

SERPENT STAR

A newsletter of The Order of Bards Ovates and Druids in the Southern Hemisphere



LUGHNASADH 2019



Welcome to the Lughnasadh 2019 issue of SerpentStar!

Hello All!

Remember how I said at Beltane that we'd taken a lot of photos at the 2018 Southern Hemisphere OBOD Assembly? Well seemingly that was nothing compared to what was taken at the 2019 (wonderfully acronym-ed) SHOBODA, held in stunning New Zealand in mid-January. This issue is mostly turned over to the attendees, though we also have special contributions from two new Macadamia Grove bards one of whom is being initiated at home over this Lughnasadh weekend.



For me, highlights included offering a dance piece in the Eisteddfod (with thanks to Katherine Short for the pic), the wonderful location and the opportunity to visit the Grove of the Summer Stars on their 'home turf' at The Woolshed. It was a great pleasure seeing Philip and Stephanie Carr-Gomm again (not having seen them since my first Assembly in 2014) and meeting the lovely Eimear Burke, incoming Chosen Chief. I hope to be able to attend the handover next year!

Glenn Conroy (Summer Stars) has created a lovely video set to a song composed by our newest Bards during SHOBODA and shared at the Eisteddfod - the video can be found here: www.groveofthesummerstars.nz/shoboda-2019 Never a truer word was spoken - Amazing!

Oh and make sure you read all the way to the last page - especially those of you who had the pleasure of trying Richard's mead at Assembly - for a nice surprise...

In peace and hopes for fair weather
Mandy / |\

SerpentStar, Lughnasadh 2019

SerpentStar is a free, volunteer-produced online newsletter for members of the Order of Bards Ovates and Druids in the Southern Hemisphere.

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Enquiries via email:
serpentstar.obod@gmail.com



OBOD in the Southern Hemisphere

Groves & Seed Groups

The following are groups currently listed on OBOD's official Groves & Seed Groups List for 2018 and have consented to have their information included in this list. Other groups run by OBOD members are listed in the Advertising section.

Brisa del Sur

We are a Seed Group called 'Brisa del Sur' (Southern Breeze) from Rosario, Argentina, and we are writing to introduce our group and share with you and the Order the fulfilling experience and wonderful learning we have had as a result of our journey along the Druid Path. You can contact us at southernbreezesfellowship@gmail.com and you can see our profile on Facebook www.facebook.com/Southernbreezesfellowship

The Cradle Seed Group

The Cradle Seed Group is based in Johannesburg, South Africa. The Group currently has only one Druid and three Bards 'in the making'. One area of focus is exploring other spiritual philosophies and understanding the synergies. Other areas of focus are to 'convert' traditional Ogham into the indigenous South African trees and also to understand and use indigenous medicinal plants and trees. All the eight yearly festivals are celebrated, all in solo as we are spread through South Africa – Johannesburg in Gauteng, Haenertsburg in Limpopo. Full moon meditations are conducted for peace and harmony. Email debby@triskel.co.za for details.



The Golden Wattle Seed Group

The Golden Wattle Seed Group are an OBOD Seed Group in Adelaide, SA. We hold ceremonies for the Wheel of the Year, nature walks, meditations and other rituals for peace and for the land. If you would like to get in contact with us, email us at golden.wattle.seed.group@gmail.com or connect with our Facebook 'Friends of' page: search Friends of the Golden Wattle Seed Group (OBOD).

The Grove of the Summer Stars

The Grove of the Summer Stars (Pukerua Bay, Wellington, New Zealand) celebrates the eight great Seasonal Festivals throughout the wheel of the year. Each of these Druid festivals is held as a community festival and meeting point for diverse creeds and cultures to honour the turning of the year, and give thanks for its abundance. The Equinox and Solstice festivals are open to all while the four Quarter Festivals are for Grove members only. We meet at The Woolshed/Grove of the Summer Stars at 11am on the nearest Sunday to the particular festival, except for Beltane and Samhain which are held at night. Lughnasadh is held on the Sunday during Druid Camp even though it is a little early, ie the third week of January (Wellington Anniversary weekend). On the day (or night) people can bring stories, poems, songs, dances, readings and insights etc to contribute to the theme. The ceremonies are followed by potluck feasting to which everyone contributes. Contact: pamela@thewoolshed.com

Macadamia Grove

Welcomes and is inclusive of South-East Queensland and Northern New South Wales OBOD members who wish to join in with any activities. We celebrate the eight festivals of the year, and organise other events depending on members' interests. As Brisbane is a central meeting point most of our events are held close to the city, often in the bushland of Mt Coot-tha. Non-members with an interest in Druidry are able to attend some rituals by prior arrangement. Contact Sandra: macademiagrove@hotmail.com

The Melbourne Grove

Welcomes all OBOD members (local, interstate and overseas) to its seasonal celebrations. Family and friends may also attend with a member and receive a warm welcome. In 2019 we will be celebrating the seasonal festivals on the following dates: Lughnasadh – Feb 3, Autumn Equinox - March 23, Samhuin – May 4, Winter Solstice - June 22, Imbolc - July 28, Spring Equinox - Sept 22, Beltane – Nov 3, and Summer Solstice – Dec 21. If you would like to join us please send an email to Elkie at elkiwhite@gmail.com or Khe-Ra, barbwitcombe@hotmail.com

Middle Earth Fellowship Seed Group

Tauranga, NZ. Also Medieval village, Medieval craft camps, Medieval dance and Border Morris dance. Contact Yvonne yjames@balnacoil.xtra.co.nz.

Silvereyes Seed Group

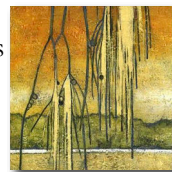
Perth Hills & members throughout the South West. Email: ghrianu@iinet.net.au

Song of the Eastern Sea Seed Group

Situated on the Central Coast of NSW, we invite OBOD members and guests to join us as we celebrate the eight festivals of the Wheel of the Year and explore nature and Druidry together. We have a number of projects in the planning, including a Sacred Grove planting, working on environmental issues as a group, and supporting our local community. Contact Chris at chris@druidryaustralia.org

The Windharp Seed Group

Based in the Adelaide Hills in South Australia and named after the She-oak or Casuarina, also known as a Windharp. She-oaks are known as windharps because of the mystical sound they make when the wind breathes through the knotted leaves - a soft music like that of the Aeolian Harp. We are a learning group who gather to celebrate the eight seasonal rituals of the wheel of the year and study together. We also hold various shared events and ceremonies that non-members are able to attend. Contact Tamzin Woodcock or Adrienne Piggott windharpseedgroup@gmail.com



Wollemi Seed Group

Nestled between the mountains and the sea, Wollemi Seed Group covers Newcastle, Lake Macquarie and the Greater Hunter Region. Rich with flowing rivers, fields and natural beauty, we meet fortnightly to explore the depths of the Bardic and Ovate paths. We meet for each of the festivals, and invite all interested in Druidry and the love earth to join us. For information, contact Rollick on 0423 626 290 or bonsaidruid@yahoo.com.au

Useful websites for SH OBODies:

www.druidryaustralia.org - A central online resource for druidry in Australia.

Druids DownUnder - Facebook group - a closed group for druids of any path, in the Southern Hemisphere and Australia in particular.

Don't see your group or website listed here? Send a listing to serpentstar.obod@gmail.com and spread the word!

OBOD Worldwide

www.druidry.org - Official site of the Order of Bards Ovates and Druids

www.druidcast.libsyn.com - Direct download and shownotes for DruidCast (or subscribe via iTunes)

Facebook Groups - *OBOD Friends* (open to members and non-members, discussing general topics) and *Order of Bards Ovates and Druids* (closed group for members of the Order).

Publications

Touchstone (HQ) Sent free to all members taking the course, and once you have finished receiving course material you can subscribe separately. Touchstone is only available to members of the Order.

Contact Penny touchstone@druidry.org

Druid (USA) www.druidmagazine.com

Druidenstein (German) www.feuersprung.de

Dryade (Dutch) www.obod.dds.nl

Il Calderone (Italian) issuu.com/ilcalderone

Menhir (French) issuu.com/obod-menhir/docs

Ophiusa (Portuguese) www.obod.com.pt/ophiusa.htm

Pagan Transitions

Pagan Transitions was created over 12 years ago to help pagans create meaningful and beautiful funeral rites which reflect the spirituality of the person who has passed through the Gateway, and offer support to the bereaved.

As well as templates that can be adapted to suit individual funeral requirements, and a selection of reading material and poems, there is also a list of Pagan Funeral Celebrants who can create and lead the funeral rite for you and arrange everything with the Funeral Director. Pagan Transitions is a volunteer-run free service.

If you are a Pagan Funeral Celebrant and would like to be listed please visit www.pagan-transitions.org.uk and complete the application form. Any suggestions on how the service can be improved are welcome.





The header image for the Aotearoa section of SerpentStar has been created by Glenn Conroy, who writes: "The image is comprised of several elements that are of special meaning to members of the Grove of The Southern Stars; Matariki, (seven sisters constellation), pounamu, (greenstone), ti kouka (cabbage tree), and of course Kapiti Island."

Dear Southern Hemisphere OBODies...

Many of you have asked for a copy of the Lughnasadh ritual we did at the 18th Southern Hemisphere OBOD Assembly in Aotearoa New Zealand and I'm happy to share The Rite here in SerpentStar. With the gap ever widening between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots', let us use our rituals to joyfully offer sustenance, care and compassion to all.

With love and blessings from the Grove of the Summer Stars
Pamela

Lughnasadh/Te Waru First Fruits/Lean Time

The theme of this season is the ageing of the year as the Earth Mother becomes the Crone and the warrior Sun King Lugh is soon to be felled. At this season we are faced with divergent meanings, depending on which cultural tradition we look at. In the European grain cycle of wheat and barley, it is the beginning of harvest, and the first loaves of bread are offered to the Great Mother. In the Maori cycle of the kumara, it is not yet harvest; in fact - far from being a time of plenty - it is te waru patote, the lean month, when the staple crop is at its scarcest.

THE RITE

HERALD: Within this circle and in the apparent world. In the name of the Sky Father, Ranginui, and the Earth Mother, Papatuanuku, the True Taker and the Great Giver; in the name of Lugh, Lord of the Shining Hand of Light, peace is now declared. I proclaim this Festival of Lughnasadh/Te Waru, within this circle. I declare the opening of this ceremony of Lughnasadh. One approaches the sacred Circle with a wheel.

PENDRAGON: Ask then of him what is his purpose?

HERALD: Who are you with this wheel and why are you here?

YOUTH OF SUMMER: I am the Youth of Summer, come to present this wheel to the Chiefs of the Order.

HERALD: *Reports to Chiefs* It is the Youth of Summer, come to present this wheel to the Chiefs of the Order.

CHIEFS: Bid him of the wheel approach and welcome.

Swordbearer escorts Youth of Summer around to Chiefs.

YOUTH OF SUMMER: O Chiefs of the Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids, I present to you this wheel to be made fiery.

CHIEFS: *Laying hands on the wheel.* O Youth of Summer, we accept this wheel, emblem of the cycle of the year and of this its hub, at the fires of Lugh.

The officers of the quarters come forward, take it and place it on the centre stand. The Fire-Bearer places candle on the hub of the wheel.

FIRE BEARER: The hub is the high place of Lugh, where at this time the sun weds earth and the feast of the autumnal fruits begins.

DRUID 1: As we revel in the height of summer, let us remember how the wheel has turned.

SOUTH: In the night of the Year, the Land lay bare.

EAST: In the dawn of the Year, buds burst, shoots sprouted.

NORTH: In the noon of the year, flowers bloomed, petals blossomed.

WEST: Now is the First Harvest. Ripe fruit falls, the golden corn will be cut and thrashed, hay will be laid out to dry.

SOUTH: As our lives turn inwards, as the evenings grow longer, know you this — that as surely as the seed needs the earth to grow, so do our souls need the longer nights to dream, and our eyes the darkness of the night sky to see more clearly.

HERALD: Behold, Lugh the Solar King, and Tailtiu, his foster-mother attend our ceremony. At this time of Lughnasadh we honour Tailtiu also. She who cleared the land for planting and died of her toil that we might grow the grain to fill our granaries and our bellies. Soon the time will come when Lugh also will make his sacrifice.

Lugh and Tailtiu enter the circle hand in hand. Tailtiu leads Lugh to stand beside the Earth Mother.

HERALD: Behold, Lugh the Solar King (Lugh – wearing a golden cloak), approaches Papatuanuku, the Earth Mother, to whom he will make his sacrifice.

DRUID 1: The union of the Solar King and the Sovereign Queen of our lands ensures the fertility of the earth. The nights grow longer and the Sun God is waning. Bees are buzzing around and fruits are ripening. Mother Earth is growing bountiful, though in sorrow at her consort's diminishing powers and sacrifice. Now, as the wheel turns, the Solar King must give up his power, and in his sacrifice the harvest is assured.

DRUID 2: We are born of the Earth, we eat of the Earth, we drink her waters, and we breath her air. And when we die, our body returns to her body.

THE SUN KING: Let us be glad of the Mother's gifts. She bears us as She bears the wheat in the field. Remember, as you begin to gather the harvest of the land, that also you may gather the fruits and seed of your own soul's harvest.

THE EARTH MOTHER: Let us then also remember the Father's gifts.

THE SUN KING: See this apple, fruit of the womb of the Earth Mother. Look how it has grown from the seed. See how the tree has flowered and fruited, until this apple has fallen ripe from the tree. I reached out my hand, and caught it, midway between heaven and earth, between life and death. This is my gift to you: the transient moment of ripeness, the single perfect moment of readiness, when the fruit falls from the tree to its death even as it reaches its own peak of life.

THE EARTH MOTHER: Death and glory, healing, transformation and renewal; this is the journey of the seed; and the seed is Spirit.

NORTH (*standing in the centre, holding up the harvested wheat for all to see*): Born is hope, ripe at the harvest; so may you be blessed.

WEST (*going to the centre, takes flour and adds water to it in full view of all*): Washed in the waters, healed and hallowed; so may you be blessed.

SOUTH (*takes a loaf, covered in a cloth and unseen, and holds this up to be seen by all*): The mystery of transformation; so may you be blessed.

EAST (*uncovers the loaf which should be as new-baked as possible and holds this up to be seen by all*): This is the bread of our life; so may you be blessed.

Elegist (Moirra) keens a lament while Joanna says:

My people cry out, But the baskets of food are empty

And the promises that filled them, nurture the thistles of abandoned courtyards.

DRUID 1: While for many the ovens are full, the Maori rua (storage pits) are empty. It is not harvest for everyone; economic discrepancies are a reality in our lands.

DRUID 2: Let this be the Festival of the Half Harvest, a time to reflect on inequalities of wealth distribution and to consider how resources may be shared.

EARTH MOTHER: The bees, blessed in their dance of harvest by the Solar King, now have hives full of golden sweetness. Let us gift their bounty until a new harvest fills the store houses of all.

SUN KING: Truth is the harvest scythe. Compassion is the honeycomb. What is sown – love or anger or bitterness – that shall be your bread. What is harvested from the heart – sour, bitter or sweet, that shall be your honey.

The bees and bakers hand around bread and honey to all. Two pieces of bread are handed to the first person in the circle and two tiny pots of honey are handed to the second person in the circle. They then exchange gifts so that each has a piece of bread and a pot of honey.



*The bees and bakers continue around the circle making the same offering to every pair.
(Sun King walks to centre and addresses all)*

SUN KING: Soon my strength will wane and I will retreat to the far realms to return at Imbolc to nourish the seed anew

EAST: In the morning the Child of Light is reborn. His renewal is in the Air. This is Life.

NORTH: At midday the golden Lord is sacrificed in his strength. His passion is in the Fire. This is Light.

WEST: In the evening His body is washed for its wounds. His healing is in the Waters. This is Love.

SOUTH: At night His form is laid deep in the lap of the Land. His transformation is in the Earth. This is Law.



Inspiration, wisdom and blessings from New Zealand



Eight fire lighters step forward and light the sparklers on the wheel.

CHIEF: Take it about the circle, that all be fulfilled. Let the lights be set for the high place of summer, the autumn fires.

Youth of Summer accompanied by the Sword-bearer takes the wheel completely round the circle.

As the sparklers die away the Earth Mother removes Lugh's golden cloak.

All turn towards west and the setting sun....



Aotearoa



Inspiration, wisdom and blessings from New Zealand



ASSEMBLY PIX PT 1
BY ADY ACORN



Sacred, Enshrined, Enchanted...

SHOBODA 2019, Reviewed by Danuta Raine

Here I am with Druid Pilgrims Michael Vlasto and Ka'yil Shaw at Rosemary's beautiful B&B cottage, Earthsounds in Taumarunui, NZ. We have just spent the last five days at Tatum Park outside Wellington, NZ, with The Grove of the Summer Stars for the 2019 SHOBODA - the 19th Southern Hemisphere OBOD Assembly. Words begin to fail as I write of that time, so intense, close, transformative, emotional, connective and illuminating. How do you describe the coming together of this family of Bards, Ovates and Druids? How do you explain the welcome of the tree people, the stone people, the bird people, the animal people, spirit people and human people of Tatum Park? Sacred? Enshrined? Enchanted?

I could write of the things we did, of initiations, workshops, rituals and meals and still not capture the essence of the time. These are words, and there was so much more, and something far beyond words, too. I could write of the genuine loving kindness of our Chosen Chief, Philip Carr-Gomm, and our Chief-to-be Eimear Burke - Philip leaving the position and Eimear taking it up. I could speak about the deep impression Stephanie had upon me, a woman who felt like a gentle spring shower whenever I was in her presence. Subtle feelings of refreshment, long and deep gratitude, rose in me for these people who offer so much and take so little in return. But still, I would miss something in telling you of this.

I could write of the friendships that were refreshed during these days, of the elevation of spirits as we shared time, broke bread, sang, spoke, played music, and opened our hearts to one another. I could speak of the safe spaces and sacred words we created and shared, and of the gifts opened in the people all around me. There was one who spoke of feeling freed from performance anxiety, and another who told of their excitement at sharing a new skill, a new instrument, a poem, a song. Again and again, I heard of someone moving through the deep well of transformation, drinking life and light from the nwyfre of the land and coming together of souls. This one has been released from some unnamed limitation, a fear, a trauma, a lost hope. That one has had some love renewed, a realisation, a direction, a vision opened within them. And always, there is the story of groups coming together, sharing space, doing an activity and discovering that they can do something together that they could not have done alone.

“Amazing!”



With all this, I still will not have captured something of that essence, of that perfume of synergy that surrounded us as we all moved through the week. As we loved each other, we shed what was no longer of use, of growth, of life, and we allowed ourselves to be planted with the deep seed of the Sun God, Lugh - the seed of light radiating the depths of our being, incubating in the soil of our sacred selves.

This is, and was, pilgrimage. Pilgrimage is the intent to share and be, to see and know, to transcend thought, space and time within the sacred circle of druid work, a work that is fully integrated with who and what we are. And it doesn't really matter who forms the liquor within the cauldron of this shared experience, because in the end the mead tastes just as fine, full and flavourful. The intent to gather and immerse ourselves within the celebration of each other, and the land that nurtures us, is the very essence of pilgrimage and the experience of assembling together.

So, I am truly grateful that the great spirit that we all honour has made the opportunity for me to gather again with this OBOD druid family, and of the beautiful blessing of generosity shown by the Grove of the Summer Stars and their grove mother and father, Pamela and Richard. They have wrapped love around us and opened a space for us all to share, a safe space that nurtured tremendous gifts to reveal themselves amongst us. I am honoured to have met so many OBOD friends, and to have sat with our eldership. It was such a beautiful blessing to be able to thank Philip and Stephanie for the work they have done, and to share a little of how it has helped my family and me. It was such a privilege to have met Eimear, and I thank Pamela and the Grove of the Summer Stars for making it possible.



Sometimes I look around at my life and I am completely amazed by it, almost shocked by the grace of it. Just the privilege of being a part of such a genuine and beautiful group of people is more of a gift than I can properly express. And to know there is a fine web that holds us together, the beautiful weaving of the elements and time and our common practice of druidism within OBOD, activates a well-spring of hope that I didn't even know I had within me. I didn't even know I needed it.

But what is more, coming to these events has nurtured an understanding that the gifts I contain are worthy of sharing. There is a place for me here, just as there is a place for each one of us, and our offerings are not just worthy of sharing, they are longed for. In coming together and knowing each other through these assemblies, I have come to appreciate some the beauty within myself and how 'creation pants in anticipation' of me sharing it. It isn't a proud or boastful thing, but an appreciation for the calling, the vocation within me, and the joy in witnessing the revelation of the vocation within those around me.

So, I am already planning for joining you all again: in Adelaide for the Windharp Druid Camp in April 2019, and the Melbourne Assembly in April, 2020. It will be too long, as even across the waters we can now recognise the subtle energies that knit us all.



Web of Sacred Stars **Danuta Raine (January, 2019, NZ Shiboda)**

*We are a grove of sacred stars
Alight between the trees,
Threaded with a misty web
That darns the hollows of the pobutakawa tree.
We come together, surrounded
By the orb of rite,
We form a fabric thick with time
And dance through nwyfre's light.
Awen and imbas infuse our bodies
And our cauldrons right and overflow
So, when its time for us to part,
We are gone but never go.
We are a grove of sacred stars
Alight above the trees
Threaded with the mystery web
That loops between eucalypt, oak and manuka leaves.
Wherever we end up standing
That thread holds us one to one
As we share the moon beam, great white clouds,
And the summer sun.*

Yesterday I was initiated into the Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids. I proud to say I am now a Bard. The ritual ceremony was so profound and so wonderful. I am very blessed to be surrounded by so many enlightened spiritual people. Thank you to all of you on this journey with me. Thank you to Sandra who was my helper during the ceremony.

This is a poem I wrote last night whilst sitting by the fire listening to singing, musicians and story telling of myth, legends and folklore.

THE WOODS

by Becca 2019

As you drive by in cars and trains, we gather in the deep woods beneath the moon and stars. We gather in groves both Yes small and large. Our fires dot the landscapes low and flickering. Our voices carry on the winds.

Perhaps you see us in the corner of your eye. Maybe you catch a glimpse of something in the night that softly pulls at something deep within.

We were here yesterday, we are here today, and we will be here tomorrow, as you ride by in in metal machines hurrying to places unknown, taking with you a strange longing in your heart that pulls you toward the woods.



Inspiration, wisdom and blessings from New Zealand

Meeting Aotearoa at SHOBODA 2019

By Julie Brett

Heading off to Aotearoa (New Zealand) for the 2019 Southern Hemisphere OBOD Assembly (SHOBODA), I was pretty excited to learn how the Kiwis might adapt their practice to suit their land and the energies there. Adaptation of Druidry practice to different lands is certainly a subject I am passionate about, but I never could have guessed the extent to which their particular way of brining in Maori language and culture would affect me; how much it would inspire me and how much we could learn about it in five short days.

Walking around the venue on the first day I really felt like a stranger to the land. There were some familiar trees – the beloved oaks, willow in the creek where we took a few cooling dips, sweet smelling roses, and even some Aussie ring-ins – gums, a Lili Pilli and a coastal banksia which had grown to an enormous size. But there were also very unfamiliar trees, shrubs, berries and other plants around that I knew nothing at all about. That comfort we get as we learn about our land, knowing every plant and its meaning, was stripped from me, and I knew there was a lot about this place I didn't know. Not only that, there were unfamiliar bird calls, and a sound that wasn't quite like the cicadas I know, so I wasn't sure what it was. Not only that, there were many people there I had never met before. I was a stranger, though accompanied by many friends. Altogether there was a different feeling about this place that I was yet to understand.

On the first evening there was a Powhiri (say "Poor-fi-ri") – a welcome ceremony. We were flooded with many unfamiliar words and ideas – names in Maori that related to practices, places, natural elements of the land, Deities and more. Their meanings were given to us too, but they seemed very foreign and exotic and I had a sense of trepidation about me in approaching so much that was new.

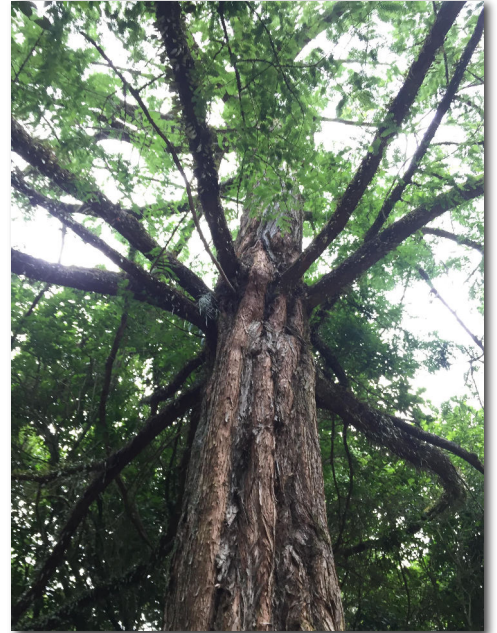
As the days went by, however, we gradually became more familiar with some of these words. Coming to realise that this use of Maori words, and the importance of Maori culture was deeply embedded in the practice of the Aotearoa Druids. There were many opportunities to discuss the meaning of words or to find out more detail about the stories or rituals. Names like Papatuanuku (The Earth Mother), Rangi Nui (The Sky Father), Tangaroa (The Sea God) and Tane Mahuta (The Forest God) became familiar sounds. The Tui birds sang to us, and the heavy flaps of the Kereru birds were explained as a result of it being a time for feasting for them. Trees like the Totara, Kawakawa, Pohutukawa, and Mahoe were now ones I could recognise. I spoke at length with those knowledgeable about the trees of the place, learning their names, uses and stories, and pondering their symbolic meanings.

I learned how the embrace of Papatuanuku and Ranganui was separated by Tane Mahuta as he pushed them apart with his feet in the form of the great Kauri trees to make space for creation. I learned that a Tiwaiwaka bird is a messenger of a death, but also to keep things light. I learned Tui is a symbol of alignment and balance. I heard the story of why mahoe wood holds the seed of fire, and why Hoheria's inner bark is associated with master weavers.

Walking in the sacred places around the Woolshed (the name of the property that is the home of the Grove of the Summer Stars), we met more trees that were sacred to our friends – a storytelling tree where the people gather to share tales; the Mother Tree that guards Brigid's Well; and the dense, winding beautiful thickets of manuka trees that graced the pathways with their fairytale branches and shadowy groves around the property, their flowers providing nectar for the bees kept there.

I met the lancewood too, which is special to me as my husband, Matthew, carved my engagement ring from it many moons ago. It grows in three distinct phases, each very different from the last. Matthew had felt this corresponded with the three phases of life, in Maiden, Mother, Crone, and the masculine equivalents we might express as Hunter, Father, Sage. It was nice to meet it in person.

As the days went by I walked through this landscape with more and more information about it, and more and more experience with it. The trees started to speak to me more. The birds arrived with messages. I could identify them more as I walked through the forest, bit by bit, not so much a stranger. Bit by bit a little more familiar.



Inspiration, wisdom and blessings from New Zealand

We were kept incredibly busy throughout the event with a tight schedule of wonderful workshops, adventures, rituals and tasty food too. The bardic circles were great fun and always my favourite part of when we all get together. Each night those of us with owl-like tendencies stayed up telling stories, singing songs, and discussing the path. We also managed, each night, to add a little to a song that has become a bit of a tradition with the community. It was begun at DDUNG with the workshop run by Adrienne Piggott and Kacey Guy Stephensen. Each time it is taken to a new place, we sing up the energy of the land there. It's just beautiful to be a part of. Here are the lyrics from our time in New Zealand:

The Awen I sing, from the deep I bring it
The Awen I sing, from the deep I bring it
The Awen I sing, from the deep I bring it
The Awen I sing...

Totara, Kauri and Pohutukawa
Kahikatea, rimu and rata
Sacred trees of Aotearoa
The Awen I sing

Tui, reru, and piwakawaka
Kakariki, kereru, kaka and kea
Winged messengers of Tane Mahuta
The Awen I sing

At the top of the Tor, we can see so far
We visit the Grove of the Summer stars
Walking the labyrinth we find who we are
The Awen I sing

Papatuanuku, Ranginui, Tangaroa
Rongo ma tane, Tane tu-Matuenga
Haumia tike tike Tawihiri Matea
The Awen I sing



As I stood at the Poroporoaki (closing ceremony), I was overcome with emotion for everything we'd learned. It had been such an incredible experience, and not only with the land, the trees, the birds and the stories, but also with the human connections we had all made. So many strangers turned into friends. So many unfamiliar faces now holding memories of laughter, joy, unity, and the wonder of shared purpose. There is so much wisdom in our community. I had walked into that space knowing very little, but was leaving it with a greater understanding of the feeling of the place. I even had a new word for it – the 'mauri' of the place. Mauri, (not to be confused with 'Maori') was explained to me as the energy or power of a place to shift our emotions and bring us into connection with the land; like the personality of the land which speaks to us. These places had sung to us and spoken through us and we had learned how to move in flow with them and the feel that mauri all around us. We were no longer strangers. Thank you everyone for your friendship, your wisdom, and all your contributions to making this a wonderful event. I learned so much, and it has inspired me in many ways.

Blessings on the Grove of the Summer Stars
Blessings on all who helped with organising
Blessings on the venue
Blessings on all who attended
Blessings on the wisdom received and shared
Blessings on your journeys forward

Aroha nui. Ka kite ano.
With deep gratitude. Until next time <3
Julie Brett.



Inspiration, wisdom and blessings from New Zealand

ASSEMBLY PIX PT 2
by JULIE BRETT



SHOBODA 2019

by Trudz



*New places, new trees
New flowers, bumble bees
New faces to meet
Old friends to greet
Talking stick goes around
Only one word allowed
Today I am simply 'observing'.*

*Spirit of Place talks
As I go on my walks
Bards, Ovates and Druids share
We are a tribe, and all are aware
We drive off in cars
To the Grove of the Summer Stars
The view from the Tor
Has me in awe
Today my word is 'Settling'.*



*Feeling the Oneness
The love and the kindness
Ceremony we share
There's a change in the air
Lughnasadh bakers and bees
And hugs from the trees
Sparklers and Circle Songs
I know I belong
Today I am feeling 'Nurtured'.*

*Mealtime discussions
And deeper connections
Druid initiations
Heartfelt emotions
I'm so happy to be
With my family
To share in the message
Through these rites of passage
My word for today is 'Happy'.*



*We've come to Day Five
Our community strong and alive
There's joy and affection
In our OBOD connection
I'll try not to be sad
We'll meet again and be glad
As we depart
You are all in my heart
For the memories and love I am 'Thankful'.*



tion, wisdom and blessings from New Zealand



As I sat watching the water rush over and around stones, I knew there was no obstacle in life that could not be overcome.

Elemental Dance

*The water weaves her way round stones
laughing as she gathers speed
and flows freely on her way.*

*In silence the stones listen
to the water laughing as she
weaves her way round them.*

*The wind catches the sound of the water
laughing as she gathers speed and
carries her joyful tones on high.*

*The Sun warms the water and stones
lighting a flame of hope in those who
wish to flow freely on their way.*



Inspiration, wisdom and blessings from New Zealand

by Linda Marson



**ASSEMBLY PIX PT 3
BY ELKIE WHITE**



blessings from New Zealand

Setting up for SHOBODA 19

The OBOD Southern Hemisphere Assembly at Tatum Park

By Charlene Hillyard

All year we had been working as a team to set up for the Druid Assembly. The week before we packed up the bags with the printed programme, scripts for the initiations, t-shirts, carved stones with the Awen symbol on it, paua shell, songs to sing, pens, healing balm, and a few other goodies. Every item in these bags was lovingly produced and packed by members of the Grove of the Summer Stars, it was a big production!



With bags packed and boxes labelled for the various events, we set off in convoy to Tatum Park on Thursday ready to receive the visitors from New Zealand, Australia and our special guests Philip, Stephanie and Eimear from the United Kingdom and Ireland.



(Collecting Linda and Kacey from the Airport on Wednesday)
Smiley faces at Oriental Bay on a sunny calm day in Wellington.

Excited members from all these countries met up and we held a special Powhiri (Maori Welcome) in the beautiful grounds of Tatum Park. Then a catch up over dinner later saying the Grove of the Summer Stars food blessing. This was to be said at every meal time.

"May the Four Winds protect us, May the Four Directions bless us, may the elements of Earth and Air and Fire and Water be our guides and companions. Uplift our Spirit. And may Papatuanuku be truly thanked for the abundance of food on our table. Blessings on the hands that hold, Blessings on the hands that harvest, and blessings on the cooks! And blessings on our good hearts. Blessings Be, Blessings Be, Blessings Be."

Friday we started with a morning meeting, and a word of the day in Te Reo Maori ie Morena (Morning). Philip led the meditation then the talking stick was passed around the 70 registered guests, including pronouncing the word of the day and another word to describe how you were feeling. I wrote up the programme on the whiteboard and noted where each of the events took place, either in the conference room, the old house or outside in various Groves or grassy places.



Inspiration, wisdom and blessings from New Zealand

On Friday, (Kia Ora word of the day) we held the opening ceremony on the lawn which was big enough to hold 70 members. We robed up and ventured out onto the lawn.

Many people admired my Tabard which I designed and the lovely Polly Lind made for me. If you wish her to make one for you here is her email address: PollyLindArtist@gmail.com. I wanted the centre Awen to show all the grades Bard, Ovate and Druid in each of the Awen drops. The fabric represents the Awen Bard drop was the blue of the ocean and had a pattern of waves on it. The Ovate, green and the pattern of the Koru (spirals from the fronds of our NZ fern - Koru spiral). Lastly, the yellow/gold for Druid grade (honeycomb pattern of the bee). I had self initiated as a Druid two years ago but was looking forward to my first 'public' initiation at this assembly (my previous initiations had also been personal ones).

That night, we had singing around the fire and again I went to bed at midnight and rose at 6.30am. I find I just get too excited at gatherings and want to make the most of it. The Wyld Moon (Full Moon) didn't help with her radiant energy (Marama is moon in Te Reo Maori) - with this particular moon we were asked to 'keep calm and patient', very apt with so much going on! On Friday, I helped with the Bardic Initiations which was very moving when I knew the people being initiated. Ben was very good as the Guardian.



On Saturday, there were workshops and Philip and Eimear also gave a forum on what it means to be a member of OBOD. It was very interesting and the talk was recorded. After this, we drove out to visit the Labyrinth at the Grove of the Summer stars. All the chiselling the bricks and work that some grove members did under the masterful creative Glenn and Anne Conroy payed off. Glenn laid the final brick just before SHOBODA - it reminds me of the programmes where you have a deadline to complete a building, in this case the Labyrinth. Everyone was asked to bring a stone to place in the Labyrinth. The visitors were taken to the Tor, the Grove, and other special places around the land. That evening we had an Eisteddfod and celebrated with songs, stories, mead and Fireworks (Sparklers).



Sunday - Ovate Initiation day and I helped also with this and it was held in the same sacred place as the Bardic Initiation - again it is very moving to be involved in these initiations and to see the new Initiates looking so radiant and happy afterwards.

I also gave my talk and guided meditation on how to improve communication with spirit through 'Farewell to a Loved One'.

I opened with a Waiata (song) 'Wairua O te Puna Aroha' and ended with a 'Fare Thee Well' song.

I received good feedback from this workshop:

"Charlene, I want you to know how grateful I am to have taken part in your workshop. It is the most valuable thing that has happened for me at the OBOD gathering."

It's something I would not have been comfortable to do had there not been a facilitator and a group of people able to bring me back and hold space for me if I had needed it (which fortunately I didn't, due to being gently guided throughout)." (Ms B).

Later, we enjoyed another lovely evening of songs, stories and staying up late!



Inspiration, wisdom and blessings from New Zealand

Monday - Initiation into the Druid Grade overseen by our special guests - Stephanie was also there but she had to leave before the photo was taken. Philip, Stephanie and Eimear made the effort to attend all the initiations whether in one group or another and it was greatly appreciated by all the initiates.

My initiation was very special. I waited by the Pin Oak tree outside the 'Grove of the Initiates' I am now calling it that as it was the same Grove that I had been in for the Bardic and Ovate Initiations. I was the last one out of four to be called from Druid 1 group, the Druid 2 group were to be initiated later that day. (There were 9 Bards initiated, 9 Ovates and 9 Druids so we had to hold two concurrent groups for each Grade).



I cried with joy and release and from the love I had received from all the Druids in the initiation, it was a very special moment for me. Twenty years I have known Philip and Stephanie and many of the Druids within the circle and thirty years I have known Pamela which is why I chose to have a 'public' initiation. I felt different, taller, serene, confident and calm. The sunlight shone on me and renewed me, Nwyfre energised my spirit. When I returned back to the conference room later many people said how radiant I looked. After writing up my experience in my Druid book. I went to Rosemary's workshop on sound therapy. We all took our blankets and pillows up to the conference room. The space was nearly full and I lay down not far away from all the bowls. I settled myself down and covered up with the blanket. Rosemary started the session and it was amazing, all the sounds working through me with my conscious mind following the various sounds from the different bowls. After the session, I asked if we could do it again.

Lughnasadh - the festival for family and community, and what a joy to be celebrating the event with our newly formed 'tribe'. Many of us were processing the energy over the last few days, seeking out quiet space to write up our notes. For myself I sat with the Oak tree to assimilate new insights gained, balance and release energy and ground myself. I enjoyed Linda Marson's talk on the Tarot. I also loved Sandra's talk on the process of creating the Druid Oracle cards. I liked her honesty and humour of her journey to get the project kicked off the ground with her Kickstarter fundraising page. It helped me focus on my talk for the next day. The Lughnasadh ceremony was magical. Our Grove members were asked to plant sunflowers in pots so they could be arranged in a circle around the lawn. Tom made the sunwheel with sparklers, and when Kacey walked around dressed up holding the sunwheel he looked magical.

Monday night was also a late one - after Eisteddfod, where others contributed their lovely songs, stories and poems a group of us stayed on and sang, told stories and poems and drank various liquids. We sang to the moon and it was magical. None of us wanted to leave as we were heading home tomorrow. At 3am it was cup of tea and biscuits time before we went to bed.

Tuesday - Last day of the Assembly - The morning word of the day was Ka Kite Ano ('see you later'), we were all a little emotional to say the least (a few including myself a little wobbly from the late night), however, we cleared our rooms after the morning meeting and got ready for the closing ceremony. The birds throughout the whole time were actively present. Singing when we sang, chirping with the songs during initiations and flying through the trees. Farewells and hugs were exchanged.

A core group of us stayed behind for the clean up and packing up. Many hands make light work and Sara brought in some food for us to keep us going. I brought Kacey back to the Woolshed and we unpacked and returned ritual and other items. After having a hydrating apple and water drink I headed off back home.

Now, I am holding on to all the precious memories. It was a joyous gathering with like minded OBOD's. Have a wonderful 2019 and see you at the next gathering.

Kia Kaha (stay strong)
Charlene Hillyard
Grove of the Summer Stars
New Zealand.

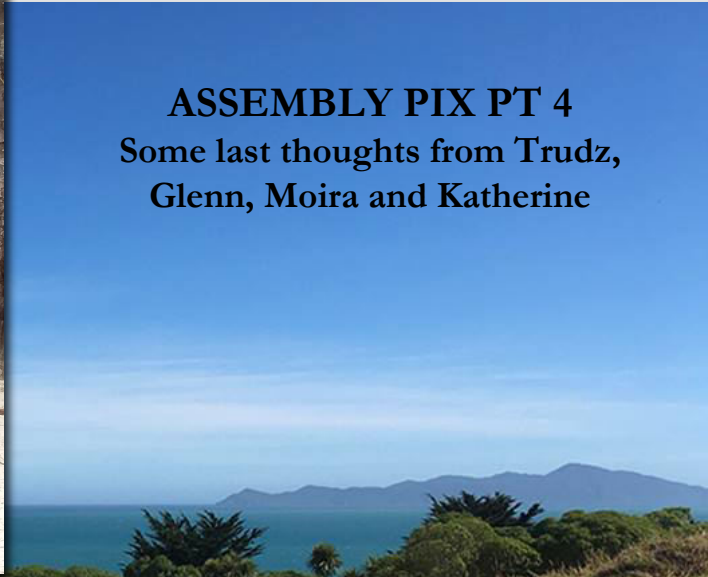


Inspiration, wisdom and blessings from New Zealand



ASSEMBLY PIX PT 4

Some last thoughts from Trudz,
Glenn, Moira and Katherine



Update of the History Project, Lughnasadh 2019

The History Project is Changing Hands...and on the way to becoming a book!

At the New Zealand Assembly, I handed Sandra a USB containing everything I have collected from you for the history project. There are seventeen completed questionnaires, one Grove history and one Seed-Group foundation story, plus a few other interesting bits and pieces. We also have some information about the UAOD in Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia.

It's actually not much to base A History of Druidry in Australia on – there is so much more going on out there – and so if you would like to contribute but have not yet found the time, please contact Sandra at macadamiagrove@hotmail.com

With a huge 'Thank You' to all who have participated so far, and to those planning to do so in the near future
Elkie



Pic by Julie Brett

Direction

As the dawn of a new year enters I allow myself to question 'why worry?' when there is nothing to worry about

When the choice is made to grow and align with the oneness, all we can do is open our hearts and in this moment know surrender. And so,

I surrender, to life and the beauty it brings

I surrender, to trust and the knowing that all that comes is that of my highest voice

I surrender, to the knowing that there is only love and within this love I reside

Why worry when in the end there can be only love

Dissolve all worry and let trust in for trust is everything

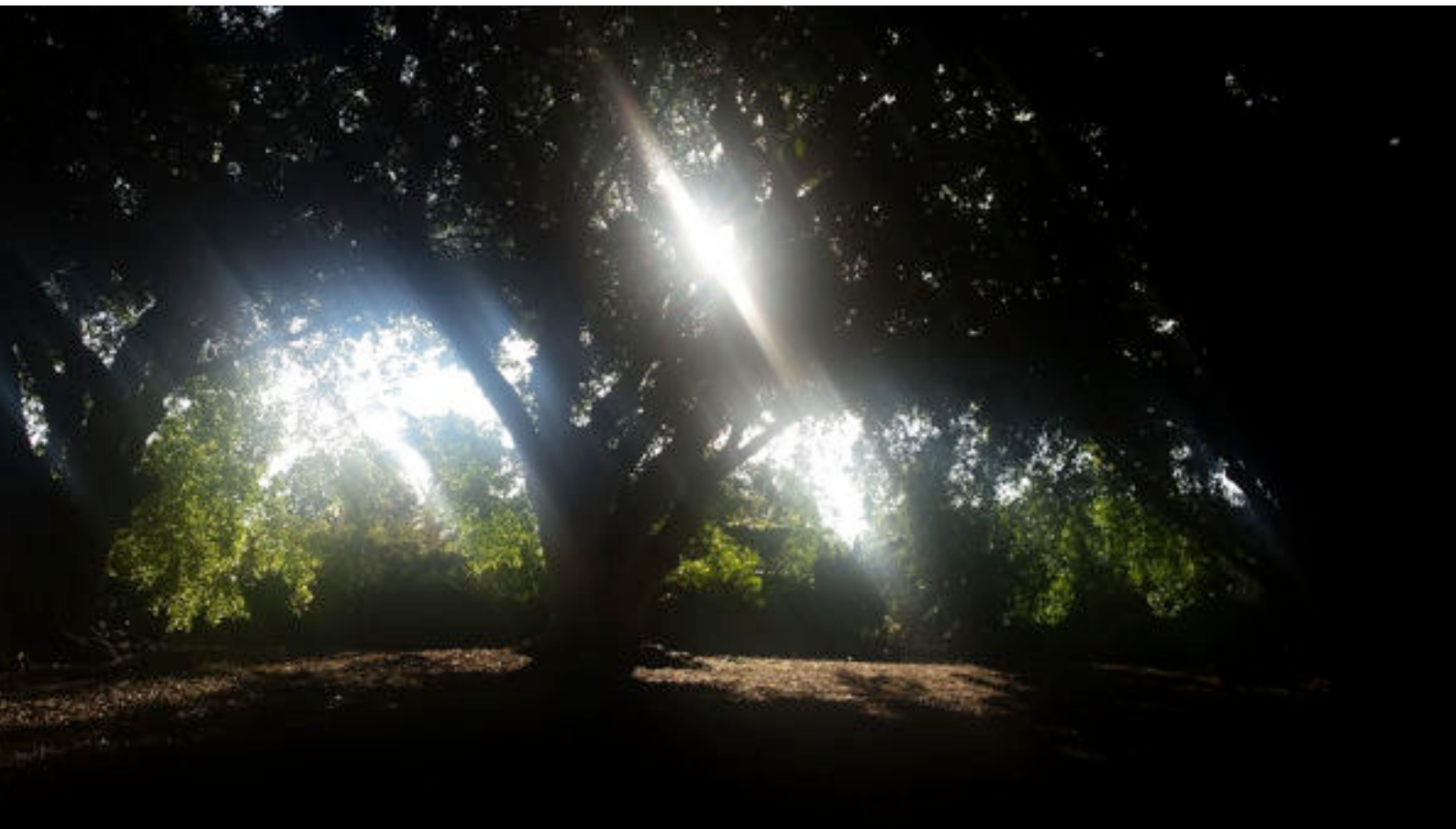
Trust in love and love will come, carried on the wings of destiny

And so it is I now walk forward, in trust and in love

The knowing within me strong, guiding me forward and into me

Towards unity and the light.

By Cathy Stillwell



Calling all Druids!

You are formally invited (and strongly encouraged) to participate in...

The World Druidry Survey

Contemporary Druidry is relatively new as a religious/spiritual path, and is still in the process of defining itself as a global movement. Several books have been written about the history of contemporary Druidry, illustrating various takes on how we got 'here', but there is not much research yet, thoroughly assessing the precise nature of what 'here' is. What does it really mean, to be a Druid in the modern age?

The World Druidry Survey (results of which are scheduled to be published as the 2021 Mt Haemus Awards paper) will attempt to answer this question by exploring the ways in which Druidry, as a globalising path of nature spirituality, is evolving both in the traditional lands of the ancient Druids; and elsewhere, as it spreads and takes root in other countries and cultures of the world. As we, the practicing Druids of the world, learn and grow and develop our personal paths of Druidry, what do we continue to hold in common? In what ways do our practices and beliefs diversify? What, if anything, forms the spiritual, common core of contemporary World Druidry?

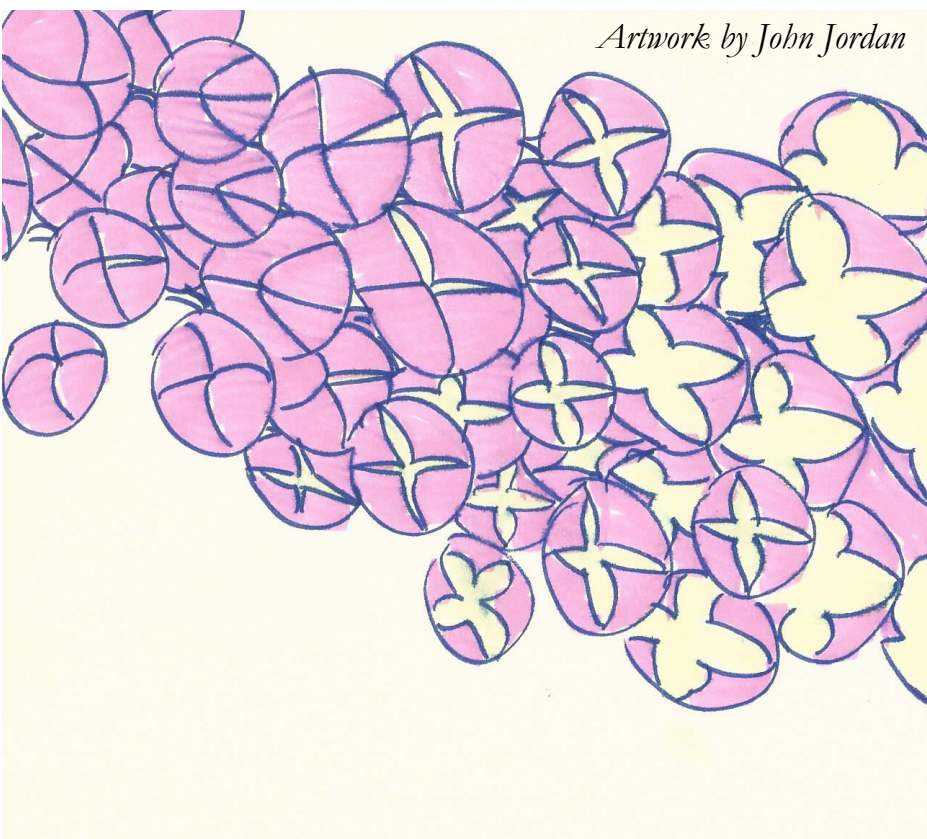
Whether you are just beginning your journey on the Path of Druidry, or whether you have been a practicing Druid for decades, your experiences and perspective are important to this work. I hope you will share a bit of your story!

For more information about the study, and for links to the questionnaire (available in multiple languages, in both web-based and pdf versions), please visit:

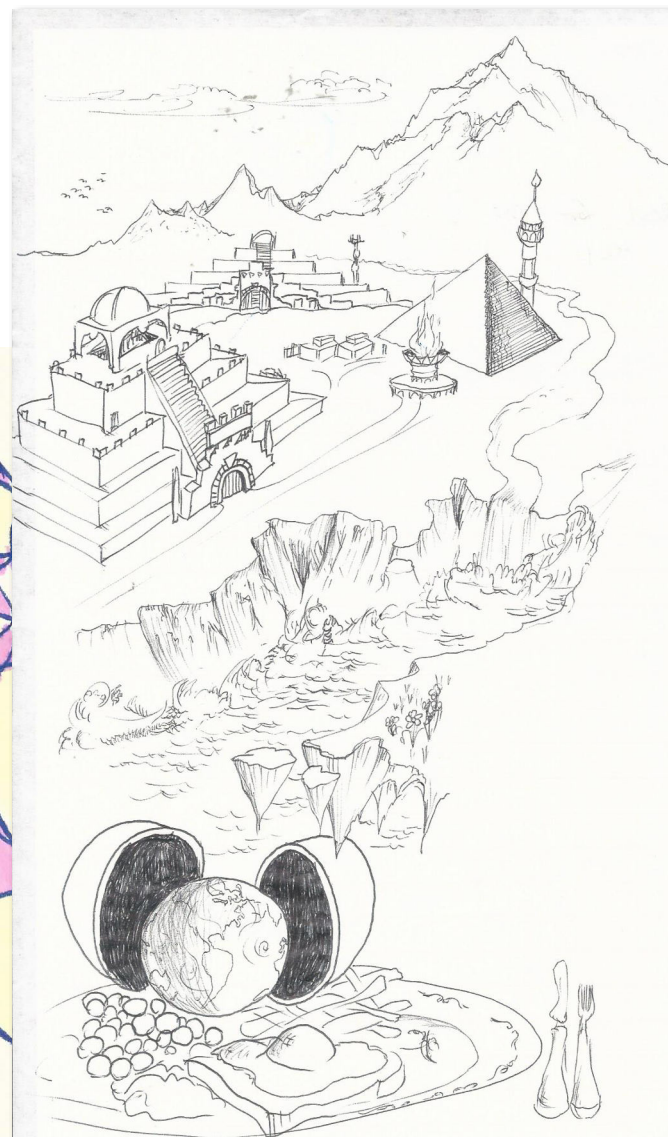
<https://coast-range-druid.com/world-druidry-survey/>

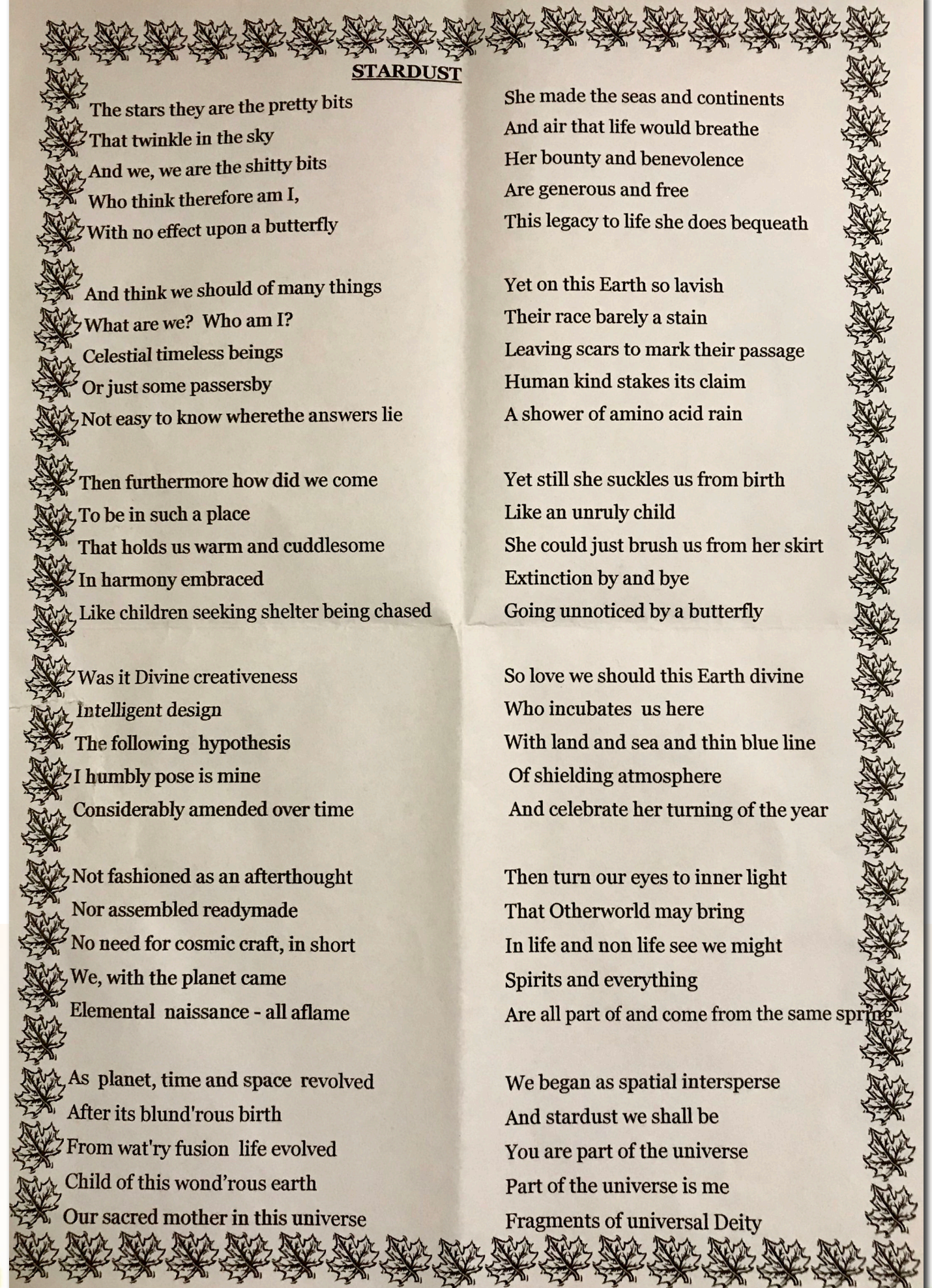
And please, spread the word!

Yours, under the California Coast Live Oaks
Larisa White MEd, PhD



Artwork by John Jordan





STARDUST

The stars they are the pretty bits

That twinkle in the sky

And we, we are the shitty bits

Who think therefore am I,

With no effect upon a butterfly

And think we should of many things

What are we? Who am I?

Celestial timeless beings

Or just some passersby

Not easy to know wherethe answers lie

Then furthermore how did we come

To be in such a place

That holds us warm and cuddlesome

In harmony embraced

Like children seeking shelter being chased

Was it Divine creativeness

Intelligent design

The following hypothesis

I humbly pose is mine

Considerably amended over time

Not fashioned as an afterthought

Nor assembled readymade

No need for cosmic craft, in short

We, with the planet came

Elemental naissance - all aflame

As planet, time and space revolved

After its blund'rous birth

From wat'ry fusion life evolved

Child of this wond'rous earth

Our sacred mother in this universe

She made the seas and continents

And air that life would breathe

Her bounty and benevolence

Are generous and free

This legacy to life she does bequeath

Yet on this Earth so lavish

Their race barely a stain

Leaving scars to mark their passage

Human kind stakes its claim

A shower of amino acid rain

Yet still she suckles us from birth

Like an unruly child

She could just brush us from her skirt

Extinction by and bye

Going unnoticed by a butterfly

So love we should this Earth divine

Who incubates us here

With land and sea and thin blue line

Of shielding atmosphere

And celebrate her turning of the year

Then turn our eyes to inner light

That Otherworld may bring

In life and non life see we might

Spirits and everything

Are all part of and come from the same spring

We began as spatial intersperse

And stardust we shall be

You are part of the universe

Part of the universe is me

Fragments of universal Deity

The 19th OBOD Southern Hemisphere Assembly is ready to go!

Dates: Friday April 24 to Tuesday April 28 2020 (**note: 2020 – not 2019** – don't get confused!)

Place: Gilwell Park Adventure Centre, Gembrook, 54 km east of Melbourne CBD

Further Information:

Facebook: get yourself onto the Friends of The Melbourne Grove page

If you are as excited as we are about this, you will find the Booking Form on the Druidry Australia website: www.druidryaustralia.org soon, if not already.

We are limiting the number of bookings to sixty, so don't wait too long!

Questions can be directed to Elkie: elkiewhite@gmail.com or Narine: dr.narine@bigpond.com



The Wheel of Segais

The Wisdom of the Four Seasons as a Divination Tool



We've packed the boxes, we've put on the stickers, calculated the postage and the Wheel of Segais Personal Reader Kit is now available to buy!

www.wheelofsegais.com

The divination kit contains a copy of the Wheel of Segais on which to do your casting; a Personal Reader Guide; nine hazelnuts for casting (plus a couple of extras in case you lose one or two) and a notebook and pen to record your personal reading,.

AND NOW: THE WHEEL OF SEGAIS READER TRAINING!

After a very successful Wheel of Segais tour in the UK, I am now putting together the video components for the **Wheel of Segais Be a Reader for Others Training**. Each participant will need to receive a Personal Reader Kit by mail before the on-line training begins, which will be included in the cost of the course, as well as a copy of the initial recording from May 2017. The further six recordings are being recorded now and I am researching ways that we can be interactive for some of them.

For more information: www.wheelofsegais.com/be-a-reader

The Wheel of Segais is a simple but profound template for understanding the innate nature of the universe and our place within it. It allows us to perceive all that we are and all that we need as we experience the turning of the wheel of the year - the Four Seasons, the 12 streams or stages and the Well of the Salmon of Wisdom, the Well of Segais itself, in the centre.

You can book an online reading or Life Coaching Session through my website
www.wheelofsegais.com

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Song of the Trees	A Piggott
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The Children of Lir	A Piggott
Soul's Gateway	M Adamson
King Orfeo	Traditional
Dark Days and Heys / Tampered Twilight	A Miller / P Gooding
Elen of the Ways	A Piggott
Mallee My Mother	Wyverne Ogma Vyvyan

Featuring:

Damh the Bard on Track 1 & 11
Wyverne Ogma Vyvyan Track 11

To order go to :

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THE GREEN ALBUM

Tuatha Dea and Nightsong Studios Presents:

THE GREEN ALBUM is a collaborative concept album featuring Tuatha Dea, Wendy Elizabeth Rule, SJ Tucker, Sharon Knight, Winter Jp Sichelschmidt, Celia Farran, Bekah Kelso, Ginger Doss, Damh The Bard, Kellianna Girouard, Spiral Dance, Spiral Rhythm, Murphey's Midnight Rounders, Brian Henke and Mama Gina LaMonte.

It's a musical plan of action. An Independent musical compilation created by a consortium of like minded Muses, Musicians and Songbirds from all over uniting as a global Tribe to raise awareness, celebrate and give something back to Mother Earth! All these amazing artists will be offering one gift of song, either NEW or never before released specifically for this Album, and themed toward the universal concept of 'Green!' All of the Artists have banded together, and partial proceeds from every album sold by the collaborators will be donated to Rainforest Trust, a Global Green Charity doing amazing work around the world!

THE GREEN ALBUM and all the artists on this compilation project are proud and honored to announce our association and partnership with this wonderful organisation. 25% of all (That's ALL 14 artists) sales proceeds from this project will be donated to Rainforest Trust! This amazing group so profoundly echoes the sentiments of this project, and has been putting them into action for 27 years. PLEASE spread the word and get involved!

<http://www.thegreenalbum.net/about.html>

<https://www.facebook.com/greenalbum/?ref=hl>

Direct downloads available from <http://www.thegreenalbum.net/home.html>

or you can buy a physical album via

http://www.spiraldance.com.au/?CDs_and_Downloads___Ordering_Spiral_Dance_CDs



RAINFOREST TRUST® *Hero*

The Green Album

donated a gift to protect

**1,817 Acres of Balanga Forest Reserve
in the Congo**

This gift assists Rainforest Trust and our local Congolese partner to establish Balanga Forest Reserve, safeguarding crucial habitat and providing a future safe from poachers for the Congo's magnificent and threatened wildlife, including the African Forest Elephant, Okapi, and Bonobo.

Issued June 20, 2016

*Thank you for your commitment to biodiversity.
Together we are saving rainforest acres, forever!*



RAINFOREST TRUST®

Dr. Paul Salaman
Chief Executive Officer



Okapi

TUATHA DEA	CELIA FARRAN
WENDY RULE	BRIAN HENKE
SJ TUCKER	MAMA GINA
BEKAH KELSO	MURPH'S
GINGER DOSS	MIDNIGHT
KELLIANNA	ROUNDERS
DAVE THE BARD	SPIRAL RHYTHM
SPIRAL DANCE	
SHARON KNIGHT/ WINTER S	



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A 33 CARD ORACLE DECK INTEGRATING ANCIENT AND CONTEMPORARY DRUID LORE. INDEPENDENTLY CREATED AND PRODUCED BY SANDRA GREENHALGH (AN AUSTRALIAN OBOD MEMBER), THE DECK IS AVAILABLE ON KICKSTARTER TIL 13 FEBRUARY. FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE DRUID WISDOM ORACLE ON FACEBOOK OR INSTAGRAM



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Pic by Mandy Gibson

Advertising in SerpentStar is free for all OBOD members in the Southern Hemisphere. If your business, event or club is related to our druidry practice, you can advertise on these pages for as long as you require. Submission guidelines are available from serpentstar.druidryaustralia.org/about



Anam Cara Soul Space

Readings, Tarot, Astrology, and Sacred Plant Essences with Fleur Grant

Greetings and Kia ora, my name is Fleur Grant and I am a student of OBOD and a practising tarot reader, astrologer, and sacred plant essence practitioner.

My connection to Spirit has been active for as long as I can remember. I have always been blessed to receive messages, and this ability has been passed down my family line from my Anglo-Irish grandmother, who possessed second sight. I have good reason to believe my Irish ancestors, who left Ireland after one of the large famines, were descended from ancient Druids.

The land of my birth, Aotearoa New Zealand, has provided me with a deep appreciation of the native forest here, and my communion with nature has been further developed through training as a plant essence practitioner. Plant essences contain specific healing properties that shift emotional and traumatic patterns. There are even essences that can shift DNA patterns that have travelled down family lines. This is an exciting area of work, as it ties into the scientific discovery of epigenetics, which is confirming what ancient cultures have always known, that trauma can be hereditary. For instance, there may be a pattern of betrayal and heartbreak in relationships that have travelled down the ancestral bloodline. As Druids, we work with our ancestral inheritance, and it is now possible for us to clear negative hereditary patterns and receive our divine inheritance.

Astrology is an ancient tool which allows us to map the potential of a soul and look at key strengths and challenges. Most people are familiar with Sun Signs, but you are more than just your star-sign! Based on your time, date and place of birth, natal astrology explains the map of the Zodiac for your individual birth, and the position and relationship of all the planets and signs that make up your personality and potential. I also provide updates of full moon and other major astrological patterns for New Zealand and Australia on my Facebook page.

Tarot (I use Rider Waite and the Druidic Tarot) is an amazing tool for Divination. Tarot is my first port of call for questions about relationship insight and decisions.

Anam Cara is an old Gaelic term which means 'soul friend'. Here, at Anam Cara, I work with you in integrity, openness and non-judgement, using the ancient tools of tarot, astrology and sacred plant essences to help you make decisions, clear emotional and hereditary blocks, and move forward with confidence.

Readings are available in person in Auckland, New Zealand, or from anywhere in the world using Skype or Messenger.

Please visit my website anamcarareadings.com and follow my Facebook www.facebook.com/anamcarareadings





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Contact Elkie - whitelk@bigpond.com



I am a marriage celebrant living on the beautiful Sunshine Coast in Queensland. I have studied with OBOD for the last six years and will soon complete my Ovale studies. My aim is to help make your ceremony meaningful and memorable....



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My gift as a celebrant is a passion for creating a beautiful experience – each ceremony will be individual to your needs and personality, including research into special moments and traditions that you and your loved ones will remember for years to come.

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Member Celebrant's
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New Zealand

I offer Druid, pagan and alternative spirituality marriages, hand fasting and civil union ceremonies working with couples to create their own unique ceremony.

As a Druid and committed to a spiritual life, the work is important to me. Couples continue to ask for my services and very much appreciate the gentle spiritual aspect of the ceremonies I help them put together.

I am also able to arrange contact for weddings and civil unions at Stonehenge Aotearoa in the Wairarapa with myself as Celebrant.

Marriage and Civil Unions are the only ceremonies that require a legal, registered Celebrant. However, I also craft and perform many other forms of ceremony and blessing:

Namings (children and change of name); **Birth Blessings**; **Vows of Recommitment**; **Entering The Wisdom Years - Croning** (women) and **Sageing** (men); **House Blessings**; **Blessings and Invocations For Passing Over**; **Funerals and Burial Blessings**



Tying the knot

Two lives entwine

Tying the knot

Two families entwine

Binding our futures together



Contact: pamela@thewoolshed.com

TheWoolshedretreats.co.nz

Tel: ++64-4 2399234



Need some time out from your day to day life?

**Want to escape the city and experience the Outback Heart of
our ancient land?**

**Interested in helping with a permaculture self-sufficiency project
and learning new skills?**

Experienced WWOOF host, and OBODie Ngatina, and her family, would like to invite members seeking a time of retreat to consider their home in the Northern Flinders Ranges (SA).

- The stunning ancient landscape and vast starry or moonlit nights are perfect for contemplation and fostering a connection with Spirit of Place.
- Experience living in an heritage listed small town (pop. 20) in a remote location
- Private accommodation in an historic inn first built in the 1870s
- Visit places of significance in the deeply powerful Flinders Ranges
- Help with an arid lands permaculture project – learn skills for self-sufficiency
- Flexible arrangements – either WWOOF for full food and board or be more autonomous as suits your needs.

For more details about our home and project visit <http://casaindomitus.wordpress.com> or contact Ngatina on wwoof@sylvanius.net or 0429795002 to discuss options.



And finally...

Richard Pohutukawa's Mead Recipe

Ingredients - for a 1 gallon glass demijohn (about 4.6 litres)

2kg Honey

1 tablespoon bee pollen (instead of yeast nutrient)

Zest and juice from 2 lemons - try other citrus too!

SN9 fruit wine yeast - about a third of a sachet - 1 sachet will do up to 20 litres of ferment. I think the fruit wine yeast gives better flavour complexity than the mead yeast available in brew shops.

Other flavourings can be added - some ideas:

- Yarrow flowers
- Oak leaf tea
- A few bay leaves
- A vanilla pod

Flavourings can be made into tea, and then just added to the ferment. Others flavourings can just be added - make a decision and try it!

Method

1. Dissolve the honey and pollen in warm water to make up to 4 litres

2. Add the tea, citrus and other flavourings.

3. Set aside about 2 cups of honey mixture to use to start the yeast

4. When the yeast starter liquid has cooled to about 25°C add the yeast and leave the spirits to start working. Depending on conditions, allow 30 - 60 minutes for this if the yeast is fresh.

5. Once the honey mixture has cooled to about 25°C it is ready to have the actively working yeast mixture added. This is called pitching the yeast. This yeast will happily work in the 15 - 30 degrees temperature range - but different temperatures will give different taste profiles.

6. Top up brewing container with cooled boiled water. Then put an airlock on the container to prevent other bacteria entering and turning it all into vinegar.

7. Leave about 10cm space between the top of the liquid and the airlock to allow room for the foam from the yeast spirits as they start to work.

8. Once everything is installed - bless it in the name of your favourite fertility deity.

9. Install the brew container in a cool dark place and leave for about a month.

10. Once fermenting is mostly done, rack of the mead into another demijohn and install an airlock, and leave for 6 - 12 months before bottling.

11. Racking off allows sediment to be separated from the mead.

12. Use the yeasty sediment to make delicious lemony flavoured sourdough bread!

13. Sample the mead regularly to ascertain when it is ready for drinking.

14. Share with good friends and make a toast to Awen.

Thanks to Verity for the original recipe!

Reference and Inspiration: *Make Mead Like Viking* by Jereme Zimmerman

The
Wheel
turns...



...we come to the time of **Lughnasadh**...which marks the beginning of harvest time. The hay would have been gathered in, and the time for reaping the wheat and barley was due. It was a time of gathering together, of contests and games and of marriages. The marriages contracted at this time could be annulled at the same time the following year - offering the couple a sensible 'trial period'. In some areas a flaming wheel was sent rolling down the hillside at this time to symbolise the descent of the year towards Winter, and in the Druid ceremony a wheel is passed around the circle in symbol of the turning year. The Christian version of this festival is Lammas, which has recently been revived in some churches. The word Lammas comes from hlafrnasse - 'loaf-mass' - since bread is offered from the newly harvested grain.

Text sourced from Druidry.org

The deadline for contributing to the Samhuinn issue of SerpentStar is 24 April 2019.

The Samhuinn issue will be released on 1 May 2019.