

Serpent Star

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



Samhain 2022

Welcome, welcome, welcome to the Samhain issue of Serpentstar!

Hello and welcome to the 2022 Samhain edition of Serpentstar! It's been a while, how have you been?

For me, Samhain (or Samhuinn) is a moment of 'in-between', where the weather's gotten a bit of a cooler edge to it and the mornings and evenings are a little darker than what they used to be. I feel the cooler breeze, and while it feels cool it doesn't have the sort of 'liveliness' or 'awakening' feeling that you would feel around, say, Alban Eilir. It's really a feeling of 'close the door, you'll catch a cold', rather than 'open the window and let the new air in'! I'm finding myself becoming more contemplative since Lughnasadh as the year is turning toward winter, and have been pruning and (quite literally!) burning parts of me that no longer serve me. There's... been a lot of burning, but I feel all the lighter for it.

In this issue, you'll find written works from Elkie White, Kacey Stephensen, John Jordan, Karen S., Liluri and the continuation of Mistress Munchkin from the lovely Tina Merrybard! So sit back, grab a cup of tea and enjoy!

Until Imbolc, with all the hugs and bright blessings that I can give,
- Sam /\

PS - The cover and the photo on this page are from our Samhain celebration on Yugarabul land, also known as the Scenic Rim! We honoured our ancestors with a beautiful ritual (picture below), followed by a Dumb Supper, which a lot of us hadn't taken part in before. I think it's a beautiful way to honour our ancestors, and I hope we get to do it again sometime.



SerpentStar, Samhain 2022

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

SerpentStar logo by Todd William Dearing.

Cover and Page 2 images by Samantha Travis.

Watermark images courtesy of Adobe Stock and <https://druidry.org>

All other images provided by the authors on the corresponding page, unless otherwise credited.

Submission guidelines and subscription info are available from serpentstar.druidryaustralia.org/about

Follow us on Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/SerpentStarOBOD>

Enquiries via email: serpentstar.obod@gmail.com

All opinions expressed herein are solely the contributors' own.

A reminder to everyone that SerpentStar has a YouTube channel, which hosts last year's DDUDE talk series from Druids DownUnder. I'd like to see other videos from OBODies on there as well - they can either be linked to ones already on other channels, or we can arrange for you to send them to serpentstar.obod@gmail.com for upload. Get in touch if you have a bardic video or a short doco you'd like to share in SerpentStar.

Search 'SerpentStar OBOD' on YouTube to subscribe!

OBOD in the Southern Hemisphere

Groves & Seed Groups

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

The Blue Mountains Seed Group

The Blue Mountains Seed Group holds regular public gatherings in Katoomba at the Blue Mountains Organic Community Gardens for the eight seasonal festivals of the wheel of the year. See our Facebook group for more information. This is open to anyone to come along, not just OBOD members. There are also private OBOD members only gatherings, but please come to the public gatherings to get to know the group first.

Email: thebluemountainsseedgroup@gmail.com,

Facebook: Friends of the Blue Mountains Seed Group www.facebook.com/groups/friendsofthebluemountainsseedgroup/

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 two new Bards and one relatively new Bard. 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, and we will be holding our first group Alban. Full moon meditations are conducted for peace and harmony. Email Debby at triskel@mweb.co.za for details.

Druid Pilgrim Grove

We are a grove of wayfaring and friendly OBODies who are happy to support those seeking to engage with pilgrimage as part of their druid practice. We have members around Australia and NZ. A number of us are happy to meet up with pilgrims as they travel close to us. Contact danuta@adruid.com. FB: Druid Pilgrim is a Facebook group that engages with people interested in exploring pilgrimage and druidry. It also acts as a 'Friends of' space for those interested in connecting with Druid Pilgrim Grove.

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: macademiagroove@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. We now have a public facebook page: Friends of The Melbourne Grove. FFI contact: Trudy - 0409 186 316, moondancer@outlook.com.au

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: ghriancu@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 - includes info/booking for the annual Southern Hemisphere OBOD Assembly.

Southern Hemisphere Order of Bards Ovates & Druids Online (SHOBODO) Community - Facebook group - a private group for Order members living in the Southern Hemisphere.

Druids DownUnder - Facebook group - a group open to druids of any path in the Southern Hemisphere, Australia/New Zealand 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)

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

Druidenstein (German) www.druidry.info/das-magazin-druidenstein

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.

Children of the New Millennium - part 3 – the Dominant Signature

Written by Elkie White

If you guessed that the second most common astro-number signature for the people born since the year 2000 was Aquarius-11, you would be correct. 13% have an Aquarius-11 Signature. This compares with a maximum of six percent for the career samples. The samples that came closest to those of the new millennium folks were a cluster of people who did not fit into any of the designated careers, which I called 'Miscellaneous', the 'Self-Made Rich', who also typically don't fit in anywhere else, and the Random Sample, which further contains a mixture of career choices.

The implication is clear: Aquarius-11 equates with doing things that don't fit neatly into career boxes used by previous generations. Many of these people have multiple interests and careers and would not want to be pigeon-holed into one or the other. These people are mavericks.

In numerology, Numbers 2 (per Taurus-2) and 11 (per Aquarius-11) are related to one another, yet it is not an easy relationship. One way to explain this is through the aspects, elements, and modalities of astrology. Taurus and Aquarius are both 'Fixed Signs' and because of that can become quite fixated on a particular point of view. With one in four of the 'millennium children' having one or the other, you have to wonder how the people with the two dominant Signatures are going to get along.

Within the Natural Horoscope, Taurus and Aquarius square off with one another. This symbolizes the tension between the two, but it is a creative tension, that catalyzes the will to act in order to resolve the tension.



Moreover, '2' as an even number tends to be conservative, favouring the status quo. If Number 2 appears in your personal numbers, you naturally tend to go along with things as they are until such time as you can't. You are then forced to venture into Number 11's domain (11 as $1+1=2$). '11' is an odd number and thus tends to ignore the status quo. When you reach this point, you will do what you think is right at the time, despite the consequences. That requires courage and conviction. Thus, 2/11 also symbolizes the dynamic relationship between Taurus-2 and Aquarius-11.

They can get along provided they appreciate that the tension between them can launch something better than currently exists. Aquarius-11 tends to run on inspiration. It's as if they subconsciously hear what the future requires of them. Taurus, on the other hand, is earthy in nature and can 'earth' the visions of Aquarius.

This is my final article on the Children of the New Millennium. Together the three articles form a major part of Appendix 17 of Pan's Script. My next task is to return to the earlier appendices and bring them up to date. If you live in Melbourne and would like to join me in some workshopping, please contact me at elkiwhite@gmail.com. No prior knowledge is required.

- *Elkie is currently conducting a preliminary study, and is looking for data to put into a data file for Druids! If you would like to help with her research, please email elkiwhite@gmail.com*

The Inheritance

Written by John Jordan

Everyone inherits a wall from their parents.

They have to pass beyond the wall to become truly free, adults in their own right, with their own unimpeded vista of the country beyond, and out to the eastern horizon.

But their parents built a wall for them.

A wall made up of rocks and stones collected from a lifetime of stumbling in the dark, tripping on bad decisions and stubbing toes on foolish mistakes.

The parents took the stones and rocks and built the wall to protect and shelter the children, to get the rocks out of the way, to keep them from even bigger rocks from the slopes and valleys ahead. But the parents could only build so much, so high, so wide. The wall was not complete.

Of course, the biggest rocks were moved out of the way and the children could easily make it to the wall when they were young.

Our parents had a backpack and carried some of those stupid rocks from way before we were even born. The rocks they sometimes took out to fill the smaller gaps in the wall. When we were old enough to pull ourselves up we could see the stony field beyond, over the top of the wall.

The yearning to breach it was strong, we saw the view, the field beyond, and longed to explore it for ourselves. But as we grew, so did the wall, and just before we decided to surmount the wall, we realised that there was a very large hole in it. We used to look to climb or to go around the wall, but it all seemed too hard. The easiest way would be through the hole, which for some reason we only just discovered.

The closer we get to the hole, the more we realise that it is a perfectly human shaped hole. If we are a boy, it is shaped like a man. Or if we are a girl it is shaped like a woman.

In wonder, we realise that our parents made it for us. Just for us to go through. In fact, it looks pretty much exactly like our parents. We realise now, that our parents have gone, that they have just ducked through the hole, and are on the other side. They left an empty backpack at the entrance to the hole.

How worn the old pack looks, how faded, yet strong enough to hold a lot of rocks. We saw them wear it, all our lives. So we put on an empty backpack, and see if we can squeeze ourselves through the perfect hole. Sometimes we scrape our head, or shoulder, or shin. How our parents were braver, stronger, weaker than we were. But we all fit through, they knew we would.

Sometimes the hole is generous, our parents trusted us, and they knew we would go further than they. Sometimes the hole is stingy; they did not have confidence in us, and tried to protect us a little too much.

Once we are through, though, our parents are nowhere to be seen. On the other hand, the view is truly amazing. Rolling hills, and grass fields down to a stream and a lake with a sandy beach. Great trees and coloured birds, cliffs and rock pillars and everywhere life to be found.

So we find our place, and make it ours, find a love to share, and start a family, start cleaning the furrows of our choices in life, fill our backpacks with even bigger rocks to keep them out of the way of our children, and start to build our own wall to protect them and keep them near us.

One day we will fix that ragged hole. That reminds us – one day – didn't I leave that hole for my children to find? Yes, there was a magnificent view over to the east, my kids will go there one day, but they are not ready yet. They haven't learned by their mistakes yet, so I will teach them to learn from mine.

The wall can help them, and it can be made up of obstacles and mistakes I have removed from my life. The land is rich here, and the soil is clear, and one day I will fix that ragged hole I left in the wall, that's starting to look more and more like me as I look at it.

Oh heck, my bag is empty and the hole looks like the night sky filled with stars. I'll just take this old empty sack off and pop through the hole to rest on that hill and look at the stars. My kids can water the garden, they know what to do. They know where I am, they'll be fine.

The hole seems a lot bigger than I intended. Oh well, I guess I have shrunk a little. Oh, I'm so tired; I'll just rest by this stream. I can't see the wall any more, but I do like watching stars.

Mistress Munchkin and the Plutonium Dragon - Part 3

Written by Tina Merrybard

Mistress Elfrida Munckhin has been living in a small cottage on the top of a cliff, sent there by her Druid Order to magically babysit a nuclear reactor, known to her as Lumpy Bum. Despite her supposedly living alone, Elfrida's cottage is rather full, what with the twinned spirits of place, Maelgwyn and Gaelgwyn, and her somewhat awakened helpful household implements, Fusser, Stewar, Bowly and Cassie the Cauldron.

Mistress Munchkin has already managed to avert a recent nuclear crisis, but at 3am she is awakened by another a cry for help from Lumpy Bum...

She woke up in a hurry. The nuclear reactor was calling to her, crying into her mind like a frightened child. Tapping into the sun energy that she carried in her centre, she snapped her fingers to make a little yellow light appear above her head, and scurried to dress by its glow, even though she was in a hurry. Working to calm down something as dangerous as a reactor wasn't the time to have your nightdress blow up over your head and blind you.

Thick track-pants and knobbly crocheted jumper pulled on, feet crammed into gumboots that were older than her, she hurriedly pushed open the rickety door with a tortured scrape of wood on the stone floor, and ran for the cliffs, with her little yellow light bobbing above her head like a pet canary.

Lumpy Bum was glowing at the base. She could see it even with the usual light-pollution of the security floods that surrounded it.

"That can't be good," Elfrida breathed, coming to a halt at the best vantage point on her cliff. "What is the matter?" she asked the huge conical pile of concrete. "Lumpy, tell me what's wrong!"

Wind blew off the sea and grabbed at her heavy braid and the floppy hem of her jumper. She staggered and spread her strong legs wider to hold her stance.

"I feel sick!" cried the huge thing. "I have a storm inside me!"

"Poor baby!" she soothed it with her mind, reaching out her mental arms to hold it in a huge hug. "Let me make it better!"

The reactor's energy felt like a tornado, swirling up and out and pushing, pushing against its walls. It forced her hug away, not because it wanted to but because the power there was too great for it to hold. It was too great for her too.

"Cerridwen, help me please!" Elfrida called. She felt new energy enter her mind and body, as the fierce crone goddess of the Druids came to her aid, and she used it to wrap her mental arms once more around the giant reactor, building a dome to contain its explosive outburst even as she worked to soothe it. "Hold on, Lumpy," she urged.

"I can't... I can't... I... caaaaaan't! Hllllpppp me!" it wailed.

She held on tight. She could see the headlights of vehicles driving away down the long lonely road that lead back to town. "Cowards!" she growled, but she didn't really blame them. They didn't have her protection against the radiation. Still, what happened to going down with your ship? It wasn't like they'd be able to drive far or fast enough to get out of range if poor old Lumpy Bum really blew his stack!

She sent more soothing energy to the reactor, feeling into the whirlwind as much as she could, trying to find the centre of the problem, trying to cool it, to calm it as she went. Ah, there it was, the problem, and it wasn't one she could fix. One of the core elements was gone, melted away. "Oh, by the Dagda's red beard!" She swore only to herself, though the little light above her head glowed brightly for a moment from the force of her emotion.

"Lumpy, I'm so sorry!" she said. "You have a bad tummy ache. You need to be sick, and I can't stop it. I can hold you, though, and make it better afterwards! I'm here! I'm here!"

The reactor wailed into her mind, “Help me, Grumpy one, helppp me!” as heat built up inside the great concrete tower and began to radiate, and the last cars drove away.

“Gods and Guides be with me now,” Elfrida muttered, and she felt her army of helpers come around her in the aether. Brigid, keeper of the holy well and flame. Cerridwen, already and always with her. Animals both real and mythical. The Yew tree who had taught her about death. Her teacher, Merlin. The Morrigan (who always liked a good fight). Thor, god of thunder and justice. So many others. They huddled close now as she pulled energy from them and from all around her, and from the considerable store that she kept inside herself too, and as poor old Lumpy Bum blew, she was there to catch every scrap of radiation, all the heat, all the death and destruction, and convert it into something less harmful.

Silence. Elfrida lowered her arms, feeling sweat run down her back under the lumpy sweater and catch the wind to turn to ice against her spine. Wind tugged at the tendrils of hair that had fallen out of her braid and over her nose, tickling her. She hardly dared to look at what she had done, but look she must.

The reactor was all dark now. No lights any more, but no glow either. It sat like a lump of rock, almost impossible to see on the cliff in the dark night. “Grumpy one?” it asked tremulously.

Elfrida breathed a sigh of relief. “You’re alright?” she asked.

“I feel tired,” it said to her, mental voice far weaker than she was used to. “I need to sleep.”

“Sleep then, Lumpy,” she told it. “When you wake up you’ll feel much better.”

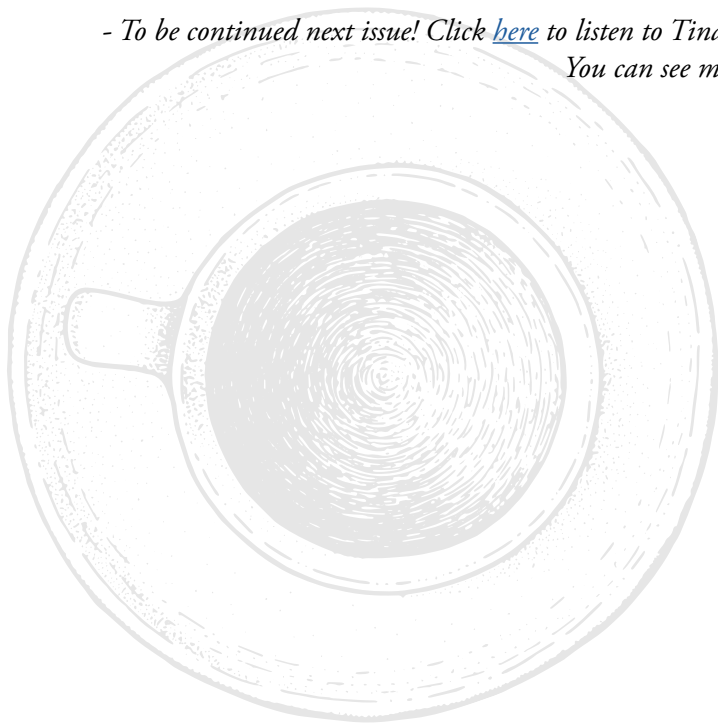
She felt the reactor go away from her, settle into somnolence. It was ok, but the power it usually wielded was gone. Gone in one explosive event that might have made it dangerous for a thousand years and more, but instead had been converted to...what?”

Elfrida suddenly sat down, plumph, right on the cold wet grass. “Phew!” she said to herself, suddenly feeling drained and tired. “Disaster averted... I think?”

She looked suspiciously at the dark, sleeping silhouette of Lumpy Bum, but it still sat innocent under the night sky. “I think... disaster averted!” she said more brightly. That’s when she noticed that the golden shine of her little overhead canary-light was no longer golden. Instead, she was bathed in a kind of purpley, silvery light, that cast a shadow of her foreshortened form on the grass ahead of her, and made her shiny gumboots, normally black, look like they were made of metal.

“Hmmm, spoke too soon, methinks,” Elfrida grumphed, and she took up her courage once more to bend her head back, back, and look up at the sky directly behind her.

- To be continued next issue! Click [here](#) to listen to Tina read Part 2, hosted on the SerpentStar Youtube channel. You can see more of her amazing work on <http://www.tlmerrybard.com>



Wheel of the Year

By Liluri

I have been working on the Wheel of the Year for a long time. Having tried various templates and ways of trying to show not just my area but having it reflect on a larger area. I wanted something that would remind me that the world is connected and showing the direction of the sun in both southern and northern hemispheres. This is the idea I came up with a way that illustrates, at a glance, both hemispheres.

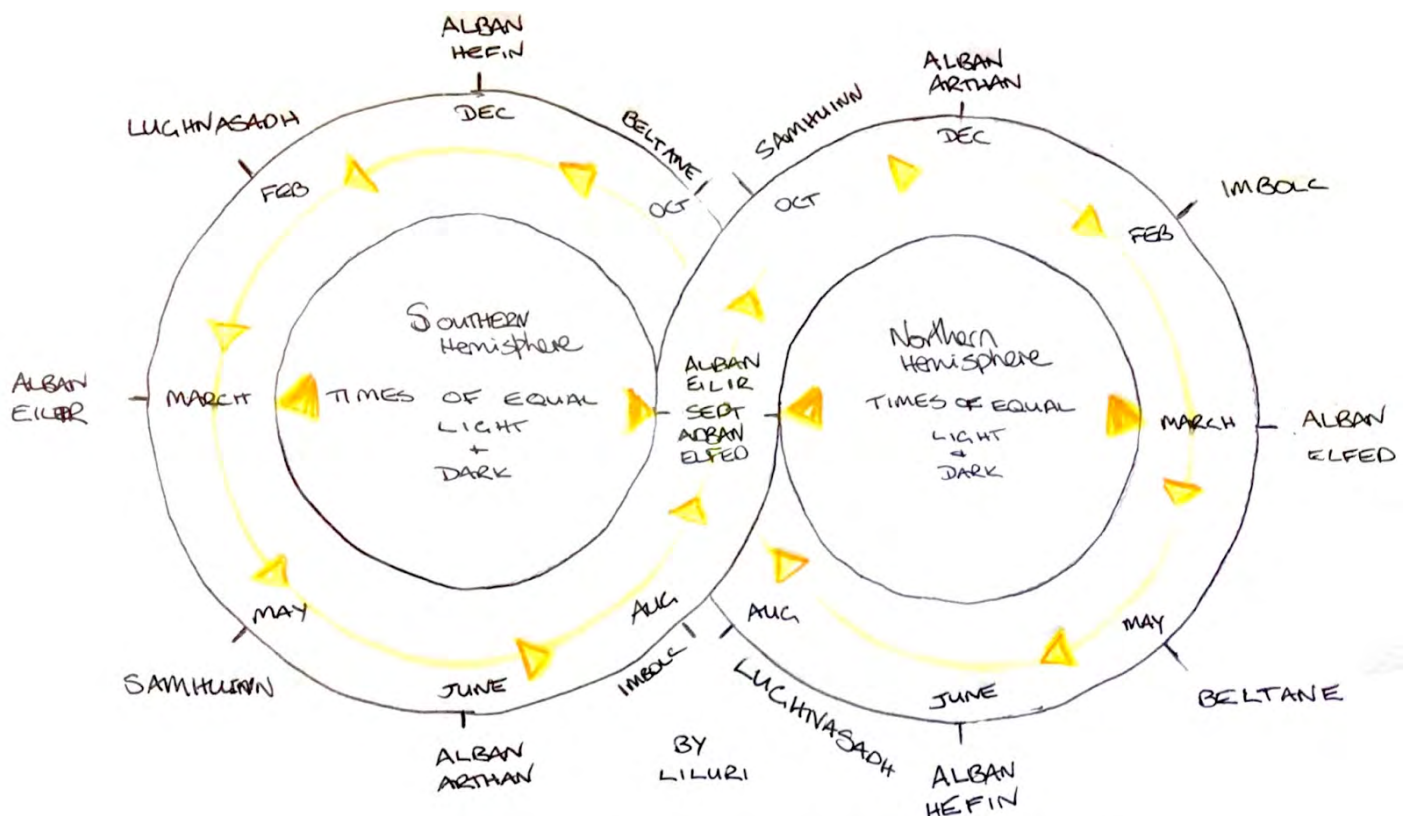
While we have extremes, where it is more likely that in the northern hemisphere there are much colder conditions, this is balanced by the extreme heat conditions that happen at the same time. So across the world there is balance, as we celebrate life, there is the remembrance of death.

I have been fortunate enough to work with people that are on a similar latitude above the equator as I am below it. We talk about what is happening in our environment and there is a magic that occurs when we swap stories of nature at a different step of the wheel.

It could be used as a hand out for visitors from either hemisphere when travelling, especially when ritual is going to take place. It would also be a great help when flipping rituals from the OBOD booklets, especially when gateways are in use.

The double wheel of the year can also have the Northern Hemisphere as the first circle as well.

Please find below a rough copy to spark inspiration and hopefully motivate people to use something like this in books to assist in a more inclusive path. The experience of representation, of being able to see yourself and where you live, enriches our Druidry.



Reflections on inner- experience, mindfulness, 'emptiness' and contemplative practice within Druidry.

A Quiet Mind and the Awen flows - Part 2

By Kacey Stephensen

By a natural consequence, you find that you do actually have less inner commentary and less judgment when you practice Zazen, and yet you are still very much aware.

Getting into this state of mind might also employ visualizations, mantras, ect but the ultimate goal is a mind that is still. Stillness in this way, is a deep awareness of the world and how we exist within it.

Beyond duality, there is oneness, unified with nature. Because all concepts invariably rely upon marking the difference between objects and subjects, between you and that person.

Yet ironically we often fail to recognise the difference between the 'perceiver within' and that constituent of your mind that 'thinks'. Thoughts are like barnacles on a worn out boat, if they are not understood within the greater awareness.

Because thoughts have no beginning or end, they are like the rabbit in the magician's hat, always appearing but never conclusive. So while we unconsciously attach to thought notions, we never actually reach them in the first place! So suffering occurs, like trying to perpetually reach the horizon!

We know we are connected to the trees, because we are one 'suchness', a coherent reality being expressed through you and the tree, and yet within the nature of reality, as druids we also know the wisdom of cherishing the interconnections found in - difference and individual conscious or unconscious aspects of nature.

Physically, I am not a tree. But because of that, I recognise in the tree something of 'me' that is both physical on a deeper layer but also non-physical. I recognise that within the tree, there is a vitalism that connects me with the tree, with the forest, ect. and we call that Nwyfre. That becomes apparent through present-mindedness. So as druids, we want to get to know that part of our deeper felt 'identity' with the tree while we also recognise that trees are sacred in their own right as sentient beings like the rest of nature.

On the one hand, mindful practice breaks down descriptions and differences but it also opens us to the deeper, subtle presence of 'agency' within trees, rocks, rivers, the sky, animals, ect. So mindfulness works to see the bigger context of the universe but also shows us the interconnectedness of all - sentient beings and non sentient beings.

This is where Druidry dwells, within the still presence of the entire cauldron, and the active mystical engagement with it's contents - i.e. the 'subjects or beings that make up the world'.

I think the experience of Nwyfre is a way of talking about this oneness and that ultimately goes beyond definition. It is talking about embodied experience which transcends concepts, although concepts may arise from such an experience, and we might call that the 'expression of awen'. Which I believe is what Penny was referring to when she said that 'there are these jagged bolts of inspiring energy, which we can not predict' in referring to Nwyfre.

Experience can not be pinned down, no matter how many concepts and logical positions we decide to take upon reflection; the root of experience can never be dug up, it's a root after all! Its very nature is in the deep, dark, fecund constituents of being. We know it more intimately than anything, yet it ultimately transcends our ability to explain what we mean when we have mystical experiences. This is where 'poetic inspiration' describes Meaning from Mystery, instead of Rationalism.

I think the Awenyddion knew a thing or too here about the nature of Awen and the often unintelligible yet directly experiential nature of mystical states. Although many of their utterances were said to have happened while they were in trance frenzies, often they would have no recollection of the experience and that perhaps points to the very 'thoughtless' state in which trance can induce.

Both methods of attaining inspiration, awareness and vitality are valid, where one hones the mental tools available to us to find the hidden elixir, the other one approaches awen from the opposite direction, through deep mental stillness or, a deep mindful awareness of the everyday world around us. Both of these techniques are used together - hence the paradox in which there really is no paradox! - but often they are different disciplines, which is when they are parallel spirals, spiraling together, to the source of being.

Letting go and opening to deep presence, is The Cauldron of Awen. We often reflect upon the 'contents' of the cauldron, the 'elixir of awen', the brewing, bubbling, creative and hissing stream of consciousness!

But what about the cauldron itself? It is if not the most important part of the whole brewing process. A vessel is always present. It is still, and yet it yields an active ingredient in the same way that 'space', as defined by the fabric of the universe, is the 'container' or context by which the physical 'stuff' of the universe evolves. The cauldron is the 'container of consciousness', and yet it is consciousness. An empty cauldron in this sense, sitting in that emptiness can birth the Spirit of inspiration. Everything supposedly came from nothing in the beginning, every potentiality is a no-thing before it is a some-thing, before becoming an actuality, and as Ross Nichols reminds us - "Darkness is the fosterer of splendor".

So, we come back to that deep, enriching, life giving 'empty space'.

It invariably turns out not to be empty in the way we think of emptiness, but it is a spaciousness of mind that gives rise to everything, to the whole cosmos. It is deep - listening.

In the west we call it 'mindfulness', it is alluding to an experience that isn't a concept, isn't a word, but refers to Experience itself, i.e. The Mind, beyond concepts, beyond the clouds of abstracts and symbols. Even though symbols in contemplative practices are often useful tools, they are ultimately there to bring about a mystical state of mind, presence and revelation.

While there might be no connection historically except within the wider indo-european theory, we can choose to reflect on the Taliesin chase, comparable to Buddha's enlightenment. While the comparability might be arbitrary, it is a useful way of relating to the chase.

We can see within it lessons about impermanence, suffering, a 'break through moment' of coalescence and eventual awakening, which reflect Buddha's journey towards a deeper awareness of reality as well.

Not that we should see Taliesin's rebirth and Buddha's rebirth as 'the same', as they are not, but that we can see that the Druids most definitely understood a transitional and impermanent nature of being, and that the internal conflict that is so apparent in the human experience can be changed, broken down and understood through a series of initiatory and transformative inner experiences, that ultimately lead us, perhaps, into a state of 'no-mind'.

Of course, it doesn't end there. It is also necessary that we come back from this deep dark womb, with the ability to think more clearly and shine our light in the world.

This is why the mystical wisdom that Druidry shines a light on is the cyclical truth of being, the Circle. Perhaps 'enlightenment' is a cyclical process as well and this gives us a holistic perspective on the plethora of emotions and internal challenges that we can sometimes go through. However, every wheel has a center and I would say that this center is Now, every moment. So Satori is always here - now. It is in fact a state of Nature, in the same way that the sun is at the center of our galaxy, so it is to the wheel of the year and the circle of our lives.

Buddhism is often misunderstood as believed to be teaching that Enlightenment is the end result of a process, but we learn through Zen that Enlightenment is not a destination, it's not even a 'subject' by which we can describe, it is in fact the raw experience of awareness and it's Now! Now, Now, Now!

Taliesin with his bright radiant brow, compared with Buddha and even the journey through the elemental forms, endured sufferings.

Through the initial long preparation period of the brew, to the eventual scalding of his thumb with awen's three drops and the sheer destructive rage and challenge that Ceridwen presented to his ego; being chased and nearly eaten four times.

In a similar way that Gautama Buddha, under the bodhi tree was faced with all manner of internal struggles as he learnt to accept the deeper state of consciousness beyond the distractions of thoughts and projections. Both stories are hinting at an ultimate state of being, while the druidic version is perhaps more cyclical - hence the chase and rebirth, Buddha was perhaps 'beyond space and time', yet within every moment composed thereof.

So in this way, it teaches us that recognising the fact of suffering, is part of the journey that everyone will go through, in the process towards enlightenment and that the ultimate state of 'Being' is pure awareness or consciousness in some form and that the cycles of nature, of birth and death and rebirth, of the tangible elements are all part of the deepening process into further 'wakefulness'. It is by no coincidence I don't think, that Buddha reached enlightenment under a tree!

The goddess tests us time and time again, until finally when we have been broken down into one grain of wheat we let the darkness, the nourishing emptiness, take place. So in this way, the one who tastes the three drops will inevitably be broken down and reborn but the cycle of nature and of being tells us that it is inevitable that we will arise again, and this is why Gwion was a seed in his last form before being swallowed by Ceridwen as the black crested hen.

You could look at the chase as Gwion's initial failure to accept the inevitable event; his fleeing representing the fight/flight of the ego trying to hold onto attachments, although usually, we would think of the chase as the natural and necessary journey that we all take, called the process of Individuation by Carl Jung.

A more conducive way of looking at it would be recognising that the journey of 'enlightenment' if we can call it that, is Wild and that it is a series of different, layered experiences, lessons, insights and challenges that result in a deep transformation or a series of smaller transformations that lead to a further awakening.

Perhaps a Druidic understanding of attaining enlightenment is thus; wild, deeply immersed in the elements of nature - a coalescence of being. In the end however, Gwion has to be eaten. He has to not only transform various times but eventually he has to die; die to his old self, and the ego has to be broken down.

This brings me to Awen itself and how we conceive of Awen.

Within the book 'Contemplative Druidry - People, Practice and Potential', multiple participants have given their perspectives on Awen. While we all understand the traditional associations - that of creative, or poetic inspiration, Awen as a mantra and as a state of being deepens us into presence. Chanting awen, we slowly become quieter within; the body relaxes, nwyfre flows and we enter a 'state of awen'.

In this way, awen isn't so much something you attain, but something you enter into or become. Awen is wakened within you, through mindfulness and through presence.

By listening to this awareness within, inspiration or insight naturally arises. The other important thing to remember, is that Awens insights are not just what we normally recognise as creative or poetic creations, Awen is contemplative and that can be very subtle or very obvious. A simple reflection in nature while watching a leaf on a tree, can be considered a 'state of awen'.

It opens us to mystical states of being, and Poetic inspiration is also 'insightfulness'.

The way in which awen's inspiration reveals itself can be in countless ways, through our physical senses or an inner message that comes to us in some way through the process of becoming 'one with Awen'.

We sit within the place where the inner cauldron meets with the greater cauldron of the universe, and then we realize there is only one cauldron and that this cauldron is being, and not being, it is within and without, it is there and it is not.

What about a silent awareness of Awen? Awen which is simply being present? I think that this is the source of what Awen is about. The experience of awen won't always be 'something' but could be an experience of 'no-thing' and that's where the deepening into Awen can nourish us in a less conceptual way. Through deep presence, with no expectations, withdrawing from judging, withdrawing from past and future, from this and that, from duality and so forth, we arrive at the source in deep presence.

There, Awen arises as an acorn breaking open and growing in the deep dark earth, towards the bright brow of Taliesin within. In the same way that the Mani-Jewel or Lotus flower opens within, when silently coming into a clarity of beingness, Awens three drops begin to surface, from the "still lake of meditation".

This way, we might even understand the consciousness of plants and the presence of rocks even more intimately.

The simple point to this whole essay is thus: whatever inner or outer work you are engaged in, come from a state of mindfulness and openness; an attentive considering attitude that is aware of the stillness and presence within. From this state of stillness, context becomes clarified and the acorns and hazels of our intersecting experiences with nature and inner-nature can become one flowing stream.

May all beings have deep peace,
May the four realms:
Mineral, Plant, Animal and Human,
Be blessed with deep peace.
May we sit within the inner grove and
the physical grove within the world,
And feel how they are both reflections
of the other.
May the three cauldrons within,
Be blessed with present mindedness,
May the circle of being,
Be light of foot,
And nourished by the abiding presence,
Of the deep earth.

Awen! /\

- Kacey Stephensen

The Unheard Cry

The Earth trembles with the weight of the world, damaged and fragile her cries unheard
The damage unfolds as the skies turn to grey, the Air once so clear now polluted with decay
Surrounded by shadows
man-made and unclean
A breath of fresh Air now only a dream
The Fire grows stronger and out of control, even though Her only wish is to heal our soul
The Waters' rise and consume the land, then flees further and further destroying what stands
As the Earth we worship rebels at our touch
The ability to heal resides within us
To cleanse, renew, rebuild and restore
If we ignore the cries we'll regret forevermore
Together as One, with our heart and hands, we can fight the despair destroying our land
Our sacred journey is to heal and repair, the future of our home now so barren and bare
Our honour-bound duty is to rise and take care
But if we refuse to heed the cry of the land
Our world will shatter, naught left but a grain of sand ...

- Karen S.

Member Businesses, Groups & Retreats in Australia/New Zealand



Animal Oracle by Vicki Minahan

After nearly eight years I am pleased to announce a project close to my heart has arrived with art by Helen Wells. Mountain Ash Animal Oracle is here.

I grew up in The Strathbogie Ranges, Victoria, Australia and have been greatly influenced by both the environment and the lifestyle espoused by my parents and extended family. I currently live in Cockatoo, Australia, Victoria

With this book and accompanying cards I have incorporated family stories, autobiographical aspects, my spiritual experiences and scientific information for each animal. My hope is that this will help you to incorporate both the Apparent and Otherworldly aspects to aid you on your journey through life.



Pan's Script by Elkie White

Pan's Script, the book, was written over a period of sixteen years with the goal of providing people with accurate information about their birth data. The book is huge – over 400 pages - but costs only \$50, including postage within Australia. Limited copies left, there will be no further re-runs.

Pan's Script, the report: Over the years the book has spawned individualised reports further designed to help people understand and appreciate themselves. These 20+-page reports are based on your personal Astronumerology. Whilst the book teaches people how to analyse birth data in general, your individual report does all the work for you: entirely personalized and excellent value at \$125.

Pan's Script, the research project: Would you be willing to contribute your birth data to research about druids? I already have data based on writers, musicians, artists, actors, scientists, politicians, sports people, and spiritual people in general, that I have compared with each other and a random sample. To do us justice, I need at least 100 druids. Write to me if you would like to be included: I'd love to hear from you. I might write an article about my findings, but no names will be mentioned. As a thank-you, I will inform you of your Astro-Number Signature and give you my findings about it.



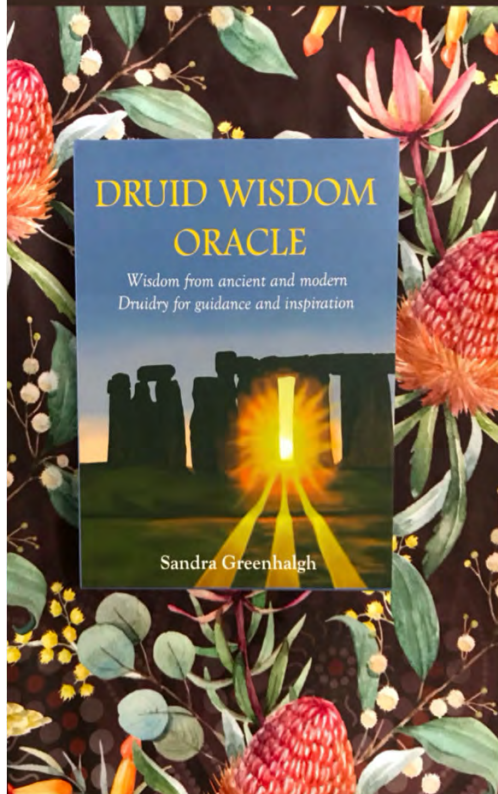
All enquiries: elkiwhite@gmail.com

DRUID WISDOM ORACLE CARDS

ONLY \$45 (INCLUDING POSTAGE)
FOR AUSSIE SERPENTSTAR READERS -

PLEASE EMAIL
DRUIDWISDOMORACLE@GMAIL.COM

ALSO AVAILABLE ON ETSY & OBOD



Forest Spirit Jewelry

Magickal and spiritual amulets
inspired by the beauty of nature, the spirit of the forest.

www.forestspiritjewelry.com
www.facebook.com/ForestSpiritJewelry
www.instagram.com/ForestSpiritJulie

DRUID AlCHEMY

Hand Crafted Incense, Essential Oils & Blends for Transforming Ceremonial Space

CEREMONIAL INCENSE

Incense Censers & Burners
Bambs, Candles & Fire bowls
Essential Oils & Absolutes

ESSENTIAL OIL BLENDS

Oil Burners & Diffusers
Singing Bowls, Bells & Chimes
Herbs, Resins & Wood powders

Phone Chris on 0405 969 533 or visit:-
www.druidalchemy.com.au

Go deeper...

Respond to life's challenges and illuminate your inner and outer worlds with holistic counselling and psychotherapy.

Tina's primary approach (Process Oriented Psychology) honours your path and embraces your soul, spirit, mind and body.

Based in Ipswich, Queensland.
Online sessions available anywhere.

W edgewiseicp.com
E tina@edgewiseicp.com



Tina Bramley,
Holistic Counsellor
and Psychotherapist



Illuminating Counselling
and Psychotherapy

Mentoring & Wise Guide Services

Mentoring is my passion as its about relationship and all things in life is about relationship, I assist you in moving in the direction that helps you. I'm BIG on Self Care and found that this is the foundation to all aspects of moving through life in a harmonious way and being your best Self.



I am trained to perform Ho'oponopono which is an ancient and traditional Hawaiian healing process that has been orally handed down for over 51 generations. It is a sacred process of getting rid of emotional baggage.
(it is NOT a mantra or affirmation)

I am a lifelong student of Hawaiian Spirituality, a Wise Guide & Affiliate to the School of Spirituality, Healing and Development (SoHAD) and a Member of OBOD /I\.
An awarded MBA'er and Archetype Consultant with over 30 years experience of developing and working with people.



SELF ACTION CENTRE

+61 (0)412 341 069

www.selfaction.org

@selfactioncentrehelp

celebrant@deborahrosehalni.com

#selfactioncentre

Spiral Dance's latest album 'Land and Legend' is now available.



Goddess of the Southern Land

Serpent Energy

Wickerman / Landlord's Daughter

Song of the Trees

The Sheringham Mermaid / Bay of Soles

The Children of Lir

Soul's Gateway

King Orfeo

Dark Days and Heys / Tampered Twilight

Elen of the Ways

Mallee My Mother

A Piggott

A Piggott

A Piggott / P Gooding

A Piggott

A Piggott / P Gooding

A Piggott

M Adamson

Traditional

A Miller / P Gooding

A Piggott

Wyverne Ogma Vyvyan

Featuring:

Damh the Bard on Track 1 & 11

Wyverne Ogma Vyvyan Track 11

To order go to :

<http://www.spiraldance.com.au>

or for more information :

info@spiraldance.com.au

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>

<http://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

7078 Airlie Road • Warrenton, VA 20187 • (800) 456-4930 • www.RainforestTrust.org



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	





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

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

CREATIVE CRONIES

Astrological Moon Calendar & Diary



Our 2022 Theme is Spiritual Renewal & Our Collective Purpose

The Creative Cronies have been consulting the planets, creating and producing the moon calendar and astrological diary for over 30 years. Based near Kaitia, in the Far North of Aotearoa, they have a Southern Hemisphere focus, with inspiring art from women across the country.

They include in depth astrological guidance, moon phases, mayan calendar guidance, daily oracles in the diary, and gardening & fishing by the moon in the calendar.

This year explores each Zodiac sign's unique skills and talents and how each might contribute to humanity's collective purpose through these times.

You can purchase a 2022 Moon Calendar, Moon Diary (**LIMITED STOCK**) or a Companion Pack at:

<https://www.creativecronies.co.nz>

Instagram: @creativecronies



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.



OBOD Member Celebrants

Australia & New Zealand



JENNETH GRAHAM
Priestess Celebrant Bard Witch

As a registered Marriage Celebrant & passionate creator of ceremonies, I craft unique & beautiful rituals to help you celebrate the important times in your life.

Ceremonies are available on the Central Coast, Sydney & Newcastle Areas. Nationally & Internationally upon request.

Handfastings ~ Weddings
Civil Ceremonies ~ Vow Renewals
Maidenhood ~ Motherhood
Blessingways ~ Baby Namings
Cleansings ~ Cronings
Divorce ~ Funerals
Transition & Initiation Rituals

www.WiseCrafting.com.au
welcome@WiseCrafting.com.au
0415 158 941

THE ORDER OF BARDIS
OVATES & DRUIDS
MEMBER

RECLAIMING
WITCHCRAFT
MEMBER & TEACHER IN TRAINING

Pagan Awareness
Network Member

Pamela Meekings-Stewart

Registered Marriage and
Civil Union Celebrant
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

Anne Conroy

REGISTERED CELEBRANT

My celebrancy is heart centred for those looking for someone who can genuinely support individuals and families when the need arises, in a relaxed and caring manner, in the Celtic tradition.

Regardless of the type of ceremony and its level of complexity, you can be assured of respect, empathy, deep listening, compassion, and creativity, along with a healthy dose of humour.



www.ritualcelebrant.co.nz

Ph: 021 781 873

E: anne@ritualcelebrant.co.nz



Member of the Order of
Ovates Bards and Druids



Member Celebrant's
Assn. of New Zealand

Creating meaningful ceremonies and lasting memories



Celebrant Services

Trained by OBOD School of Celebrancy
Offering OBOD Members and their families
Celebrating Life & Farewell Services
for a donation to charity.



It would be great for us to work together, I am here at your service to make the ceremony unique to you, so don't delay, get in touch today.

Serving Sydney and surrounding areas

+61 (0)412 341 069

celebrant@deborahrosehalani.com

www.deborahrosehalani.com

[@deborahrosehalani](https://www.facebook.com/deborahrosehalani)



Proud member of the
Australian Federation of
Civil Celebrants

House of Cu'
Vicki Minahan
Authorised Civil Marriage Celebrant



MARRIAGE CEREMONIES AND LIFE CELEBRATIONS

OFFERING A RANGE OF CEREMONY STYLES TO SUIT YOUR WISHES

Based in Dandenong Ranges, Victoria, Australia

TRADITIONAL

PAGAN

DRUID

PERSONALLY WRITTEN

TAILORED TO YOUR NEEDS

CHILDREN AND PETS WELCOME

0467688565

houseofcuoracle@gmail.com

And finally...

A Druid's Life



Comic by Tina Merrybard

The word **Samhain** is pronounced Sow (as in Cow) Inn, and is sometimes written in the Old Scottish Gaelic form as 'Samhuinn'. It is said that at this special time of Samhain the veil that separates the worlds is at its thinnest. So our world, the world of Faerie, and that of the dead, blend as one. It is no wonder then that this night has become so wrapped in superstition. It is a night of wonder and magic. On this night the Cailleach (the Crone) comes to strip the leaves from the trees, to quicken the decay of the flesh of the year, so that it may feed the new life to come. We can also ask Her to take the unwanted aspects of our personal year away, so that these too might be transformed. Yet even on the darkest night of Samhain, whilst our minds ponder our mortality, if we listen carefully, we can hear the sound of a new-born child crying for its Mother's breast, for soon it will be Alban Arthan, the Winter solstice, and the Wheel will turn once more.



Artwork by wyverne ogma vyvyan

To the ancient Celts, the year had two “hinges”. These were Beltaine (the first of May) and Samhain, or Samhuinn, (the first of November), which is also the traditional Celtic New Year. And these two days were the most magical, and often frightening times of the whole year.

The Celtic people were in superstitious awe of times and places “in between”. Holy sites were any border places – the shore between land and water (seas, lakes, and rivers), bridges, boundaries between territories (especially when marked by bodies of water), crossroads, thresholds, etc. Holy times were also border times – twilight and dawn marking the transitions of night and day; Beltaine and Samhain marking the transitions of summer and winter. Read your myths and fairytales – many of the stories occur in such places, and at such times.

Text sourced from www.druidry.org

Text sourced from www.druidry.org

The deadline for contributing to the Imbolc issue of SerpentStar is Sunday, 24 July.

The Imbolc issue will be released in the week of 1st August, 2022.