

SERPENTSTOIR

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



Lughnasadh 2012

About **SERPENTSTAR**

SERPENTSTAR comes out four times a year at each of the Fire Festivals, Imbolc, Beltane, Lughnasadh and Samhuinn.

Opinions expressed in **SERPENTSTAR** are contributors' own and not necessarily opinions of the editor or of the Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids.

Deadline for next issue: 20 April 2012

Subscriptions:

Online - Free as a .pdf from www.serpentstar.wordpress.com

Paper Subscriptions - Australia - AU\$10, New Zealand & Pacific AU\$12.50, AU\$15 Rest of world

Via Bank Deposit: Westpac Bank, Salt Productions, BSB: 032016 Acct: 297976

Via Paypal: to ladya.serpentstar@gmail.com

Please email: ladya.serpentstar@gmail.com to advise if you have made a payment, including your postal address.

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Have you contributed to **SERPENTSTAR** yet?

We'd love to hear from you!

Contributions are eagerly sought for future editions. Whether you like to create masterpieces in the Kitchen, with paper and pen, a camera, or you've read a relevant news article or some links of interest. Maybe you've created your own Sudoku, or you've written a piece on Druidry, we can use it all.

Please email ladya.serpentstar@gmail.com

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From the Editor

Lughnasadh Blessings!

It is certainly starting to feel like winter already, it has been interesting watching the seasons "melding together" here in Sydney.

This edition we have some magnificent poetry from Dragonwyst and Patrick Murphy, a fascinating article from Vyvyan ogma wyverne and some exciting news about a new seed group.

I have also included an interesting article based on a conversation with a Mayan Elder. Having just entered 2012, there has been some discussion around the Mayan calendar, and I thought it may make some interesting reading for those interested.

Bright Blessings to you and all you encounter,

Lady A



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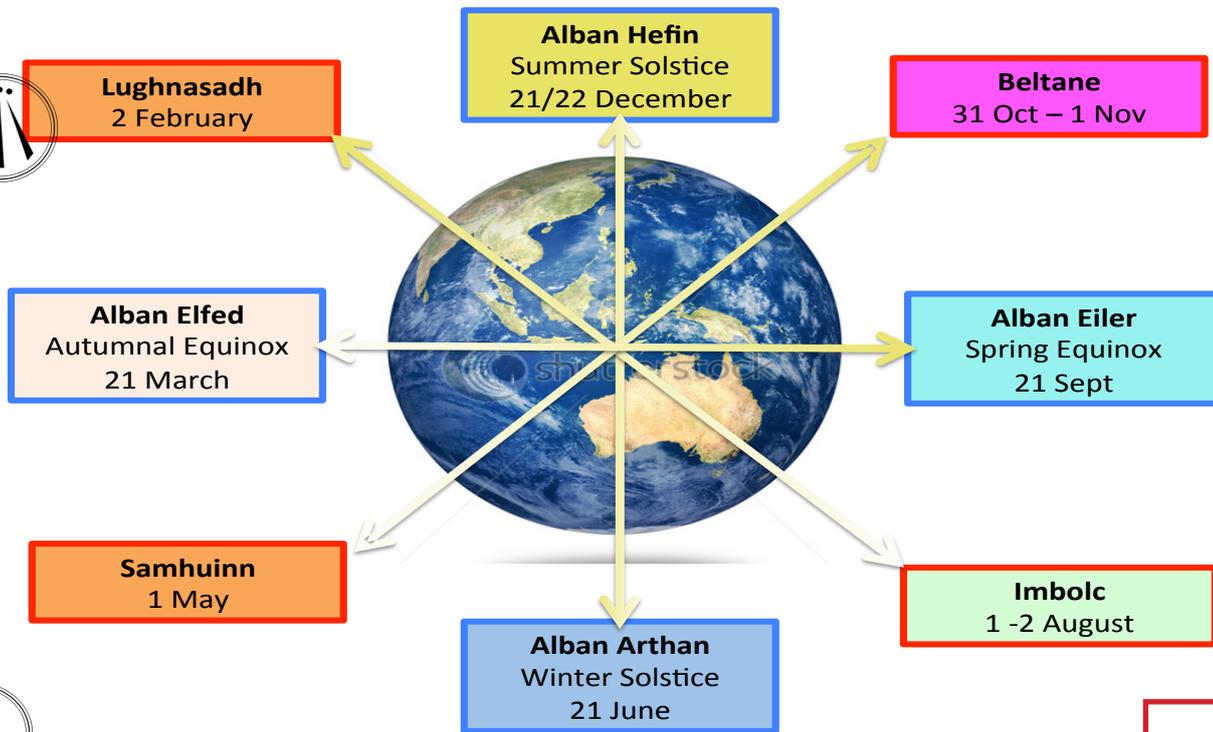
What Dragons

- *Dragonwyst*

*What dragons will arise with me today
Unfurling restless wings within my breast,
And, eager for expression, seek to play
Between my words and deeds with dragon zest?
Perchance 'twill be Defender, red with rage
At some unkindly word or hurtful deed.
But then may come the silver-blue of Sage,
With haiku'd insight hiding wisdom's seed.
Or he of burnished bronze and green and gold -
The Nature Wyvern - may call me to find
A path by leafy, sunlit creek and hold
The lizards dear. They, too, are dragon-kind.*

*'Tween word and deed, with glinting scale and claw
The dragons rise, dispensing dragon-lore.*

celebrating the wheel of the year in the southern hemisphere



we are here!

Fire Festival

Solar Festival

The 12th Australian OBOO Assembly will be held at Beltana in late October next year.

Located in the ancient desert mountains of the Northern Flinders Ranges, South Australia, Beltana (www.beltana.org.au) is a small heritage town with a permanent population of 6.

The Assembly will be dedicated to Morrigan, and activities will include exploring a conservation park accessible only by 4WD: Warraweena (<http://www.warraweena.com/>) and a Masquerade Ball on the Friday night.

Dates for the event are as follows:

Arrival Day: 25 October 2012
Bardic Day: 26 October 2012
Ovate Day: 27 October 2012
Druid Day: 28 October 2012
Departure Day: 29 October 2012

People are welcome to stay for Beltaine celebrations on 31 October, but this will not be included in the general programme.

For further information including accommodation options, please register your interest at www.druidryaustralia.org (you will need to sign up to do this) or contact Ngatina direct at gypsy@sincorp.org



The 2012 Assembly will be held in the last weekend of October this year at Beltana, SA.

I'm very aware that when considering travelling to Beltana one of the most pressing concerns is transport, so with this in mind I've put together the following, outlining some options to assist with your decision about whether to come or not and your plans on how to get here. I've written this with someone who lives outside of SA in mind, but some of it should still apply to those of you who are a bit closer.

Beltana is reasonably remote when it comes to transport, especially for those of you who don't have a car.

The town is situated 510kms north of Adelaide in the Northern Flinders Ranges, and the closest major transportation hub is Port Augusta which is still a 2.5 hour drive away. There are no buses which service this area, however there are a number of other options:

Self Drive from your location

This is great if you have the time, I know that for some of you it would be a journey of days, but I'd still recommend it for the experience.

If you do self drive, please be aware that there is 11kms of dirt road at the end which has many creek crossings along it. It is possible to drive a 'town' car along it but you can also park your car at the roadhouse at the start of the dirt and we will organise to have someone come and pick you up if you don't want to risk the dirt (we park one of our cars there all the time for this reason).

Fly to Adelaide, Hire a car and drive the remaining distance (510kms)

This may be the simplest option and also possibly the cheapest if we can get car pooling going

The drive is quite beautiful if you go through the Clare Valley, which is the shortest route as well, very easy to do in a day especially if there is more than one person who can drive.

Fly to Port Augusta, Hire a car and drive the remaining distance (241kms)

You will need to fly Your location > Adelaide > Port Augusta

The carrier servicing the Adelaide > Port Augusta flight is Sharp Airlines (www.sharppairlines.com.au). Flights are currently \$121 each way for the 'travel days' but could possibly go up to around \$280.

Hire cars have a more limited pool of options but there is Budget, Avis and at least one local supplier. Buses also run to Port Augusta regularly - through PremierStateliner (www.premierstateliner.com.au) and take 4 hours from Adelaide.

Fly to Leigh Creek, Local pickup for 36km drive

You will need to fly Your location > Adelaide > Leigh Creek

This is a private charter service for the Leigh Creek Coal Mine and only has extremely limited seat availability and must be purchased direct from the mine. Flight times are also restricted to twice a week so you would end up arriving at the Assembly at approx 9am on Bardic Day and then departing around 4:00pm on the Departure day (or a week earlier or later of course). If you are interested in this option, let me know and I'll look into the specifics of it including price, but expect somewhere around \$350 each way.

Car Pooling from either Adelaide or Port Augusta

No matter how people get here we will need access to enough seats in 4WD cars to make sure that everyone can get to the locations for the Ovale and Druid days. With this, and cost efficiency in mind I wonder if people would be interested in car pooling from either Adelaide or Port Augusta? (or both if we have enough people coming in to each location to make it worthwhile).

I have contacts with hire companies who specialise in cars which are appropriately set up for 4WDing in the Northern Flinders & from the Adelaide one at least can source either Landcruiser or Troopcarrier options depending on numbers. This way I could organise the hire & the cost could be spread amongst those who will use it.

We already have at least 3 people interested in travelling from Adelaide in this way, so we will be getting at least one car and there is one person who is planning to drive from Port Augusta and will have spare seats as well. If you are interested in this option PLEASE let me know (including your ability/willingness to drive a manual car –it's fine if you can't/don't want to, but obviously we'll need at least one driver per car) as I'll need to know numbers before I can estimate costs and set a fee for the event.

This information was originally sent out via the Assembly Mailing list, so if you have an email address and want to be included in that list, please contact me at gypsy@sincorp.org to be added.

I'm hoping that the next information will be about accommodation options and should include a cost for the event and an enrolment form, but until then if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me on either the above email address or 0429 795 002

Love & Light, Ngatina



CANBERRA

- Patrick Murphy



In the corridors of power
and the waratah flower,
beyond the pale of to-morrow
in the dawn of to-day,
sorrow and sadness still flower
and tie in the future the past

Our children now are our power
and resound in the corridors of power,
from the cyber age of to-day
to the dusty roads of the past,
on the outriggers of the sailing ships,
our ancestors paved the way of the past.

A future to hold onto
as our dreams cherish and flower
and to be caught in a rain shower
take time to see a flower
and the sun still shines to-morrow
for their will always be flowers
even in the corridors of power.

Tuckonies

vyvyan ogma wyverne

Tuckonies are Aborigine fairy-like beings, extra-dimensional diminutives who take an interest in our world and play important roles in regulating affairs in the plant and animals realms of the 'dreamtime' worlds we share. At this time they are also helping to integrate the new fairy races, which came with the white settlers and are still arriving from foreign lands to become part of the rich rainbow-snake diversity of this ancient mysterious land.

The Aborigines knew them as little people, a bit like Mary Norton's fictional borrowers or Jonathon Swift's Lilliputians, in that they have the physique proportions of ordinary earthly people, but they're only six to eight inches tall. They resemble Aborigines, with ritual scarring on their chests, and sometimes ceremonial body paint and they often carry hunting spears and woomeras. They are benevolent people, with wisdom beyond ours, and the freedom to travel further and do more, and they can be called upon in times of need to help our peoples with our problems.

Traditionally, they are thought of as actively promoting the health of the environment, in particular, having the power through their dancing and song (corroboree) to greatly increase the rate of plant growth, and Aboriginal folk tales include accounts of their miraculous power to turn tiny saplings into great trees in minutes with their magic.

Now, when anyone seriously intends to work with fairies in their lives, fairies know of that intention, and they help to bring on the fairy sight. Tuckonies are no exception to this rule, and because their reality is so closely interwoven with ours, they are fairly easy to see. I first saw them after years of developing my psychic ability in communion with (especially) the Aborigine spirits and ghosts of the land and the European fairies and spirit people.

My focus at the time was on the flower fairies of Jacobean England as they are now in our times, and I had been experiencing success communing with them and even seeing them. So the work I had done in that direction meant that I was primed to see the Tuckonies. What tipped the scales was the fact that I was experimenting with Aboriginal 'bush tucker', digging up and eating the roots and bulbs they ate, eating the flowers and seeds, sampling the herbs and chewing the medicinal bark of bushes and shrubs. This put me on their wavelength.

Also, I was spending long hours out in the scrub, studying the fauna and flora close up and communing with nature in the company of nature spirits who wanted to help me to see them. Under these conditions, accustomed as I was to communing with ghosts, I found Tuckonies very easy to see. I still find them easier to connect with than many European fairies. They have great charm and charisma, arising from their natural dignity, uprightness and wisdom.

Some authorities refer to them as nature spirits, but they're not really confined to the world of nature. Once you know them, they'll visit you inside your house, and draw your attention to them with great pleasure and courtesy, and they become very communicative. However, it is easier to establish first contact with them out in the wilds.

They haunt certain bushes and sheltered places in characteristic ways. The signs are subtle, but remember, they know you are looking for them and are helping you to home in on them. Look for the sort of feeling that you find in old churches, or cathedrals – a clear crystalline quality of the air, a feeling of sacredness or spiritual power, quiet, like a dome, holding everything within it safe and protected. It is similar to that which surrounds a birds' nest but instead of hiding from you, it calls you, and invites you to see it. Within that, or nearby, as you soft-gaze from a distance, not staring too sharply at anything, that's where the Tuckonies live. If you've been actively looking for fairies for a few years, they may build their pavilions in your garden.

I first saw them about twelve or so feet away, standing among the flowering canes of yellow jasmine and catsclaw creeper while I was looking for the flower fairies I was accustomed to seeing there. I was also conscious of full-sized Aborigine spirit guides making me look in the right direction. I had the impulse to sit down quietly and rest, admiring the flowers. I fell into a reverie, and then after a while, slowly lifting my eyes, I saw them, glimpsed them and held them in view for a few seconds at a time. There were three young men in ceremonial regalia, calmly watching me, and a sense of many others behind them. Everyone was delighted!

Some weeks after that, I was stopped as I went about my chores by a disturbance beside the path that I saw as being caused by one of the garden gnomes that was outside the fence in the wild. He held my attention for a while, exchanging pleasantries as they do, half by charade, with a telepathic hint or two and much smiling and nodding, and by the time he'd finished with me, I was primed well and truly for my next close encounter with Tuckonies.

As I turned back to the path, I saw him, an old man this time in everyday dress, a bit dusty, smiling and friendly, standing beside his wurley at the base of an erect bluebush. I have learnt over the years not to explode with emotion when these things happen, but I still needed a few moments to calm myself after this exceptionally clear vision. He remained visible, and when I was ready, he stepped to one side and showed me his wife, sitting inside the wurley, smiling broadly.

They seemed a little different from the first ones, which were taller and more charismatic and seemed to occupy a slightly different dimensionality. This old man and his wife were nevertheless inexpressibly moving and beautiful, their faces weathered and worn like those of old people on our dimension.

To be continued next issue.



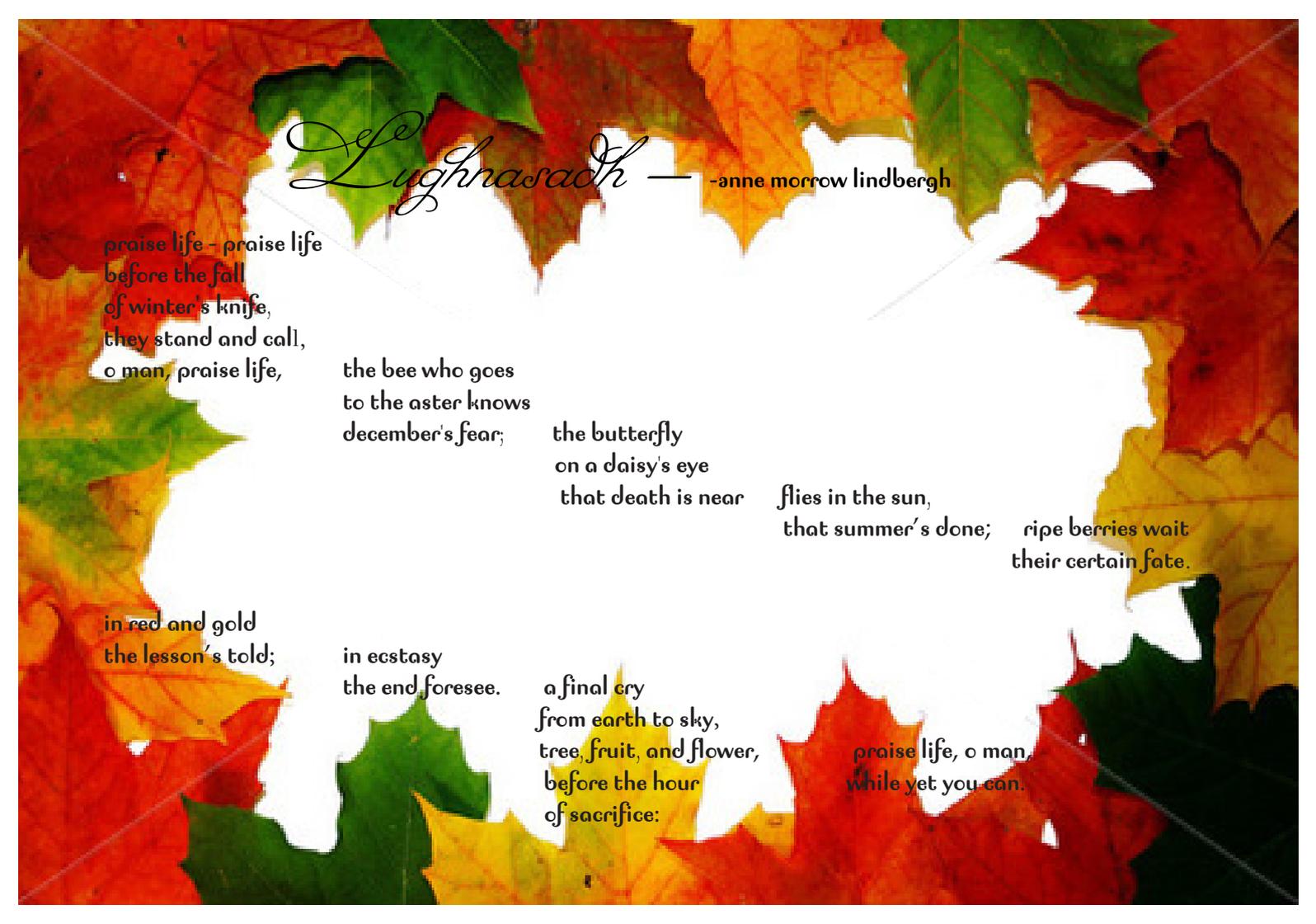
This image was mocked up in Paint to give an idea of what a Tuckony looks like. Unfortunately, they don't show up easily in photographs.

Tyranny - Dragonmyst

*Before the whistling, whetted edge of blade
Divides the silver thread of sense and soul,
And life is left unfettered and un-whole
With whispered urgings of the unheard shade;
Before this dread and darkest hour of all
There is a thought that grows in strength of words,
That finds a form in ink, like dark-winged birds
Across a page that cringes at the fall
Of pen-tip. Oh, that pen so wielded here!
What power drips in ink on this bleak leaf,
This strength to end the life of saint or thief
And keep the mobs immobilized in fear?*

*Now, this I know: when faced with restless horde
The lowly pen is mightier than the word.*





Lughnasadh — -anne morrow lindbergh

praise life - praise life
before the fall
of winter's knife,
they stand and call,
o man, praise life,

the bee who goes
to the aster knows
december's fear;

the butterfly
on a daisy's eye
that death is near

flies in the sun,
that summer's done; ripe berries wait
their certain fate.

in red and gold
the lesson's told;

in ecstasy
the end foresee.

a final cry
from earth to sky,
tree, fruit, and flower,
before the hour
of sacrifice:

praise life, o man,
while yet you can.

Inaugural Meeting of the OBOD Seed Group for the Adelaide Region.

The 19th January 2012 will go down the Druidic history books as being the auspicious date of the inaugural meeting of an, as yet, un-named OBOD Seed Group.

Five members met for a lively discussion of their introduction to Druidism, how they were progressing along the OBOD path and how being part of a Seed Group could enhance their experience. And so the Seed Group was born!!

We will meet again on Monday, 20th February at 7pm at the Governor Hotel on Port Road close to Adelaide City for a discussion on books (fiction and non-fiction) about Druidry and how they have influenced (or not) our understanding of the Druid path.

Looking forward to meeting with everyone again as well as other members who wish to join us.

Blessings to you all,

Sarah Marshall



Carlos Barrios, Mayan elder and Ajq'ij (is a ceremonial priest and spiritual guide) of the Eagle Clan. Carlos initiated an investigation into the different Mayan calendars circulating. Carlos along with his brother Gerardo studied with many teachers and interviewed nearly 600 traditional Mayan elders to widen their scope of knowledge.

Carlos found out quickly there were several conflicting interpretations of Mayan hieroglyphs, petroglyphs, Sacred Books of 'Chilam Balam' and various ancient text. Carlos found some strong words for those who may have contributed to the confusion:

Carlos Barrios: "Anthropologists visit the temple sites and read the inscriptions and make up stories about the Maya, but they do not read the signs correctly. It's just their imagination. Other people write about prophecy in the name of the Maya. They say that the world will end in December 2012. The Mayan elders are angry with this. The world will not end. It will be transformed."

"We are no longer in the World of the Fourth Sun, but we are not yet in the World of the Fifth Sun. This is the time in-between, the time of transition. As we pass through transition there is a colossal, global convergence of environmental destruction, social chaos, war, and ongoing Earth Changes." He continues: "Humanity will continue, but in a different way. Material structures will change. From this we will have the opportunity to be more human.

We are living in the most important era of the Mayan calendars and prophecies. All the prophecies of the world, all the traditions are converging now.



There is no time for games. The spiritual ideal of this era is action."

Carlos tells us: "The indigenous have the calendars and know how to accurately interpret it -- not others. The Mayan Calendars comprehension of time, seasons, and cycles has proven itself to be vast and sophisticated. The Maya understand 17 different calendars such as the Tzolk'in or Cholq'ij, some of them charting time accurately over a span of more than ten million years.

"All was predicted by the mathematical cycles of the Mayan calendars. -- It will change -- everything will change. Mayan Day-keepers view the Dec. 21, 2012 date as a rebirth, the start of the World of the Fifth Sun. It will be the start of a new era resulting from and signified by the solar meridian crossing the galactic equator and the Earth aligning itself with the center of the galaxy."

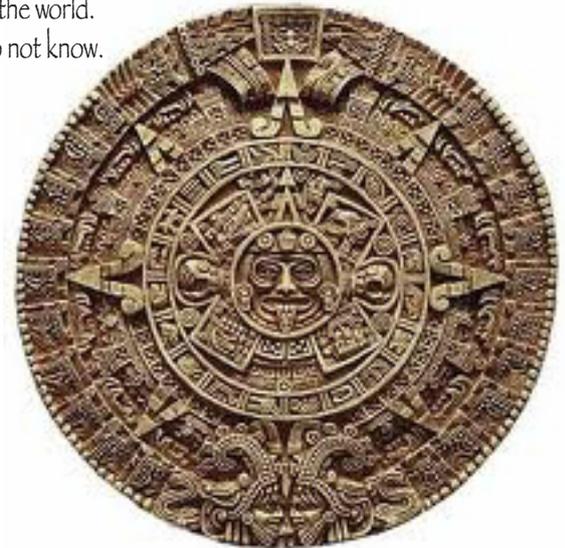
At sunrise on December 21, 2012 for the first time in 26,000 years the Sun rises to conjunct the intersection of the Milky Way and the plane of the ecliptic. This cosmic cross is considered to be an embodiment of the Sacred Tree, The Tree of Life, a tree remembered in all the world's spiritual traditions.

Some observers say this alignment with the heart of the galaxy in 2012 will open a channel for cosmic energy to flow through the Earth, cleansing it and all that dwells upon it, raising all to a higher level of vibration. Carlos reminds us: "This process has already begun. Change is accelerating now and it will continue to accelerate.

If the people of the Earth can get to this 2012 date in good shape without having destroyed too much of the Earth, we will rise to a new, higher level. But to get there we must transform enormously powerful forces that seek to block the way."

The date specified in the calendar Winter Solstice in the year 2012 does not mark the end of the world. Many outside people writing about the Mayan calendar sensationalize this date, but they do not know. The ones who know are the indigenous elders who are entrusted with keeping the tradition.

Carlos tells us: "The economy now is a fiction. The first five-year stretch of transition from August 1987 to August 1992 was the beginning of the destruction of the material world. We have progressed ten years deeper into the transition phase by now, and many of the so-called sources of financial stability are in fact hollow. The banks are weak. This is a delicate moment for them. They could crash globally, if we don't pay attention. Now, people are paying attention."



The North and South Poles are both breaking up. The level of the water in the oceans is going to rise. But at the same time land in the ocean, especially near Cuba, is also going to rise. Carlos tells a story about the most recent Mayan New Year ceremonies in Guatemala. He said that one respected Mam elder, who lives all year in a solitary mountain cave, journeyed to Chichicastenango to speak with the people at the ceremony. The elder delivered a simple, direct message. He called for human beings to come together in support of life and light.

“Right now each person and group is going his or her own way. The elder of the mountains said there is hope if the people of the light can come together and unite in some way. We live in a world of polarity -- day and night, man and woman, positive and negative. Light and darkness need each other. They are a balance.”

“Just now the dark side is very strong, and very clear about what they want. They have their vision and their priorities clearly held, and also their hierarchy. They are working in many ways so that we will be unable to connect with the spiral Fifth World in 2012.”

“On the light side everyone thinks they are the most important, that their own understandings, or their group’s understandings, are the key. There’s a diversity of cultures and opinions, so there is competition, diffusion, and no single focus.”

Carlos believes the dark side works to block unity through denial and materialism. It also works to destroy those who are working with the light to get the Earth to a higher level. They like the energy of the old, declining Fourth World, the materialism. They do not want it to change. They do not want unity. They want to stay at this level, and are afraid of the next level.

The dark power of the declining Fourth World cannot be destroyed or overpowered. It’s too strong and clear for that, and that is the wrong strategy. The dark can only be transformed when confronted with simplicity and open-heartedness. This is what leads to unity, a key concept for the World of the Fifth Sun.

Carlos said the emerging era of the Fifth Sun will call attention to a much-overlooked element. Whereas the four traditional elements of Earth, Air, Fire and Water have dominated various epochs in the past, there will be a fifth element to reckon with in the time of the Fifth Sun --- that element is ‘ETHER’. The dictionary defines Ether as a “hypothetical substance supposed to occupy all space, postulated to account for the propagation of electromagnetic radiation through space.” Perhaps it could be defined as the “space between space”. I would suggest it could be manifest as the alignment of charged particles from our solar system (Sun), and our galaxy (Milky Way) surge. The Ether element represents spiritual energy.

“The element of the Fifth Sun is celestial. Within the context of Ether there can be a joining of the polarities. No more darkness or light in the people, but an uplifted unity. But right now the realm of darkness is not interested in this. They are organized to block it. They seek to unbalance the Earth and its environment so we will be unready for the alignment in 2012.”

“We need to work together for peace, and balance with the other side. We need to take care of the Earth that feeds and shelters us. We need to put our entire mind and heart into pursuing unity and unity now, to confront the other side and preserve life.”

“We are disturbed -- we can't play anymore. Our planet can be renewed or ravaged. Now is the time to awaken and take action. Everyone is needed. You are not here for no reason. Everyone who is here now has an important purpose. This is a hard but a special time. We have the opportunity for growth, but we must be ready for this moment in history.”

Carlos says: “The prophesied changes are going to happen, but our attitude and actions determine how harsh or mild they are. We need to act, to make changes, and to elect people to represent us who understand and who will take political action to respect the Earth.”

“Meditation and spiritual practice are good, but also action. It's very important to be clear about who you are, and also about your relation to the Earth. Develop yourself according to your own tradition and the call of your heart. But remember to respect differences, and strive for unity. Eat wisely --- a lot of food is corrupt in either subtle or gross ways. Pay attention to what you are taking into your body. Learn to preserve food, and to conserve energy. Learn some good breathing techniques, so you have mastery of your breath. Be clear. Follow a tradition with great roots. It is not important what tradition, your heart will tell you, but it must have great roots.”

“We live in a world of energy. An important task at this time is to learn to sense or see the energy of everyone and everything -- people, plants, animals. This becomes increasingly important as we draw close to the World of the Fifth Sun, for it is associated with the element 'ether' -- the realm where energy lives and weaves. Go to the sacred places of the Earth to pray for peace, and have respect for the Earth which gives us our food, clothing, and shelter. We need to reactivate the energy of these sacred places. That is our work.”



“One simple but effective prayer technique is to light white or baby-blue colored candles. Think of a moment in peace. Speak your intention to the flame and send the light of it on to the leaders who have the power to make war or peace.”

Carlos reminds us this is a crucially important moment for humanity and for Earth. Each person is important.

He said the elders have opened the doors so that other races can come to the Mayan world to receive the tradition. “The Maya have long appreciated and respected that there are other colors, other races, and other spiritual systems. They know that the destiny of the Mayan world is related to the destiny of the whole world.”

“The greatest wisdom is in simplicity. Love, respect, tolerance, sharing, gratitude, forgiveness. It’s not complex or elaborate. The real knowledge is free. It’s encoded in your DNA. All you need is within you. Great teachers have said that from the beginning. Find your heart, and you will find your way.”

Source: Maya Mystery School

Carlos Barrios is a Mayan priest, historian, anthropologist, researcher, and an expert in the Sacred Maya Calendar.

Carlos was born in Guatemala. After studying with traditional elders for 25 years he became a Mayan Ajq’ij, a ceremonial priest, shaman, and spiritual guide and member of the ‘World Council of Mayan Elders.

He studied the traditions and Cosmo-Vision of the Maya people with Don Pascual, a Chi-Mam -spiritual guide- of the Mam people, who was the mayor and a leader of one of the older partisanships of Mayan people.

Carlos was also a student to Don Isidro, one of the last Alach Winak -king of the Achis- and an academic and wise man who had several PhD’s.

Carlos is a researcher with expertise on Mayan culture and spirituality. He worked as a professor at Universidad Rafael Land and Universidad Del Valle in Guatemala.

What am I?



I am Stinging Nettle. Urtica dioica

Stinging nettle is a perennial herb of the nettle family. Most used parts of this herb are its leaves and roots, but sometimes even stem of very young plants are used. Hair on the leaves of this plant instigates stinging sensation to human beings and animals. Since ages this herb has been widely used as a very effective medicine and a nutritious food.

As Old English Stīde, nettle is one of the nine plants invoked in the pagan Anglo-Saxon Nine Herbs Charm, recorded in the 10th century



Stinging Nettle Infusion

“Stinging Nettles herbal infusions have calcium, magnesium, potassium, iron, chromium, selenium, trace minerals, Chlorophyll, and B vitamins, manganese, silica, iodine and sodium. They are also a great source of vitamins A, C and E, B complex vitamins and beta-carotene.

You will need:

1L glass jar with a lid, 1 cup of dried stinging nettle, 1L of boiling water

- * Place one cup of the dried herb in the glass jar
- * Cover herbs with 1L of boiling water, and place lid on jar
- * Place jar in the fridge for a minimum of 4 hours
- * Drain the liquid off the herbs, ensuring to squeeze all the moisture from the herbs.
- * Enjoy 1-2 cups of the infusion daily.

Seek your medical practitioner's advice if you are pregnant, breastfeeding, have diabetes, high blood pressure or kidney problems before consuming this infusion

Goddess

- Dragonwyst



There is a woman, dark, and filled with power
Who leans against the archway of my mind
And wills me to acknowledge her this hour.
She haunts my sense of self. I often find
Her watching, mockingly through eyes of those
Who walk of a path of psychic certainty.
She has no time to hear about my woes,
Demanding strength. She wants tenacity.
There have been times she's made me cringe in fear
When I believed too much in being meek
And she would laugh derisively to hear
Such passive words as "turn the other cheek".



That cheek I'll turn as equal, nothing less,
For her to kiss with moonlight 's dark caress.

Damh the Bard in Australia

Damh the Bard will be appearing at The English Ale on Saturday May 19th firstly as part of The English Ale Druid's Gorsedd in Mylor S.A. a relaxed gathering between 12pm - 2pm bookings and enquiries contact Tom gpmr82@adam.com.au then Damh will be performing in the evening at the English Ale in Mylor - entry is \$15 details www.theenglishale.org/ or info@spiraldance.com.au

A workshop with Damh and Cerrí is planned on Monday 21st May (venue and cost to be announced but it will be in the city in Adelaide)

Sponsors Concert on Tuesday 22nd May for all the fabulous sponsors that donated money to bring him to Oz.

Wednesday 23rd May Damh and Cerrí will be giving a talk at Pagans in the Pizza Bar - Marcellina's Pizza Bar 273 Hindley St Adelaide more info from Tamzin at tomtam@sa.chariot.net.au

Damh will also be appearing in Melbourne on Thursday 24th May at Bar 303, 303 High St Northcote along with Spiral Dance. There will also be a concert in Sydney on Friday 25th May and Brisbane 26th May. details still being arranged. keep checking www.spiraldance.com.au or email info@spiraldance.com.au

Kitchen Magic

Watermelon & Mint Ice Cubes

You will need:

- * 2^{1/2} cups watermelon, cubed
- * 1 to 2 tablespoon of honey
- * 1 tablespoon sugar
- * Juice of 1/2 lemon
- * 24 mint leaves, finely chopped
- * Ice Cube Tray



- In a medium bowl, press the watermelon cubes through a fine mesh strainer. Discard the pulp.
- To the watermelon juice, add honey to taste, sugar and lemon juice.
- Combine and strain the liquid again, adding mint leaves once strained.
- Pour liquid into ice cube tray.
- Freeze for at least 2 hours before using.

* Can also be made into icy-poles, or added to Ginger Ale

Refreshing Alternatives to Soft Drink

- * If you own a soda stream, use it with filtered or rain water, to make your own mineral water. To this you can add mint leaves, or fresh ginger pieces, slices of lemon, whatever takes your fancy. If you don't own a soda-stream, mineral water will do fine as well.
- * Make a refreshing iced-tea. Add boiling water to your favourite tea bags or 2 teaspoon fulls of your favourite herb, and add your favourite sweetener. Pour into a jug filled with ice cubes.

Celebrating the Seasons...

Festive Wreaths

A wreath can be a great way to not only decorate your home, but also contemplate the current season and festival as you create it.

If you have trouble (as I did!) with getting the branches/grasses to be circular, you can purchase a wire wreath stand from craft shops and add your flowers/branches ribbons etc to it.

I set about to create a Lughnasadh wreath, and decided to attempt a Bardic symbol.

I used: long seedy grass, and some branches I found in a mulching pile outside my National Park



I used the seedy grass to create a circular shape. After much difficulty, I ended up needing to use wire to hold the grass in place, but you could also use a glue gun if you can't weave them together.

I then created the diamond shape, using parts of branches we'd found at the National Park.

I then wrapped some seedy grass heads around the front of the wreath and added 2 flowers, one for each full moon that would pass between the seasons, and a ribbon to hang the wreath.



Materials are unlimited. Willow branches make excellent materials for creating the outside circle, or perhaps you could create a cardboard template and weave around that.

My wreath will sit in my home, until I burn it in an Alban Elfed fire, or recycle the pieces, and then I will make a new wreath.

Beware of Bunnies eating
your materials

