
and we don't hear

Morfran

Samhuinn

Samhuin, Halloween, All Hallows, All Saints

Halfway between Alban Elved at the autumn equinox and Alban Arthvan at the winter solstice, Samhuinn is a triple-natured time; a homely time of harvest and saving, a pious time of reverencing the dead, and a bizarre time of scary thrills and terrifying visitations, one that is thankfully characterised by more hilarity than dread these days.

In our southern hemisphere gardens we are bringing in the last of the late summer harvest. On farms, in orchards and in vineyards, rich crops have been harvested and are now being processed and packaged for long-storage. In many homes, freezers and larders are packed with summer preserves.

In the past our northern hemisphere ancestors killed their steer cattle, pigs, deer or horses and salted down the meat for winter use. The fish catch was kippered, and all hides were put into the tan. They stock-piled turnips and other roots, cabbages and eggs, boiled up fruit and nuts, flour and suet into puddings for the midwinter season. They made wine, mead and medicinal ales, beers and cordials, and potted up preserves and jellies using honey or sugar as a preservative. It was they who pioneered the preserving techniques our own food economy still depends on in their modern forms.

Upon our ancestors' care and skill depended the survival of the community throughout the snowy winter months, when snow would cover the ground and prey might be scarce and hard to catch. Today most crops are commercially processed, stored and distributed, and anyway, modern transportation methods let us 'harvest' anything we like at any time of the year from our supermarkets. Even if we don't grow our own, or make our own preserves, we can incorporate an appreciation of these processes into our Samhuinn celebration.

But the time of Samhuinn is also the time of Hallowmas, or All Saints' Day, when the souls of

the dead are remembered and prayed for and the souls of the blessed dead who have died during the year are offered our continuing love and reverence. Just for a short time, we offer them our company as they journey in the otherworlds. Bells may be rung for them, good spells chanted for them, and poems in their praise, or addressed to them with love may be read out loud or whispered to them in secret. Written messages or prayers may be cast into the fire for them also. These meditations help to thin the veil between our world and the next, where our blessed dead still remember us with love.

It's surely no mere accident that ANZAC day, the day we honour our warrior dead is so close to the southern hemisphere Samhuinn - 25th April.

Many people offer the blessed dead food on special altars or by throwing it into the fire, in the midst of their own feasting, so that all may feast together. Soft lights in the windows guide lost souls to our welcoming hearths and the ghosts and winter fairies are brought into the circle of warmth and light of the Samhuinn fire. Offerings of flowers, fruit, nuts, honey, dairy and garden produce, and bottles of wine, or mead can be placed on ancestral shrines, and incense and candles lit.

Our ancestors' fear of Samhuinn was probably once real - alien (foreign) peoples of many races probably did all converge on Tara for the Feast of Tara, and superstition based on half-truths about all the different races fed the fears of humble country folk who did not attend such grand festivals. Big

events attract all kinds of scoundrels, so maybe it really *wasn't* safe to be outside after dark. The motif of the Seelie Court, headed by the Fairie Queen with her commitment to Hell (which was not necessarily a bad place in Pagan times), and sometimes also the Unseelie Court, who were less virtuous, may be a memory trace of a real cavalcade of foreign dignitaries on their way to Tara. This event has become a prime excuse to dig out all our favourite scary monsters, and let them into our lives for harmless fun and pleasure for a short time.

May your Samhuinn be blessed!

Festival of Death



Last Friday was Anzac Day and the response in New Zealand was huge in the whole week leading up to the day. I understand it is similar in Australia. The day was warm and sunny and I went for a long walk on the beach and sat and contemplated the waves. I always think of Samhain when it's Anzac Day and I feel it's so appropriate that it's close to our own honouring of our ancestors. I wrote this poem:

TODAY I MOURN

Anzac Day 2008

Today I mourn

For all the lives lost in needless hatred
For the men who died in battle against a faceless foe
Calling for their loved ones who they strove to protect.
No taking sides - I mourn them all, every hue, creed and tribe.
The daemons of war have no favourites,
The noble warrior is long gone, no choosing now to die for
honour hand to hand.

Today I mourn

For all the women and children who never again warmed
to the smile
Of husband, father, lover, son.
But lit the candle every night in memory of something
past
And caressed the photographs until the image was no
more.
A new day dawning they told themselves but lonely was
the cry
Broken hearts have no place in the world of men
'Get on with it' they said. 'Go home' they said, 'you are not
wanted here'.

Today I mourn

For every living thing, every sentient being who fed the
greed of war.
For rocks that shattered from mighty blasts, tearing the
heart
To mine the ore for busy assembly lines forging the
capsules of death
For every mighty tree that fed a fire of destruction or was
felled for clearer view.
No honouring of sacred groves here, no respect for faery or
for gnome
Or for the mighty hearts who spoke the magic for a
thousand years.
For every flower mindlessly trodden under a booted heel
Replaced by a plastic poppy, I mourn.

Not for me today parades and drums, speeches that tell
only half the story.

Glory is an easy word, with pride its companion and 'God
on our side' its poison.

Creamy words that swell the hearts of the young
with.....what?

No, down to the beach for me, to sit upon a silver log,
alone and dreaming.

Here I can feel the souls of past generations, not lifeless
but shimmering in the morning sun,

Breathing in every rock, tree, animal and plant.

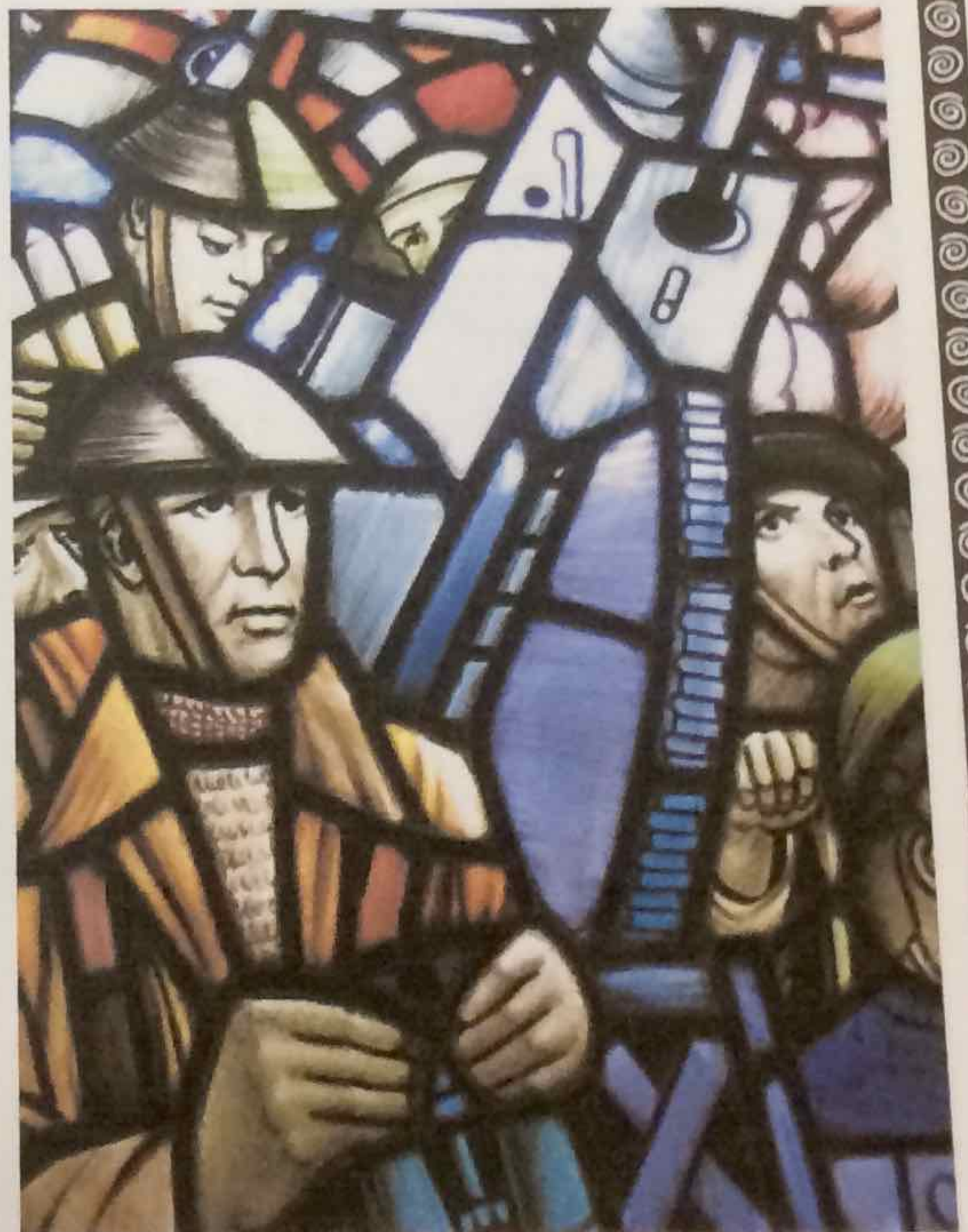
Chattering in the small waves that gossip with the sand.

A battalion of seaweed floats just under the surface of the
sea

Pokes little soldier heads up and sways to the music of the
day.

They are singing 'Hallelujah'.

Meadwyse 2008



Talking Point

A Henge for Western Australia

A replica of Stonehenge, to be known as 'The Henge', is currently being built in Margaret River, south of Perth, by Australian entrepreneur and Colonial Brewing founder, Ross Smith. The Henge is being built on his 20ha property and will cost in excess of \$1 million. Smith describes it as "a business venture". An entry fee will be charged and it will be available for hire. Guests will be encouraged to touch and play around the 101 granite stones arranged in an inner and outer circle. Spanning 110 feet, it will have a central altar along with an interpretive centre and children's playground. Smith is hoping for up to 300 000 visitors per year. It is due to be finished for the Summer Solstice this year.

"I'm doing it because I can" proclaimed Smith, and when asked what does Stonehenge have to do with Margaret River he replied "Well, I can say, 25 years ago what did grapevines have to do with Margaret River?"

While surfing the net in pursuit of further information, I came across an on-line chat group, Blue Crab Boulevard. In a posting on 25 March, titled 'Counterfeit Stonehenge', Gaius (ring a bell?) writes: "One waits breathlessly for the howls of outrage from fake druids over a fake Stonehenge". Ross Smith replies: "I can't wait to hear from the fake druids (that's really funny) given that the actual Stonehenge predated the Celtic Druids by a few thousand years. If my history serves me well I'm pretty sure that the Roman Legions wiped out the few remaining Druids during their last stand on a little island".

On the same site Smith also writes "nowhere in the world has a complete Stonehenge been built", to which 'Ericon' replied "There is already a complete Stonehenge built in the U.S., there is one in Northern Montana in a town called Fortine, it is a full scale replica of Stonehenge and it is built to have the sun on the Summer solstice hit the altar rock at sunrise. It is located on a private golf course and was built a few years ago. They have poured concrete and rebar to reinforce it so you can touch it and move around inside the circles. I've been there many times and it is a beautiful place."

During a radio interview, Smith was informed that the druids probably blessed the stones before they were placed at Stonehenge, and asked if he was planning to ask some druids to bless his stones. To this he replied that he wouldn't, and that there were no druids in Australia anyway. (Apologies, but we have been unable to source this interview).

Much of this seems like deliberate baiting to me. I suspect Smith would relish any such "howls of outrage" from 'fake' Australian druids because he could use it as publicity. And

so I've decided not to give him the satisfaction of my indignation at his blatant use of the sacred for monetary gain. Instead, in peace, I trust that Great Spirit and Mother

Earth have their reasons for inspiring Ross Smith to build this monument. What do you think?

Further

information:

<http://www.abc.net.au/rn/breakfast/stories/2008/2199212.htm>

Written by Elkie White with research assistance from Debra Annear and Mickael Cox.

Serpentstar will publish your responses to this thought-provoking item. And meanwhile, send in your suggestions for the next Talking Point

Journey

Trees, tall and remote
Majestic, towering
Distance and dense
So my Journey begins
The Forest Journey
Learning about trees
Meditation, communication
Listening and Listening again
Ancestors, those that came before
Future to explore
More trees to learn and study
Deep into the roots
The Journey descends
Past Lives to meet
High into the branches
The Journey ascends
Future to meet
Into the trunk
The Journey is NOW
Present to meet
Elementals, Sylphs, Erdines
Salamanders and Gnomes to greet
To meet and know
Divas, Nature Spirits, Queen of the Ants
To say hi to, to know
To work with and be with
Grass to grow, Garden to prepare
Angels, Celestial Beings
Another tree to be with
So the Journey continues
Trees tall and near
Majestic, Towering
Present and Open
So the Journey Ends
Or does it.....

by Morfran
(Tom Robertson)

druidscience



with Carole Nielsen

Time to investigate our environment

We hear a lot about the benefits of genetic modification of food, and most people that I know are pretty suspicious about the technology and motivation involved in GM industry.

While browsing the internet I came across this little snippet that may give you another reason to resist the Genetic Modification of foods and other plant life. Scientists have recently discovered that a lot of the particles that go up into the atmosphere and help form ice and snow, are in fact bacterial organisms.

One of these, the most common one, is *Pseudomonas syringae*, which infect plants like tomatoes and beans. It seems that this was one of the "pests" that was being considered for elimination.

Pseudomonas syringae strain ESC-10 and *Pseudomonas syringae* strain ESC-11 are natural strains of bacteria that occur on many kinds of plants throughout the world. They were originally isolated and identified from apples.

It begs the question to ask, what other organisms have we "deleted" from our complex environmental tapestry, and to what harm?

It has been and is always time to investigate our environment, to see our place on the planet and see where we fit into the complex web of plant, stone, water and light that serves as the shawl of mother earth.

With climate change, the warming of the poles, and the consequent loss of the conserving blanket of snow and ice, leading to the loss of habitat, we need to be more vigilant regarding artificial changes to our environment and foods.

Put this arrow of information into your quiver.....

For more information have a look at this site

<http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/99093.php>

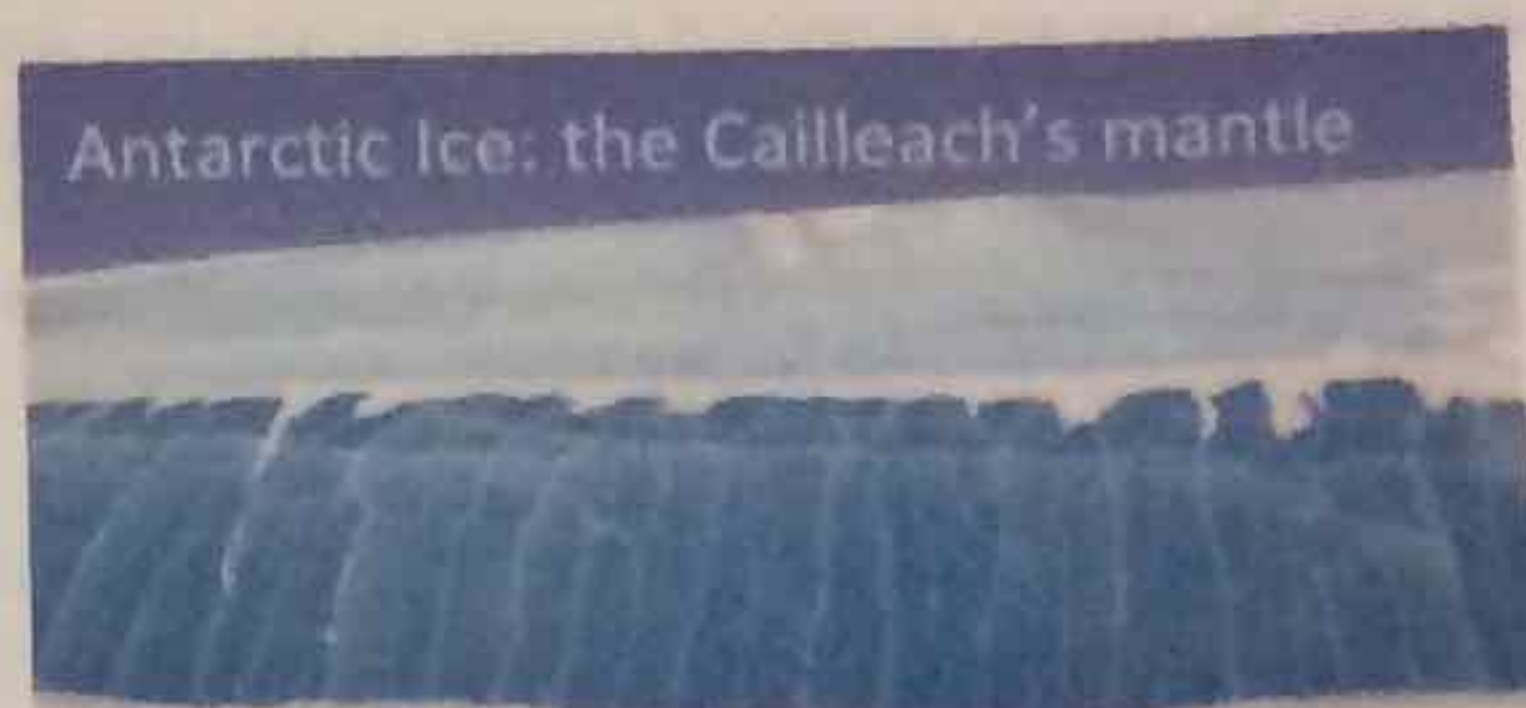
http://www.epa.gov/opp00001/biopesticides/ingredients/factsheets/factsheet_006441.htm

New life born of the Ice Queen.

As the planet warms and life in the various kingdoms, animal plant human mineral etc, are threatened with extinction, we should pause and take time to look at the rebirthing of other life forms that is occurring in the Southern Seas, as well as other parts of the planet, life forms that have been cocooned in the safety of the ice, the Kingdom of the White Queen.

Sub-glacial lakes in Antarctica were first identified in the 1960s. Since then over 150 have been discovered but it is thought thousands may exist, as much of the bed of Antarctica has not been surveyed.

The scientists allay fears that global warming has created these pockets of water. They say these lakes lie some 2,300 feet below compressed snow and ice, too deep



for environmental temperature to reach. However, it is necessary to understand what causes the phenomenon as it can facilitate an understanding of the impact of climate change on the ice sheet in Antarctica.

Back in 1996/7 this sub glacial lake was mapped out by radar (Echo Sounding) and satellite. This was a joint venture by Russians and the British. Through their experiments they confirmed it was more than likely several hundred million years old.

In September 1999, scientists were conducting a study of Lake Vostok, a lake buried four kilometers under east Antarctica.

Around the size of Lake Ontario, Lake Vostok is estimated to have been cut off from the rest of the world for at least one million years (some say as long as 40 million years); enough time for life within it to look completely different from the rest of the world.

When the scientists drilled to within 120 meters of the lake itself, they were shocked to find life within an ice core they extracted.

Plans are underway to explore the lake, but the scientists are understandably wary of contaminating the water with our own bacteria so it may be some time before a probe is sent through.

If the Russians had of penetrated the ice cap they would of contaminated the water and introduced this Sub glacial Wonder Lake to 21st century contaminants. So Lake Vostok is

located under the vast East Antarctic Ice Sheet directly beneath the Russian Antarctic Station, Vostok. As the ice sheet flows over Lake Vostok, material and water are introduced and removed from the lake.

It is now estimated that the entire contents of the lake are re-placed every 50,000 years (Jouzel *et al*, 1999; Bell *et al*, 2002; Studinger *et al*, 2004).

It is also believed that the water in the lake circulates much as water in lakes at the Earth's surface (Wuest and Carmack, 2000). To understand the evolution of the lake, it will be important to study the ice melting and freezing cycle, the geological setting, the flux of heat from below and the dynamics of the ice sheet flowing above.

So my Druid friends, we are looking at the discovery of life that has been living safe under the mantle of the Callieach, the White Queen. Some of these life forms will disappear quickly as the environment changes and some of this life is ready to be born again.

Of course others are already looking at how the resources in Antarctica can be exploited, so while we work with the earth in this time of change, spare a thought for the new life, and the life leaving this fragile eco system and twists ,turns and weaving in the steps of earth's dance to balance.

<http://library.thinkquest.org/C003763/index.php?page=findlife06>
<http://www.abovetopsecret.com/forum/thread130070/pg1>
<http://www.earthtimes.org/articles/show/31276.html>

Even though this ice core was nearly four kilometers below the surface and had no apparent access to light, heat or nutrients, it contained a range of bacteria, fungi and algae. If life can exist in the ice core just above the lake, scientists believe that it's almost certain life exists in the lake itself which would have conditions much more beneficial to life.

The Dance in the South

by Carole Nielsen

I felt your warm breath leave my cheek and knew you'd
turned away.

Your chariot soon would take you to a distant, far off
day.

I knew you'd soon be leaving me to dance my own
tattoo

I felt my strength returning for the work I'm bound to
do.

I knew what would await me, as my slumber moved
away.

My task, to clear the dross and excess of the languid
days.

To take away the sick, the weak, to shelter buried
seed

To give the rest and clear the land and scour the
earth of need.

Earth's rhythm pounded through my being, my skirt
flew far and wide

The howling of my clan song
sent all who feared inside

My family of flesh and leaf
gave thanks and blessed my
name

Those who didn't know of me
saw hail and sleet and rain.

I grew to size four fold and with
my mantle of white frost

I took away the dying, dead
and those who were too lost,
I gathered them unto my breast
and wished them on their way
The snow and cold rain falling
on the sacrificial day

I gave new hope to worn out land and washed the
earth anew

From far and lofty mountain tops the minerals I
strew

They rained and snowed and thundered by, to
reseed magic earth

To be there waiting, weaving, for the tiny seeds
rebirth

And once again as lovers do I felt your warm
regard

My strong and mighty soul wind, dancing through
my season hard

And then I felt the deep night turn as you were
born again

And moved to my midwifery, the birth waters of
spring rain

And dancing in my power now, my kingdom now
renewed,

I felt you once again become aware of my allure
Your golden eyes struck spark from mine, of icy
steely fire

I know that soon you'd come again to feast on my
desire

Your passion I felt growing as you raced on, to my
side

I gave the land a last embrace, a defiant winter
bride

And then my strength was melting as you reached
to touch my face

And once again, as every year to the summer we
did race

And now I'm lying dreaming in your hot and fiery
arms

I am once more content to slumber in your veil of
charms

But balance must be well maintained as night will
follow day

And once again I'll stir and dance, when you've
turned your gaze away.



But balance now is changing and
seasons are awry

Lands sheltered by the Ice shawl
are exposed too much to sky

The balance needs to be
maintained both light and dark
must sway

The sun and moon need measured
time or we'll dance this world away

What have we done?

What have we done?

We are losing all the shadows

We have strengthened the sun

Our greed and our fear

Have led us to this

Who will miss the Callieach?

Who will miss her kiss?

What have we done?

What have we done?

The power of the Callieach

Has surrendered to the sun

Her healing in the winter

Her protection of the snow

Is going now to leave us

To a world we cannot know

Whales need her icy waters

As the krill are born beneath

She gives shelter to the kingdoms

Of Bears and Birds and Fish.

And all the creatures of the snow

Who sleep in icy bliss

And who will miss the Callieach?

Who will miss her kiss?

I will miss you mother,
Your winter healing arts
The blanket of protection That
you spread on highest parts
Of alps and mountains in this
land
As you call across the sea
To keep the balance of the
seasons
That feed and nurture me.



I will morn the Callieach
The mother of the dark
Who holds the ancient waters
Of another time and ark
Who will bring forth life, from
hidden lakes
As her body melts sway
Birth waters flooding coastal
planes
Birth of a hotter day



Well we've wanted it all
And we've taken it too
We've raped the proud mother
I've got more than you
Our greed and our anger
Our need for just more
And now our Earth Mother
Is outside our door



The Callieach's going
The icy poles gone
The sea will be rising
The coast will be shorn
We'll all loose a packet
We'll loose islands and towns
We'll loose a lot more
When the mother goes down

Its happened before
But it happened because
The mother, our Earth
She had a just cause
She knew what was needed
To balance things out
And so the earth
Turned and it all came about



Now things are changing
But this time its us
And soon well be riding
At the back of the bus
It'll take a long time
To fix this mess up
And maybe she can't
Cause we've filled our cup

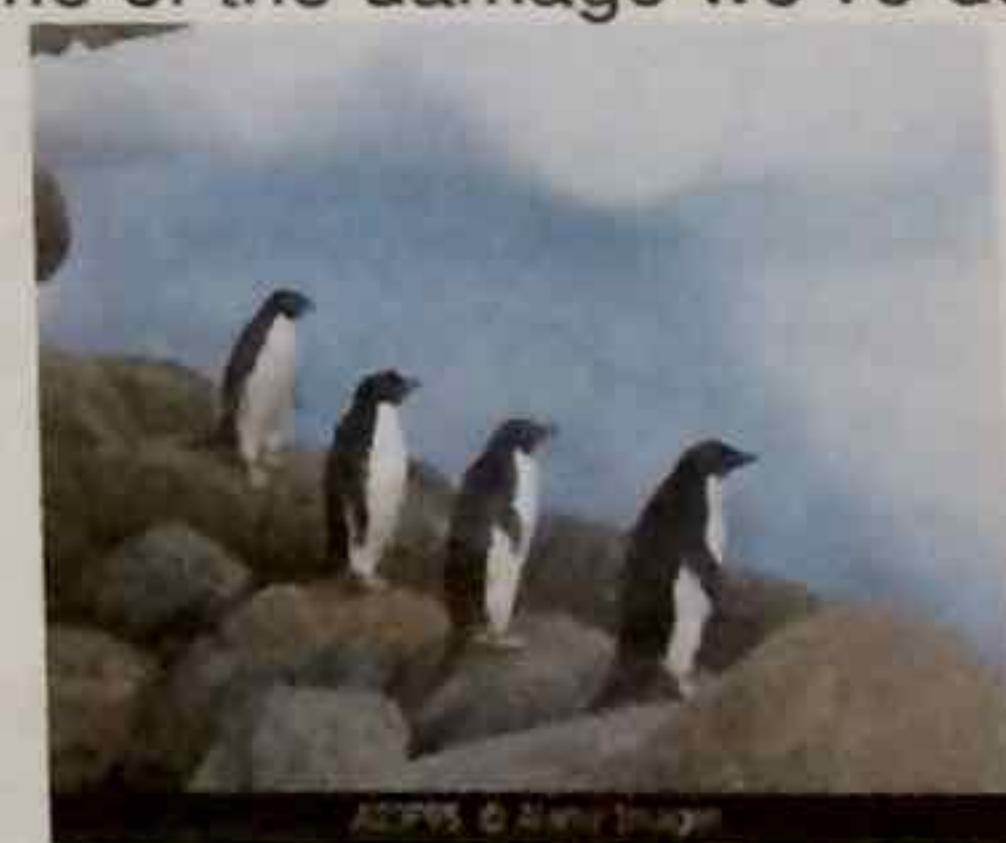
Have a good look at Mars
Cause I really believe
That Mars is our future
And once was our past.
We wanted it all
And it looks like we won
And now it is going
Into the sun

Work with the water
Work with the wind
Give up the oil
And abandon the coal
If we start straight away
We maybe will resolve
Some of the damage we've done

Millions will starve
Millions will weep
We'll hear them all wailing
Deep into our sleep
And I guess that's what happens
When winner takes all
As we watch the earth
Will she stumble and fall

And don't blame the others
The ones who have more
We're all going to tremble
When she knocks at the door
The signs were all there
And we couldn't care
Enough and changed nothing at all.

Work with the water
Work with the wind
Give up the oil
And abandon the coal
If we start straight away
We maybe will solve
Some of the damage we've done



Tamsin Rae sent in the thrilling images of Antarctic Ice.

The water froze the instant the wave broke through the ice. That's
what it is like in Antarctica where it is the coldest weather in
decades. Water freezes the instant it comes in contact with the air!
The temperature of the water is already some degrees below

Southern Ceremony and Ritual Gwers

Tom Robertson

"And what are the seasons of the year save your own thoughts changing? Spring is an awakening in your breast and summer but a recognition of your fruitfulness. Is not autumn the ancient in you singing a lullaby to that which is still a child in your being? And what, I ask you, is winter save sleep big with dreams of all the other seasons." Kahlil Gibran, The Garden of the Prophet

Dear 'Southerner',
The Ceremonies provided in the OBOD booklets are a very useful resource for designing seasonal ceremonies for New Zealand. However there are a few changes that have to be made to reflect the different energies of this land. The sun travels in a different direction through the sky and North is the hot fire direction while South is cold and icy. This Gwers can be used to assist you to simply modify the OBOD ceremonies in the booklets to be appropriate for New Zealand and the Southern Hemisphere.
Yours in Love, Peace and Light
Tom

What is required: OBOD Seasonal booklets

What to do to convert these ceremonies for the Southern Lands and more particularly for New Zealand:

1. Change the Directions of North and South
2. Check the flow of the ceremony to ensure that the North/South changes still flow logically – noting that the sunwise direction is anticlockwise for the Southern Hemisphere.
3. You may want to modify the Honouring of the Four directions to more reflect the land you live in.

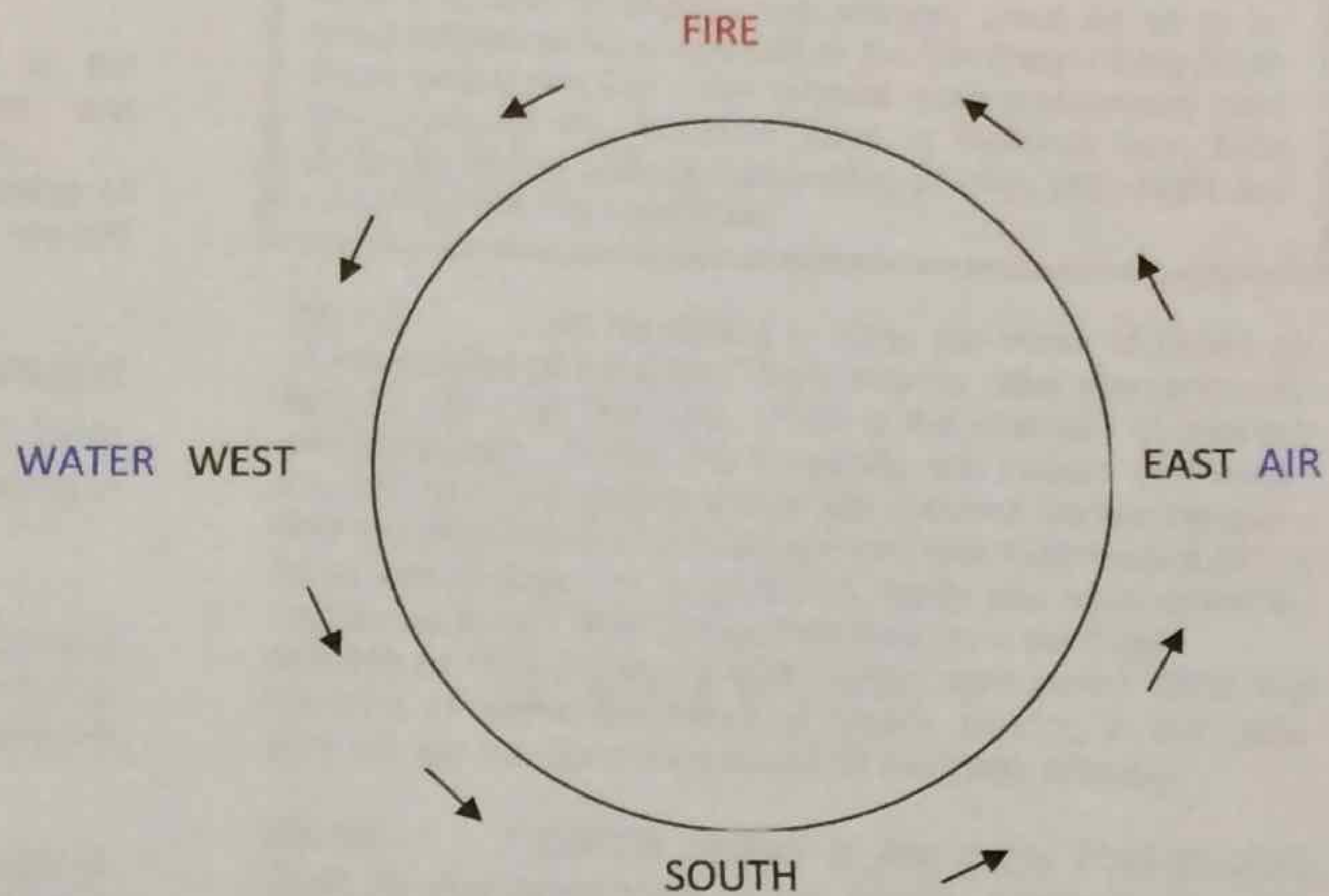
First and most important change to make is to change South and North. The OBOD ceremonies in the Seasonal booklets are written for the Northern Hemisphere where the hot, fiery

winter winds come from the Artic Circle. Throughout the ceremony were North has been written change it for South and likewise, South for North.

Once you have completed these changes, it is **very important** to read the whole ceremony and check the flow of the ceremony. For example during the Opening of the ceremony there is "peace to the quarters" which you will need to check and possibly change the order of the directions to reflect the anticlockwise movement while maintaining the intent:

OBOD version:

"**Druid 2** Let us now peace to the quarters, for without peace can no work be. (moving to salute each direction in turn, then returning to place in the West)



May there be peace in the North.
May there be peace in the South.
May there be peace in the West.
May there be peace in the East."

Southern Hemisphere version:

"**DRUID 2:** Let us now peace to the quarters, for without peace can no work be. (moving to salute each direction in turn, then returning to place in the West)

May there be peace in the South.
May there be peace in the North.
May there be peace in the West.

| North Hemisphere (Britain) | | Southern Hemisphere (New Zealand) |
|----------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| SOUTH | → | NORTH |
| NORTH | → | SOUTH |
| Opening is | → | Opening is |
| Clockwise (Sunwise) | | Anticlockwise (Sunwise) |
| Closing is | → | Closing is |
| Anticlockwise | | Clockwise |

sun and the hot winds are in the South while the North is cold

Now that Peace has been invoked it is time to Honour the Four Directions and here too note the change of direction of flow going from: E => S => W => N (Northern Hemisphere) to:
E => N => W => S (Southern Hemisphere).
[See circle diagram above]
An example is set out below:

May there be peace in the East."

OBOD version (taken from the Alban Arthan booklet):

"Druid 2: Let the four directions be honoured, let the gateways of the quarters be opened, that power and radiance might enter our circle for the good of all beings.

EAST (*turning and facing outwards*): With the blessing of the hawk of dawn soaring in the clear pure air, we call upon the powers of the East.

SOUTH (*turning and facing outwards*): With the blessing of the great stag in the heat of the chase, and the inner fire of the sun, we call upon the powers of the South.

WEST (*turning and facing outwards*): With the blessing of the salmon of wisdom who dwells within the sacred waters of the pool, we call upon the powers of the West.

NORTH (*turning and facing outwards*): With the blessing of the great bear of the starry heavens and the deep and fruitful earth, we call upon the powers of the North.

All four then turn to face into the circle.

ALL: May the harmony of our circle be complete."

Southern Hemisphere version from a modified Alban Arthan ceremony.doc for New Zealand

"DRUID 2: Let the four directions be honoured, let the gateways of the Quarters be opened, that power and radiance might enter our circle for the good of all things.

EAST (*turning and facing outwards*): With the blessing of Kahu, hawk of the dawn soaring in the clear pure air, we call upon the powers of the East.

NORTH (*turning and facing outwards*): With the blessings of the Great Pahutukawa Tree, of Our Ancestors who came from the North, and the sacred element of fire that burns in us all, we call upon the powers of the North.

WEST (*turning and facing outwards*): With the blessing of the salmon of wisdom who dwells within the sacred Waters of the pool, and the Sea that surrounds us, we call upon the powers of the West.

SOUTH (*turning and facing outwards*): With the blessings of the Southern Cross of the starry heavens and of Tuatara, guardian of the deep and fruitful Earth, we call upon the powers of the South.

All four then turn to face into the circle.

ALL: May the harmony of our circle be complete."

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All four then turn to face into the circle.

ALL: May the harmony of our circle be complete."

You have now changed the direction or order the Directions are honoured. You can now go through the remainder of the ceremony changing the directions North and South.

Now it is time to change the imagery used so as to be more related to New Zealand or the Southern Hemisphere place where you live. The excerpt, from a ceremony from the Grove of the Summer Stars in Pukerua Bay, New Zealand, below provides examples of what you might like to call in from the Directions.

"East : I will be calling in Kahu the Hawk of Dawn as representative of the East. There may be other elements you wish to call in at this time. East is the direction of intellect and knowledge, Te Ra, the Dragonfly, the Initiator of Energy, the time of dawn. As you call in the element, sense the clear blue sky above and ahead of you, and feel the blessing of the dawn and of Kahu, or the power or entity you have called in, and sense power flowing into the circle from the East.
(*turning to face outwards and raising right palm*) With the blessing of Kahu, the Hawk of Dawn, soaring in the clear pure air, we call upon the powers of the East. (Pause)

North : I will be calling in the great Pohutukawa Tree as representative of the North. North is also the direction of intuition and creativity, the Phoenix, the Salamander, Fiery Dragon, the time of midday. As you call in the element, see warm northern lands before you in the noon-day sun. Sense the blessing of the great Pohutukawa Tree, or the power or entity you have called in, and feel power flowing into the circle from the North.

(*turning to face outwards and raising right palm*) With the blessing of the great Pohutukawa Tree that stands in the North, and the inner fire of the sun, we call upon the powers of the North.

West : I will be calling in the Salmon of Wisdom as representative of the West. West is also the direction of emotion and deep heart, Marama the moon, Taniwha, Goddess Maat, the time of sunset. As you call in the element, see the sun setting over the sea or a lake. Sense the blessing of the Salmon, or the power or entity you have called in, and feel power flowing into the circle from the West.

(turning to face outwards and raising right palm) With the blessing of the Salmon of Wisdom who dwells within the sacred waters of the pool, we call upon the powers of the West.

South: I will be calling in the vast realm of Antarctica as representative of the South. South is also the direction of the Great Serpent, the Bear, the five human senses, grounding, the time of midnight. As you call in the element, imagine you're gazing into a clear night sky, see the stars shining in the darkness, sense the blessings of Antarctica, or the power or entity you have called in, and feel power flowing into the circle from the South.

(turning to face outwards and raising right palm) With the blessing of the vast realm of Antarctica and of the starry Heavens and the deep and fruitful Earth, we call upon the powers of the South.

(Pause. Then all turn inwards.)"

This same ceremony follows on from the above and adds a distinctly New Zealand "flavour" by invoking the Ancient Maori Gods, including Papatuanuku, Earth Mother, and Ranginui, Sky Father.

"**EAST:** Let us move our attention to Papatuanuku, Mother Earth, beneath us. Sense her energy flowing up into us, and the energy of Ranginui, Sky Father, flowing down into us — meeting in the centre of our beings. (pause) Allow yourselves to feel connected to both Earth and Sky....."

The ceremony from the Grove of the Summer Stars also invokes the Maori Gods when giving peace to the quarters:

"**EAST:** Let us now give peace to the quarters, for without peace can no work be.
(All turn to the East)

EAST: Let us send Peace flowing to the East — Pou-ke-te-Whiti, across this land, over farms and wild places, hills and valleys, over land and sea. (expand to include global peace working)
(raising right palm) May there be peace in the East.

(All turn to the North)

NORTH: Peace flowing to all our neighbours to the North — Pou-ki-te-Raki, through homes and gardens, bush and desert, over land and sea. (expand to include global peace working)

(raising right palm) May there be peace in the North.

(all turn to the West)

WEST: Peace flowing out to all our neighbours in the West — Pou-ke-te-Uru, over land and sea. (expand to include global peace working)
(raising right palm) May there be peace in the West.

(all turn to the South)

SOUTH: Peace flowing out to the South — Pou-ke-te-Tonga, picture it flowing out over Wellington, Cook Strait, Te Wai Pounamu, the Southern Oceans and the frozen continent of Antarctica. (expand to include global peace working)
(raising right palm) May there be peace in the South."

An excellent resource for adding a New Zealand feeling to your ceremony is:

"Celebrating the Southern Seasons — Rituals for Aotearoa" by Juliet Batten, Pub by Random House, New Zealand 2005, 2nd Edition.

So now you are ready to try modifying a ceremony, go ahead and try it out.

BUT remember:

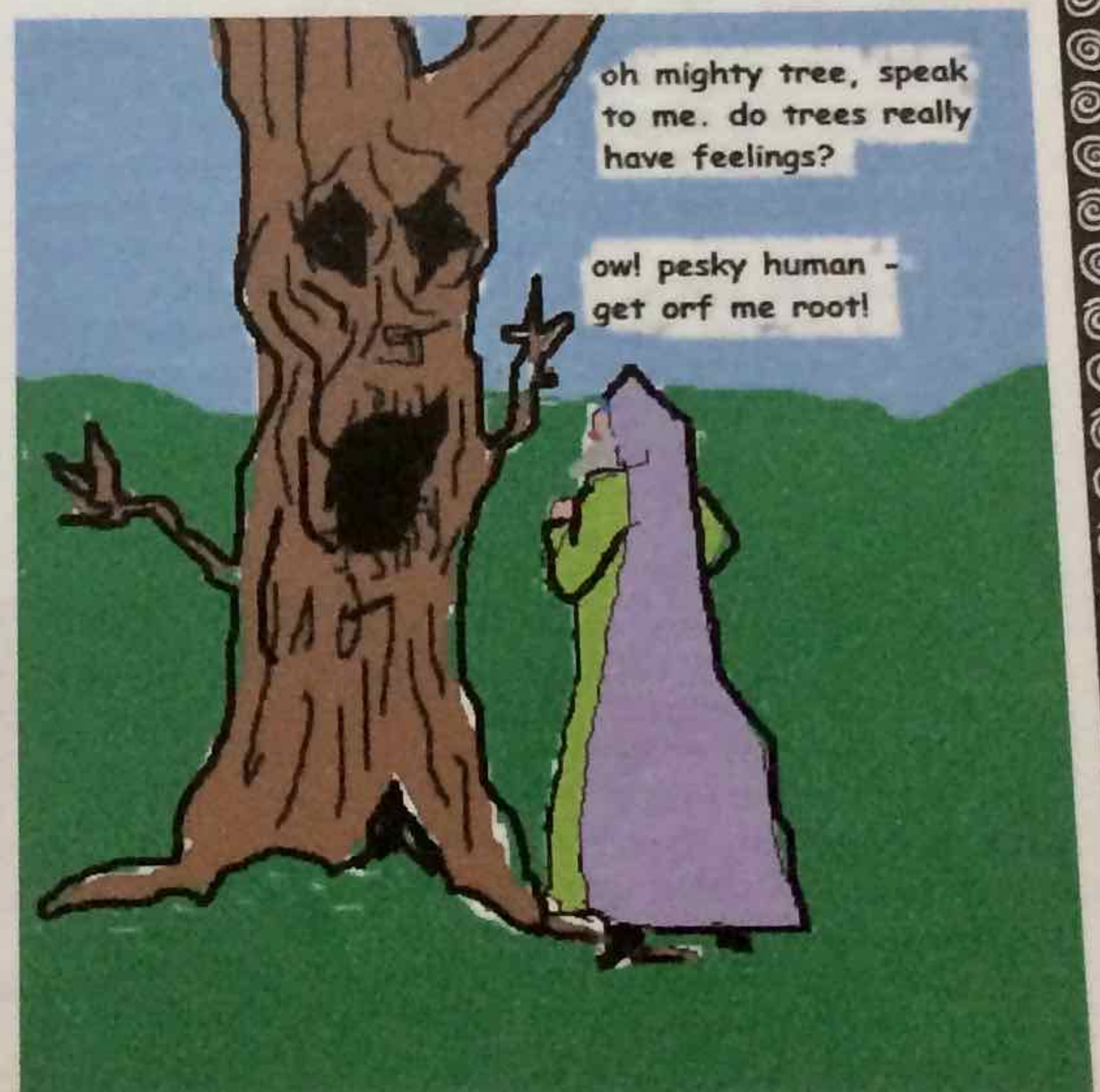
"Of course, casting a circle can be a futile dance. We might read what it says in a book and follow it, letter for letter, or hear some teacher describe what should be done and attempt to copy this. Any dogma — for instance that the circle must be cast with a consecrated wand, that it is the scribing of an impenetrable line of silver-blue energy, that it must be cast clockwise starting in the east — is best respectfully ignored. the casting of a circle is about our own unique expression of spirituality, sanctuary and sanctity. If we know why we are doing it and we are sensitive to the energy, with a little guidance or affirmation we can find our own way."

From: Living Druidry, Magical Spirituality for the Wild Soul" by Emma Restall Orr, Published by Piatkus Co, UK 2004, p43)

And if you want to use a wand, visualise a line of silver-blue or gold silver line to create your sacred space then it really is up to you. Remember the last line of the above quote.....

May your ceremonies flow with the Energies of these Southernlands.

Nature Talks Back



magical words

by Vyvyan Ogma Wyverne

It's the chief pride and pleasure of a good bard to use well-polished words, each like a gem, so that

every utterance, whether poetic, magical or mundane, will be endowed with the right kind of magic, spruce and clean and clear as the first daisy in spring! So how does one begin?

Break or cut a small branch off a tree (with the tree's permission, of course), or just imagine one. Choose a good straight stoutish one about as thick as your thumb and as long as your fore-arm.

call it a stick. Look at it, its shape, colours and textures, touch it's barky or woody surface, smell it, taste it, tap it against your hand, against another small branch, against something hard, something soft, whizz it through the air and listen to the sounds it makes. How do you feel about it? Pleased? Or dissatisfied? Neutral? Does it feel like a friendly stick, or a stern, punitive stick? What images pass through your mind as you hold, touch, smell, taste, tap and whizz it about in the air? Think about what uses might be found for it – nice ones, nasty ones...

Now call it a rod. Can you feel any difference in your subtle responses to this piece of wood now that you've uttered this new name over it? Does the 'rod' feel different, inspire different feelings, attitudes or ideas in you, or does it motivate you to find different uses for it? You might think of a craftsman's measuring rod, part of a machine or chair or wooden rack of some sort, or is it a rod of discipline as in 'spare the rod and spoil the child'?

What happens if you call it a baton, a staff, or even just a piece of wood, for that matter?

Whatever differences you notice in your response to that piece of wood in your hand, according to what name you called it by, are magical effects – the effects of the magical power of the words you uttered.

Now try calling your piece of wood a wand. Perhaps you can feel the subtle changes in the energy of the wand, the sudden access of awen that happens when you do. For most people this exercise demonstrates not only that all words are magical, but also that some words are 'more magical' than others.

well, maybe 'more magical' isn't quite right if all things are magical.

When the magic of a thing, event, word, etc, sustains the prevailing or 'mundane' enchantment, it is scarcely noticeable, but nonetheless just as powerful in its own way as the magic of one that sustains a perceptibly extraordinary enchantment. School uniforms, fashionable hairstyles, conventional décor, mass media advertising, and myriad small details and broad trends sustain very different enchantments, but they are within the range we call mundane.

Normality is not unmagical, it is only that we are used to it. We quickly notice any significant variation in the enchantment of everyday life, and we often go out of our way to bring about variations that people will notice – by our choice of decorations for our homes or the fashions we adopt in clothing and grooming, the slang we use, our lifestyle choices. Every detail of everything is magical.

If everything is magical, no one thing can be more magical than another. Just as everything has its spiritual dimension, so too everything has its magical dimension, its potency and power to act and react in relation to all other objects and events, and is magical to repletion.

And so of course every word is magical in that each utterance generates its own enchantment, mediates the enchantment of the utterer's inner personality and modifies the existing enchantment of everyday reality. Think again of that word stick. Let it have all its pleasant associations in your mind and all the unpleasant ones too. Think of words that sound like it but mean something else – to stick to something, to stick something into something, or to stick out, a stick of licorice, incense, out in the sticks, quick-sticks! Chopsticks, digging sticks, musical claspsticks; and perhaps you had a strict school-teacher who was after all, not a bad old stick – and as many as you can find. Notice your own reaction to each of these associations, and also try to imagine what other's might be.

If they please you, let your mind roll on, explore the ideas and feelings, attitudes and inspirations that play about and feed and energise or weaken and distort your idea of a stick. Here you may begin to feel yourself instinctively crafting the magic of your word 'stick'. Everyone does this instinctively – it's just a matter of catching yourself at it. The process becomes much more effective as you consciously begin to participate in it.

Your word 'stick' will be quite different from anybody else's word 'stick', and the differences, while not important in ordinary conversation, can be major contributors to (or detractors from) the good enchantment you wish your word to cast.

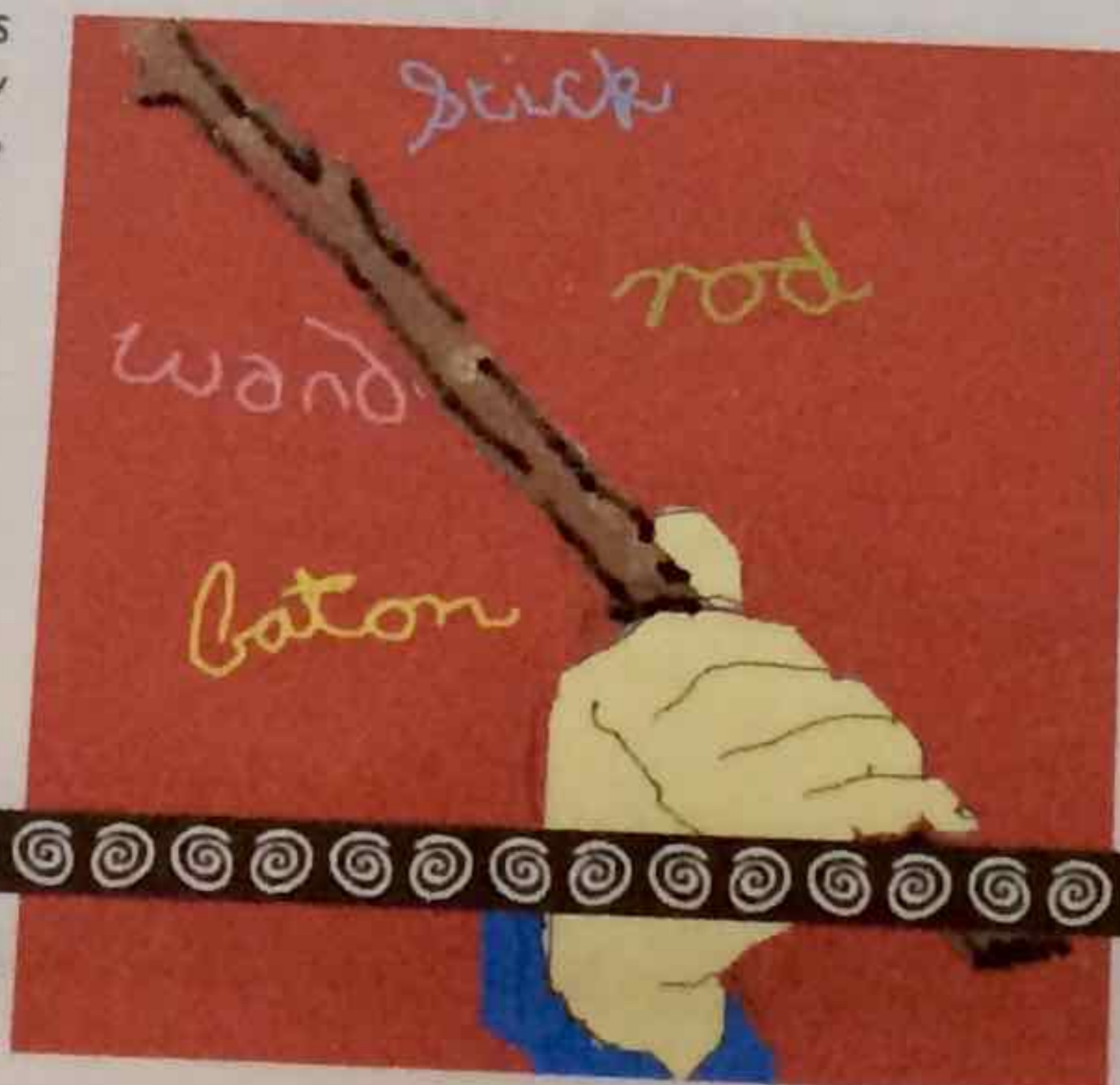
If the associations don't please you, consider why. Enquire gently, ask the word, ask your own soul, ask the awen. Perhaps you might quickly enough dismiss your fear of its punitive connotations – you know it won't be used for that. But feel the shift in the magic of the stick while it is in your magical hand as you reassure it, yourself, the awen, and all those around you that 'this stick will never be used to inflict pain'. Actually say it out loud, in the words of your choice. This will take the potential subliminal threat from your word.

If some association of the word annoys you, and you don't quite know why or even what the association is, feel yourself pass the annoying part of the word's enchantment over to your subliminal wisdom, where your wiser self can deal with it in dreams or while you are preoccupied with other things.

You might visualise your annoyance, or the annoying part of the enchantment, or both if they seem to be inseparable, moving from one place on the altar of your being to another place, perhaps out of sight.

This will ensure that the annoyance will not distort the enchantment of your word, whether you are using it in mundane conversation or in a magical charm. It will also affect the deva of the word, so that it is that little bit clearer for everyone else who utters their own version of it, and ultimately brings a bright clear blessing, a pure and wholesome enchantment to the object it names.

That's just one glimpse of the magic of words. If you want to participate consciously in the crafting of your own vocal magic. You can vary this exercise so as to purify and heal and enhance the enchantment of any word that holds your attention – try words you use often, words you hear often, words that worry you, or get on your nerves, or stimulate and interest you, and new words that excite or thrill you, and before long perhaps you'll find that, after all, the words are listening!



The Ballad of Tam Lin

(traditional)

O I forbid you, maidens a',
That wear gowd on your hair,
To come or gae by Carterhaugh,
For young Tam Lin is there.

There's nane that gaes by Carterhaugh
But they leave him a wad,
Either their rings, or green mantles,
Or else their maidenhead.

Janet has kilted her green kirtle
A little aboon her knee,
And she has broded her yellow hair
A little aboon her bree,
And she's awa to Carterhaugh
As fast as she can hie.

When she came to Carterhaugh
Tam Lin was at the well,
And there she fand his steed standing,
But away was himsel.

She had na pu'd a double rose,
A rose but only twa,
Till upon then started young Tam Lin,
Says, Lady, thou's pu nae mae.

Why pu's thou the rose, Janet,
And why breaks thou the wand?
Or why comes thou to Carterhaugh
Withoutten my command?

"Carterhaugh, it is my own,
My daddy gave it me,
I'll come and gang by Carterhaugh,
And ask nae leave at thee."

Janet has kilted her green kirtle
A little aboon her knee,
And she has broded her yellow hair
A little aboon her bree,
And she is to her father's ha,
As fast as she can hie.

Four and twenty ladies fair
Were playing at the ba,
And out then came the fair Janet,
The flower among them a'.

Four and twenty ladies fair
Were playing at the chess,
And out then came the fair Janet,
As green as onie glass.

Out then spake an auld grey knight,
Lay oer the castle wa,
And says, Alas, fair Janet, for thee,
But we'll be blamed a'.

"Haud your tongue, ye faus auld loon,
Some ill death may ye die!
Father my bairn on whom I will,
I'll father none on thee."

Out then spak her father dear,
And he spak meek and mild,
"And ever alas, sweet Janet," he says,
"I think thou gaest wi child."

"If that I gae wi child, father,
Mysel maun bear the blame,
There's neer a laird about your ha,
Shall get the bairn's name.

"If my love were an earthly knight,
As he's an elfin grey,
I wad na gie my ain true-love
For nae lord that ye hae.

"The steed that my true love rides on
Is lighter than the wind,
Wi siller he is shod before,
Wi burning gowd behind."

Janet has kilted her green kirtle
A little aboon her knee,
And she has broded her yellow hair
A little aboon her bree,
And she's awa to Carterhaugh
As fast as she can hie.

When she came to Carterhaugh,
Tam Lin was at the well,
And there she fand his steed standing,
But away was himsel.

She had na pu'd a double rose,
A rose but only twa,
Till up then started young Tam Lin,
Says, Lady, thou pu's nae mae.

"Why pu's thou the rose, Janet,
Amang the groves sae green,
And a' to kill the bonny babe
That we gat us between?"

"O tell me, tell me, Tam Lin," she says,
"For's sake that died on tree,
If eer ye was in holy chapel,
Or Christendom did see?"

"Roxburgh he was my grandfather,
Took me with him to bide
And ance it fell upon a day
That wae did me betide.

"And ance it fell upon a day
A cauld day and a snell,
When we were frae the hunting come,
That frae my horse I fell,
The Queen o' Fairies she caught me,
In yon green hill do dwell.

"And pleasant is the fairy land,
But, an eerie tale to tell,
Ay at the end of seven years,
We pay a tiend to hell,
I am sae fair and fu o flesh,
I'm feard it be mysel.

"But the night is Halloween, lady,
The morn is Hallowday,
Then win me, win me, an ye will,
For weel I wat ye may.

"Just at the mirk and midnight hour
The fairy folk will ride,
And they that wad their true-love win,
At Miles Cross they maun bide."

"But how shall I thee ken, Tam Lin,
Or how my true-love know,
Amang sa mony unco knights,
The like I never saw?"

"O first let pass the black, lady,
And syne let pass the brown,
But quickly run to the milk-white steed,
Pu ye his rider down.

This olden time Halloween song can still
raise the goose-bumps - even if some of
the words are now a bit quaint...

"For I'll ride on the milk-white steed,
And ay nearest the town,
Because I was an earthly knight
They gie me that renown.

"My right hand will be gloved, lady,
My left hand will be bare,
Cockt up shall my bonnet be,
And kaimed down shall my hair,
And thae's the takens I gie thee,
Nae doubt I will be there.

"They'll turn me in your arms, lady,
Into an esk and adder,
But hold me fast, and fear me not,
I am your bairn's father.

"They'll turn me to a bear sae grim,
And then a lion bold,
But hold me fast, and fear me not,
And ye shall love your child.

"Again they'll turn me in your arms
To a red het gand of airn,
But hold me fast, and fear me not,
I'll do you nae harm.

"And last they'll turn me in your arms
Into the burning gleed,
Then throw me into well water,
O throw me in with speed.

"And then I'll be your ain true-love,
I'll turn a naked knight,
Then cover me wi your green mantle,
And hide me out o sight."

Gloomy, gloomy was the night,
And eerie was the way,
As fair Jenny in her green mantle
To Miles Cross she did gae.

At the mirk and midnight hour
She heard the bridles ring,
She was as glad at that
As any earthly thing.

First she let the black pass by,
And syne she let the brown,
But quickly she ran to the milk-white steed,
And pu'd the rider down.

Sae weel she minded what he did say,
And young Tam Lin did win,
Syne covered him wi her green mantle,
As blythe's a bird in spring

Out then spak the Queen o' Fairies,
Out of a bush o broom,
"Them that has gotten young Tam Lin
Has gotten a stately-groom."

Out then spak the Queen o' Fairies,
And an angry woman was she,
"Shame betide her ill-far'd face,
And an ill death may she die
For she's taen awa the bonniest knight
In a' my companie.

"But had I kend, Tam Lin," said she,
"What now this night I ken,
I wad hae taen out thy twa grey een,
And put in twa een o stane."

Notice Board

GROVES AND SEED-GROUPS

SerpentStar would like to publish details of any seed-groups and groves currently operating in the Southern Hemisphere so that new OBODies can quickly find their way to them.

DUTCH DRUID TO VISIT OZ

I like to make in SerpentStar the **announcement** that I am going to Australia, Queensland, August 2008, and like to get in contact with Obodies to get information about Aboriginals and the land. Johan van Werven, the Netherlands aljo@orange.nl.

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

I have been working with the DD Project Team on creating a **Celtic Spirituality online magazine**, ranging from Pre-Christian, Reconstructionist, Druidic, Celtic Christian, and anything Celtic in between. We are getting close to the time when we want articles coming in. At the moment I still don't have a theme and we're still not sure when the first issue will come out – could be (Northern) Bealtaine, or it could be closer to the (Northern) Summer Solstice, as the Druid Sound section needs to be completely finished first before really delving into the magazine portion of the site.

So if you have essays, articles, poems/songs, photographs, artwork, and etcetera, that you'd like to see in the magazine, please email them to ona.kellen@gmail.com

INFORMATION WANTED

If you are planning an event, or know of any events coming up that might interest OBODies in the Southern Hemisphere, please drop a line or two to **SerpentStar** about it, at wyeuro@bigpond.com.

LikelyLinks

Druidic Dawn – is working towards becoming a social enterprise for the global druid community. Membership is by invitation from a member.

<http://www.druidicdawn.org>

The Druid Network – aims to give information and inspiration about the modern Druid tradition, Druidic practice and the history of Druidry. There's a small membership fee.

<http://druidnetwork.org>

A Scottish Blessing

*A h-uile latha sona dhut
Gun latha idir dona dhut!*

Translation:

Good to you every day,
without an evil day to you!

Crossword Puzzle answers

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

Kids Page

Junior Bards:

Bards like making **music**. Anyone can **make up a tune** and **whistle** or **sing** it so that others can **hear** it too. Perhaps you've made up a **nice poem** that you would like to **put to music**. Then you could teach your **friends** to **sing** it too. It would be a completely **new** song that has **never** been sung **before**. That's **very creative**!

When you've **made up** your **tune** or **song**, you might like to sing it to the **sounds** of **musical instruments**. Perhaps you know how to play a **flute** or **guitar**, or you might have a **drum**, or be able to borrow one.

It's **easy** to make a **drum** out of an upsidedown **bucket**. A wooden spoon makes a good **drum stick**. You can beat the **rhythm** as you sing your song.

You can make a good **xylophone** by putting different amounts of **water** in some jars and hitting them with a **spoon**. Perhaps someone older can help you to **tune up**. The more **water** you add, the higher the **note**.



Happy music-making!

Young Ovates:

Ovates learn about nature by being part of it. They know the trees and the **creatures** that dwell in them and make their homes within their **trunks** and branches and among their **roots** just as well as they know their human friends, and they always treat them with kindness and **respect**. Some Ovates are lucky enough to live in the **country**, where nature is all around them. They can get to know many different kinds of animals and **birds**, trees and wild plants by spending time in the **quiet places** in which they live.



1 A bird's nest in a sandalwood tree.

But **Ovates** who live in the city can find wild **creatures** living in their own gardens or parks, and they can get to **know all kinds** of animals and **plants**, landscapes and wetlands at home, from books, TV, DVDs and the World Wide Web.

Of course, **human beings** are part of nature too, even if we might sometimes forget that. Our pets and **farm animals**, and our gardens and parks are also part of nature. Ovates are always **gentle and kind** with animals, and with the plants and trees as well, because ovates know that even the tiny ones **all have souls** and can feel.

When the souls of the **wild beings** of nature know that you are their **friend**, that's when they begin to tell you their **secrets**.

Budding Druids:

Druid wisdom is tree wisdom. Druids have a special connection to **trees**, and know how to communicate with them; not just talking to them, **listening and learning** from them too. Perhaps there's a tree that's **special** to you. It might be one you've climbed when you were small and still **love**; or one that's new to you, but seems to call you and feels like a **friend**; it might be one you've admired from a distance, or even one you've only seen pictures of but felt a **bond with**. Your special tree might exist only in **fantasy**, like an ent out of Tolkein's *Lord of the Rings*, or like *The Faraway Tree* in Enid Blyton's book.

One way many Druids **strengthen** their bond with a special tree is by making a **wand** of its wood. If it's on private property, **ask permission** from the owner first. If your tree exists only in your **imagination**, use any good rod or stick to represent its wood.

To make your wand, go to the tree and **ask** for a wand. Do this in your **imagination** if your tree is unreachable. Tell your tree that you **promise** only to use your wand to do good in the world.

Then search the ground for a suitable stick – about as long as your **forearm** and as thick as your thumb. If you can't find any, the tree might let you **break or cut** off a small branch. **Thank** the tree for its gift. Some trees like to **be hugged**!

Now you can peel the bark from your wand, if you like, or not if you think it **looks good** with it on. You can carve **spirals** or runes or the awen on your wand to help to give it its own **unique character**. Has your wand got a **name**?

Wands have **personalities**. Remember always to be **courteous** to your wand.

Some druids carry their favourite wand in a **pouch** attached to their belt. You can use it to bring the positive, **life-enhancing** energies into any situation where you think they might be useful, or you can just hold it while **communicating** with your tree.



This is a Rowan wand.