

# SerpentStar



Magazine and newsletter of  
The Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids  
in the Southern Hemisphere.



Willy Wagtail nestlings. Photo by wy

Beltane 2013

G'day people!

It's been a brisk, windy spring here in the southern mallee. The kangaroo joeys are leaving their mother's pouches and learning to forage, wagtails are breeding prolifically and the reptiles are spreading their magic though the land. As the native pasture grasses are haying off, the days warming up and the skies clearing, it is time for the Beltane 2013 Edition of SerpentStar.

With gratitude and applause we farewell OBOD Druid Todd Dearing as editor and wish him every success for the future—see within! Under Todd's care SerpentStar has been growing and evolving along with us all, contributors, subscribers and casual readers, members and non-members alike. It is reaching out to more and more people, emerging into the pagan circles as a vital, informative little newsletter packed with great inspiration and plenty of seriously good druid writing. Getting back behind the editor's desk, I find it is Time for a skin-change, allowing more room for things to expand to their fullness, and I'm also trying for a sleeker more stream-lined style. And so nothing could be more welcome and blessed than the abundance of pictures and articles and news items of interest that arrived in my inbox for me to work with. A glance at the table of contents on the next page will whet your appetite for a feast of good reading. And while you're enjoying it, think how much contributors benefit from your feedback—a quick email to [wyverne@gmail.com](mailto:wyverne@gmail.com) will get your encouraging comments on an article, poem, picture or news item into the next issue for all to share. I'd also appreciate your opinion about all things connected with SerpentStar.

Condolences and best wishes to members affected by bushfires in the Blue Mountains of New South Wales in October.

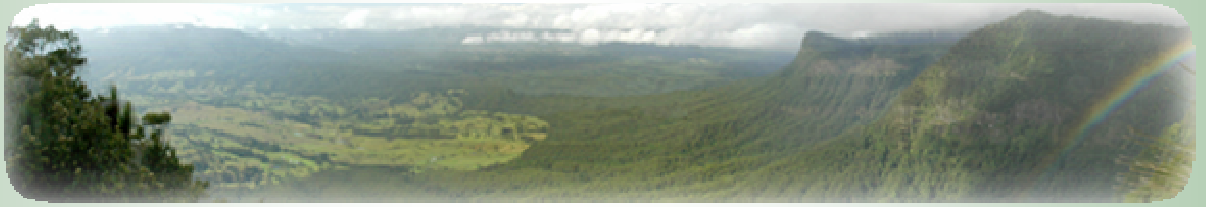
May you all have a blessed Beltane!

Wy,



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# The Assembly Program

**Friday January 24 is 'Arrival Day'** and we are leaving it open for people to arrive in a safe and relaxed fashion, look around and say hello to the place in their own way, and generally meet and greet. At twilight an indigenous Elder will conduct a Welcome to Country Ceremony for us.

We will conduct our Opening Ceremony on Saturday morning followed by a Bardic Grove. Then after lunch it's 'Druids Sharing Their Passions'.

This is an opportunity for participants to share their interests with one another. This idea was introduced at the first assembly and then refined at the Melbourne gathering. It was a huge success, most enjoyable, and we have noticed that passions shared at assemblies have a way of taking on a life of their own! At that gathering we were treated to a book launch, CD sales, an art exhibition, and a fashion parade. We

look forward to hearing how such initiatives are developing and launching some new ones as well. This is an opportunity to tell us about your website, give us your business card and sell us your wares.

The creativity continues in the evening, now devoted to Eisteddfod.

The 2010 assembly in Melbourne saw the beginning of gatherings dedicated to a particular God or Goddess. At the Melbourne assembly it was Pan, who dances through the magical hills where the assembly was conducted. In Port Lincoln, nearby the waters of the Southern Ocean, Manannan was the obvious choice. Then last year we went inland to Beltana, where we tasted life in outback Australia, and honoured the Morrigan.



This assembly, being conducted at the time of Lughnasadh in the Southern Hemisphere and Imbolc in the Northern Hemisphere, will be dedicated to Lugh and Bridget. You can dress up as one or the other or half and half, and present an item to one or both.

Sunday morning is for Bridget's Circle and the ladies of the group, and Sunday afternoon is for the Ovate Grove. Then in the evening we will conduct a very special ceremony to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the founding of OBOD in 1964 and we are deeply grateful that Philip and Stephanie will be there to share this occasion with us. We are calling it the Golden Grove Ceremony and you can read about it in a separate article.

Monday morning is for Lugh's Circle and the men of the group, and Monday afternoon is for a Druid Grove followed by a workshop by Philip and Stephanie.

Tuesday 28 is 'Departure Day' and the only thing planned apart from lots of hugs is the Closing Ceremony.

Please send all enquires to Elkie: [whitelk@bigpond.com](mailto:whitelk@bigpond.com)





# A Golden Grove for the Southern Hemisphere

2014 is a unique year in the Life of OBOD: it's the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary since Nuin started it in 1964. To honour this occasion, it would be fantastic if we could have 50 groves planted worldwide but I think we could manage that number just among ourselves in the Southern Hemisphere. Maybe not 'complete' groves, but some beginnings at least.

Philip and Stephanie are coming to the Assembly in January, making this the ideal occasion to mark our commitments and have them blessed. How to do this practically then becomes the question.

The first problem is distance; Australia in itself is a massive country, and Australia is only one part of the Southern Hemisphere. This project is not just for those people lucky enough to attend the Assembly - we want you all to feel that you can participate in this Golden Grove - even Northern Hemisphere members who feel a connection with the South.

Also related to 'place' is the actual site of the Assembly: it's private land and planting a grove here may not be appreciated! Another issue is the time of year; not many plants would survive a January planting. We tossed around the idea of people bringing the plants to the assembly for blessing and then planting them in autumn but then there are quarantine regulations across borders that we must be mindful of.

As so often happens, the solutions lay within the problems. The Awen flowed and a beautiful idea emerged. The vision was the assembly circle laid out with representations of our groves. Those people who live locally and can bring actual trees would be encouraged to do so but we're not expecting too many of those.

Our hope is that lots of you will send us a representation of your grove idea: pictures of trees rather than actual ones with a note to describe your intention. We're hoping that you will share the story of your grove-vision with us so that we can read them out at the Ceremony.

If you are at the Assembly, you can do this for yourself, but if not, then I'm happy for you to send your ideas to me. Be as creative as you like in your presentation. You can also send me commercially packaged seeds that won't worry our border patrol officers and which I can post back to you with the blessings of the Grove Ceremony intact.



“My chances of attending the assembly are about zippo but at least I could be there by tree!”

Member's  
Comment.

We intend to synchronize the timing so that you can hold your tree, seeds, or picture as we conduct the ceremony. The Golden Grove Ceremony will be conducted at 8 pm on Sunday January 26. It's Australia Day and we are mindful of everything that goes with that. It's also Ovaté Day and we plan to include a healing component within the ceremony.

Some of you may be able to plant actual groves at the same time as the ceremony is conducted because some

parts of the Southern Hemisphere are much cooler than others. Even in the hotter regions there may be local plants that not only survive but thrive in the heat. One of our plant experts pointed out that some species of tree need the warm soil of summer to germinate or to develop a good root system. This includes some Australian natives but also a lot of warm-climate food forest trees such as moringa, citrus and olives.

If you wanted to create a publically-accessible food grove for a local council, you could seed them in pots on Australia Day, take care of them for three months, and then plant them out in autumn (thanks Tiki for those ideas!)

In case you are wondering why 8 p.m. rather than earlier, it's because there are friends in the Northern Hemisphere who want to tune into our ceremony as well and this time would enable them to do so. 8 p.m. in Qld is 10 a.m. Greenwich Mean Time and you can work out your own time zone from that.

If you want to participate in our Golden Grove Ceremony, please drop me a line by email and we'll nut out the best way to represent your idea at the assembly.

Elkie: [whitelk@bigpond.com](mailto:whitelk@bigpond.com)

"I like the idea of connecting via a tree on your own land, or window sill in my case!"

(Member's comment)



# Grove ideas from members

Brad (Petrichor), Geraldton, Western Australia

"I have decided to turn this venture towards restoration rather than the creation of new groves; something within me senses that Nuin would approve of this. While we celebrate occasions we can also strengthen that which is left behind on our path, that needs redefining for those journeys we face in our future. There are 2 groves close to where I live that have been damaged by recent 'local development'. A grove of Sheoak that was an important part of my Bardic order has been desecrated and is calling to me to restore the energies of this sacred space. And a grove that I planted a while ago, when my daughter was born - of lemon flowering gum - the local council went through and mowed down the weeds and in the process took out 3 of the 8 trees that I planted to constitute the 8 points of the compass/elements/seasons/festivals/Celtic wheel of the year etc. I will restore these 2 groves in memory of our previous chief and to celebrate the beauty and majesty of this awesome planet and her great depth. Hopefully this work will translate into my local community and people can once again share and appreciate the focus these groves will bring."

Elkie, location of grove: Heartswood. NE Victoria.

"I have been planting a spiral grove for a number of years now to represent the Ogam trees. Some are the regular British trees but others are local to the area: the weeping Acacia Cognata for Willow, Happy Wanderer for Ivy, Kangaroo Apple, Native Broom, Native Blackthorn, our local White Elderberry, Native White Cypress Pine, Gorse Bitter Pea, and Victoria's Floral Emblem: the Common Heath. I have just 4 more to plant and I will do this in autumn: Hazel, Vine, and a Prickly Current Bush to represent Hawthorn and Holly Grevillia for Holly. I will bring representations of these plants and the spiral with me to the assembly."

## FAQ: HOW MUCH DOES THE ASSEMBLY COST?

This is the question I've been asked most often and the answer is that there is no set fee for this assembly. Everyone's assembly costs will be different, depending on the choices you make in these 3 areas:

Transport: for queries about how you get to the assembly and back again please check out the Binna Burra website

[www.binnaburralodge.com.au](http://www.binnaburralodge.com.au)

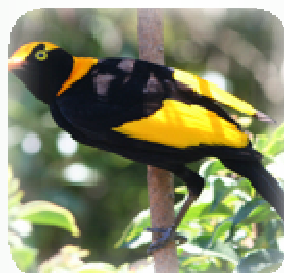
Accommodation: as detailed by Ngatina in a separate article; please contact Ngatina with your queries and choice of accommodation: [gypsy@sincorp.org](mailto:gypsy@sincorp.org)

Food: you have 3 options: (i) fully catered at \$50 per day; (ii) byo everything; or (iii) negotiate your needs: please send me an email if you have specific dietary needs or if you would like a partly-catered option. I will take all such emails with me when I visit Binna Burra November 26 and then reply to you personally when I return. Elkie: [whitelk@bigpond.com](mailto:whitelk@bigpond.com)

Donations: if you can spare it, donations from readers are being gratefully received. All such donations are being put towards covering Philip and Stephanie's costs to attend the assembly.

Please send a cheque or postal order to Cherry Carroll (our 'assembly banker'): PO Box 377, Kingaroy, Queensland, Australia, 4610, or deposit directly into the special account that she has set up for us: ANZ Bank, JS & C Carroll, BSB: 014630, ACCT: 2682 69393. Include your name and the word 'donation' so that Cherry knows who it has come from and for what purpose. Make sure that you email Cherry to inform her of your transaction:

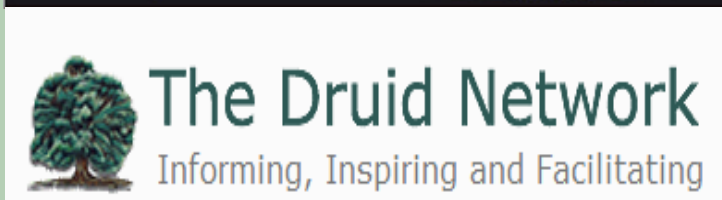
[nimueart@bigpond.com](mailto:nimueart@bigpond.com)



[http://www.druidry.org/about-us/  
annual-reviews-order-and-  
druidry/2013-annual-review](http://www.druidry.org/about-us/annual-reviews-order-and-druidry/2013-annual-review)

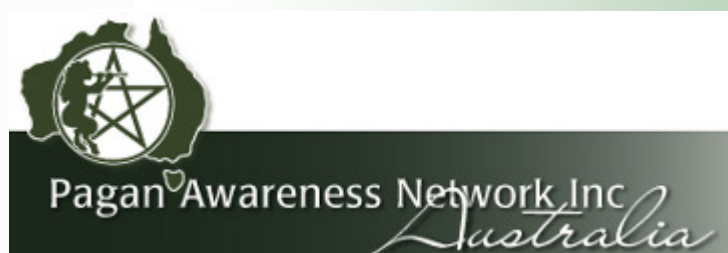


Druidic Dawn is a beautiful site with forums, events and festivals, images, reviews and on-line videos. Aontacht is its outstanding on-line magazine.



[http://  
druidnetwork.org/](http://druidnetwork.org/)

[http://  
www.paganawareness.net.au/PAN/](http://www.paganawareness.net.au/PAN/)



Druid Links



# ALPHIE

a Yellowstone  
wolf pup

by Brian A. Connolly  
author of Wolf Journal and Hawk



sketches by George Bumann



# YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK WOLVES

Lady Cu' – Oct 2013

**P**ete and I returned to America in August/September this year and of course one of our primary objectives was to view the wolves of Yellowstone again. While in a later issue there will be a tale about our travels and the plight of the wolf in America I would like to introduce you to a children's book written by a wolf advocate.

**“ALPHIE a Yellowstone wolf pup”**, this is a children's book written by Brain A. Connolly. Alphie is a piece of fiction but a beautiful book written by a man committed to saving and protecting the wolves of North America and the world. The tale is set in Yellowstone National Park is centred in the Lamar Valley and the life of a young wolf. This is a tale for young and old alike, a tale for those who like to listen to our elders and learn from their wisdom. A tale for grandparents to read to their grandchildren, this is a book to educate our children to love and respect our wild places and all that resides in them.

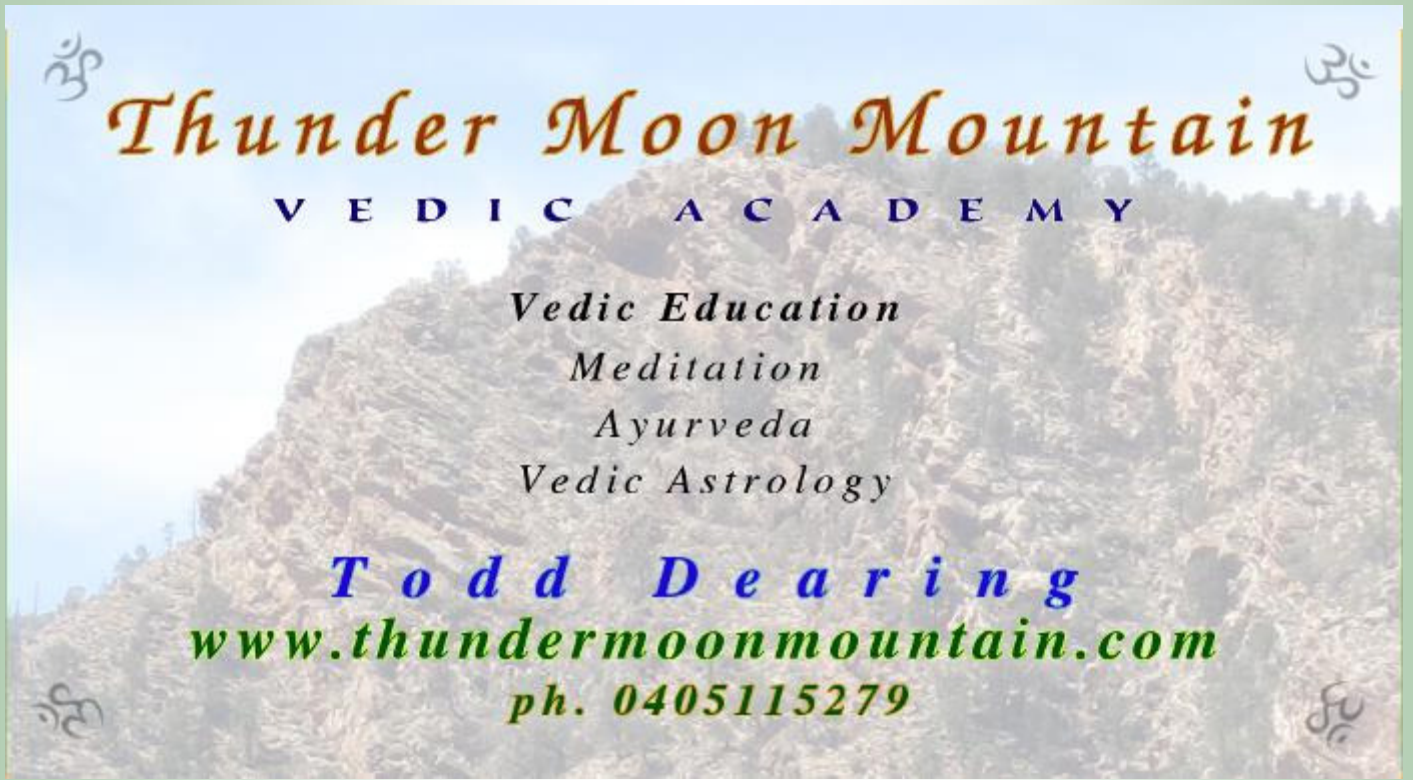
“Alphie” also contains beautiful illustrations by George Bumann who is a professional artist. The illustrations are of Yellowstone wolves and other wildlife that reside in the park. During, both our trips to Yellowstone Pete and I have been blessed to see all the animals illustrated with the exception of a beaver. The book also contains a glossary that I find unusual but surprisingly educational and refreshing and great for children and those of us not fully familiar with American language.

Unfortunately Brian A. Connolly passed away this year but there are many carrying on his message. We saw our friend Doug McLaughlin who knew Brain and is promoting this book from a shop and accommodation he manages in Silvergate just outside Yellowstone. Doug kindly let me use some of his photos in my last story. Doug and a group of wolf advocates are raising funds to purchase copies of the book “Alphie” and donating them to schools, the hope is to educate children about the importance of true biodiversity and that these children will educate their parents and effect change.

This is a cause close to my heart. I do love the wolf with a passion and to see them in the wild is breath taking, to watch the family unit, the care given to youngsters, times at play and the serious intent when a pack sets out on a hunt is truly inspiring. Those of you who know me will be aware of my passion/obsession for canines, particularly my hounds but ultimately this is about more than wolves.

“ALPHIE a Yellowstone wolf pup” I believe can inspire us all to advocate the saving of our wild places and all that resides within, regardless of whether it is plant, animal, mineral, cute and cuddly or a carnivore that needs to kill to survive. All has a right to its place, safe from the inhumanity of mankind.





*Thunder Moon Mountain*, based in Adelaide, Australia, offers study and practice in Vedic wisdom, providing tools, techniques, and knowledge for the evolution of consciousness.

Vedic wisdom is an integrated spiritual system which is universal, natural, experiential, and practical. Originating historically from the Himalayan mountains and surrounding regions following the end of the last ice age, it has upheld a sacred understanding of the universe over thousands of years of cultural development. It contains a range of sacred arts and sciences, including Yoga, Ayurveda, Tantra, Vedanta, Jyotisha, Sanskrit, and Vastu, among others, yet in a far deeper sense than may be commonly known today. As a culture of universal knowledge for self-development and self-realisation, these transcend any particular ethnicity, historical period, belief systems, ideologies, or dogma, and are available for any sincere student to study and practice.

### **About Todd Dearing**

I am a Yoga and Ayurveda educator, meditation teacher, and Vedic Astrologer, with a specific interest in Vedic Yoga and the broader integrated tradition of Sanatana Dharma. My teaching focus is on practice guided by a clear and authentic understanding of the broader Yoga Tradition, individually specific, and grounded in the world of Nature.

I began my spiritual study and practice in 1997, and hold a *Diploma of Integral Yoga* through the [IYAA](#). I am qualified as an *Ayurvedic Lifestyle Consultant*, *Yoga and Ayurveda Health Educator*, and *Ayurvedic Astrologer (level 1)* through the [AIVS](#). I have completed *Tibetan Dream Studies (level 1)*, through the [IATIM](#). I am continuing formal study and practice in Vedic knowledge, Sanskrit, Ayurveda, and traditional texts.

Visit [www.thundermoonmountain.com](http://www.thundermoonmountain.com) for details, classes, articles, etc.



# The SA Beltane Camp

*With Damh the Bard & Cerri Lee*

22nd – 24th November 2013

Arbury Park Outdoor Education Centre



*Gary Colombe from Celtic Myth Podcast  
About Damh & Cerri's Anderida Camp*

'A massive thank you to Damh, Cerri, and all the facilitators for providing a weekend of pure transformative magic, a space between the worlds that was nurturing and educational (in the sense of bringing out rather than putting in!) in which we all made our own paths and discoveries. That is no mean feat when organising a field full of people. I stand in awe of the skill of all the practitioners at putting the event together as well as the tremendous out-pouring of love and welcome that met us all as we settled in.

I am left with a wonderful sense of rejuvenation, a deep awareness of connectedness not only with the land but also with the whole Gorsedd and memories that will not fade, of lessons learned and work to be done. I also carry away a small light that shines gently on my brow, sparked by our joint explorations.'

*Damh the Bard and Cerri Lee* have been working as a team since 1998 running a grove, moots, open ceremonies, camps, talks and workshops. They have found that by working together with their combined passions and sometimes opposite ways of approaching them, they can offer a dynamic and inclusive exploration of druidic magical themes.

Both feel it is important to bring people into their own power within any magical/spiritual experience, in order that the individual finds a genuine, personal connection to whatever the workshop, ritual or ceremony happens to be about.

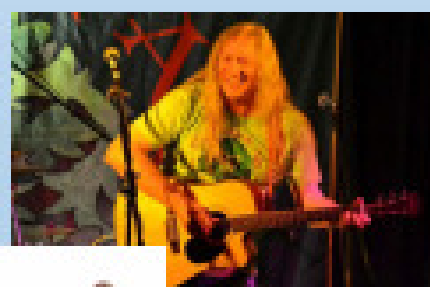
## Friday Night Concert

Featuring

Damh the Bard

& our very own Spiral Dance

*Songs of  
Nature, Myth  
Magic &  
Legend*



*Music that  
will rock your  
ancestra!!!*



*Damh the Bard* is a modern-day Bard whose spirituality and love of folk tradition is expressed through his music, storytelling and poetry. Drawing on the Bardic tradition, his performances are both entertaining and educational, speaking directly to the heart, and never without a good splash of humour. With six outstanding CD's, and singing and speaking engagements all over the world, Damh has become one of the most popular contemporary pagan musicians - a musical storyteller who works within the world of myth: where the Faerie really do dance on Midsummer's Eve, where the trees talk, and the Hollow Hills take you into the realms of Annwn, where the Goddess rides her horse, guiding you to magic, and the Horned God of old calls to you from the shadows of the Greenwood.



Damh came to Druidry in search of a deeper contact with the land and all of Nature after studying ceremonial magic in the Golden Dawn tradition within a magical lodge. He is now Pendragon of the Order of Bards Ovates and Druids, and host of the Order's *Druidcast*, a podcast which reaches over 6,000 listeners every month. He is also a trained practitioner of Neuro-Linguistic Programming, a qualified stress consultant, and a teacher of bushcraft and wilderness survival skills. In addition to playing his music and singing, Damh has given talks, run workshops and participated in panel discussions at conferences and camps in the UK, Europe, Australia, Canada and the USA, with his favourite topics including Druidry, Awen and the creative quest, magick, treelore, and Arthurian lore. Damh the Bard - [www.paganmusic.co.uk](http://www.paganmusic.co.uk)



*Cerri Lee* is an Artist, Druid and embryonic writer.

With her artwork, Druidry and life in general, she takes learning and inspiration from the book of nature, the ancestors, through myth, legends, stories and magical symbolism.

The artwork crosses a number of media, such as watercolour, pencil and many others, but ceramics and, these days writing, are where she finds freedom of spiritual expression.

Within her Druidry, as well as her art, Cerri has a passion for diving deep into the symbolism and meanings held within ancient myths and finding ways to bring that into a modern language, particularly within workshop or ritual situations.

Working with people as they empower themselves to find their own connections to the land they live on, as well as accessing their ancestors store of wisdom and knowledge, partly through academic investigation, but mostly immersion into the symbology and interaction with magical ritual, is something that Cerri enjoys more than anything. Cerri has facilitated many rites of passage, opens ceremonies, groups, workshops, talks, conferences and camps over the past 15 years and plans to continue to explore the inner reaches of our multicultural, multilayered, magical heritage.

Find more information at Cerri's website: [www.cerrilee.com](http://www.cerrilee.com)

## Weekend Schedule:

### Eksteddford/ Bardic Circle

This is your chance to share something with the group, be it a poem, song or story. Perhaps you have a song/chant you would like to teach the group! We have been having a great time at the Greenman Grove Bardic Circle here in Adelaide.

Performance is not mandatory but it is your chance to share something in a supportive and caring group of like minded individuals.

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*"At Arbory Park we  
make connections with  
the natural world and  
with each other,  
through experiential  
learning in a bush  
setting"*

---

*(rough guide only, subject to change)*

### Friday

5:00pm

Arrive, register & unpack

Meet and greet and a chance to look around and say hello to the place in your own way

6:00pm

Opening ceremony

6:30pm

Dinner

8:00pm

Damh the Bard/Spiral Dance Concert

### Saturday

8:30am

Breakfast

10:00am

Morning gathering and short meditation

10:15am

Morning Tea

10:30am

Clay workshop

12:30pm

Lunch

1:30pm

Men's and Women's Workshops

3:30pm

Afternoon Tea

4:00pm

Pre Ceremony (Men and Women to separate areas)

4:30pm

Ceremony

7:00pm

Dinner

9:00pm

Eksteddford/Bardic Circle

### Sunday

8:30am

Breakfast

10:00am

Morning gathering and short meditation

10:15am

Morning Tea

10:30am

Ogham Workshop, working with Australian trees and plants

Please bring ideas, particularly stories you may have heard about native trees or plants and what they can be used for on a healing/practical level

12:30pm

Lunch

1:30pm

Maypole

2:00pm

Closing Ceremony

## What to bring:

### Please Note:

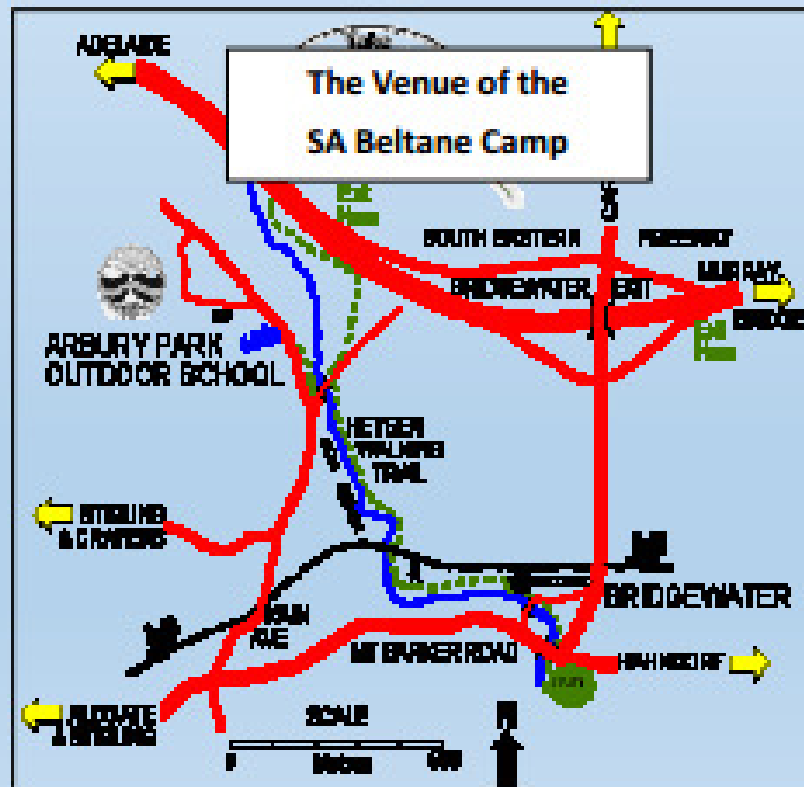
Arbury Park is a non smoking venue—however smoking may be permitted at some outside areas.

Drugs or illegal substances of any kind are not permitted at the Beltane Camp.

Participants found with these will be escorted from the grounds and may not be permitted re-entry.

Thank you for your understanding in this regard.

- All bedding, including pillows—if you are an interstater and fly over please let us know what you can't carry and we can arrange for you, eg pillows, bedding etc.
- Towel and toiletries
- A tea towel (if possible)
- Insect Repellent—could be mossies around!!
- Sun block and hat, it could be very warm so please check weather reports before leaving
- Warm jumper or shawl for evening
- Covered shoes (if planning to walk through the Park)
- Robe (optional for Ritual)
- Chalice or goblet for the Feast (plastic glasses will be provided)
- Instruments/songs to share
- BYO alcohol & soft drinks
- Willingness to participate and enjoy the weekend!!



## How to get there:

### Bus Transport from Airport:

Board the Skylink Shuttle Service from the Airport to the Hotel Grand Chancellor on Currie (12-18 Currie St, Adelaide)

Walk west to Bus Stop 21 (42 Currie St)

Board Bus 846F to Mount Barker

Get off bus at Stop 45 on Mount Barker Rd

Walk to Arbury Park 1.15 km (approx. 10 minutes)

Please phone Tamzin on 0429822388 or Evelyn on 0433355025 prior to walking and we will arrange a lift if possible

Walk northeast on Mt Barker Rd for 114m

Left on Kain Ave for 422m

Continue on Old Mt Barker Rd for 247m

Slight left on Arbury Park Outdoor School (300m)



# The Druid's Prayer

*When I entered the Bardic grade,  
I learnt a dark and terrible secret  
from someone I loved.*

I was new to OBOD, and during the time in the Bardic grade I had the usual revelations, challenges and insights as others. I felt safe on this path, and used the Druids' prayer to keep me on track.

When I was told the secret I worked in my budding grove to ground myself in knowledge and look for responses that would work. I was still doing the elemental rituals; it was very early days.

I eventually found that the Druids' Prayer was the anchor in the stormy seas of emotion, the sea of pain and incredulity that came with the secret.

Every night I would say the prayer. Not to manipulate the situation or the people involved, or try to force my will on others. The prayer simply called for justice. And I believe in justice.

Many many times I have seen wrong doing people create the situations of their own demise. I understand that people create their own situations and watch as their paths lead to places I would never want to go, and I know that I don't have to go to those places to achieve justice.



After some 12 months or more, when I was ready to go into the Ovate grade, my call for justice was recognised.

While my friend and I were walking down a street in Sydney we found ourselves behind the person who had caused so much pain and grief. My friend crossed the street and ran ahead to the police station in the city. I followed the person to see where he went. Eventually I was waiting outside a building and the police arrived. They found the person in the building and arrested him.

He had been living interstate for years, was over here and had come into the city for one day, and even though the police had been looking for him for a couple of years, we found him. He confessed, no doubt due to the surprise arrest, and went to jail. This was just the beginning of a story that started 30 years ago, and has been coming to fruition for the last 10 years or so as my prayer for justice has been answered.

Since then there have been many healing ceremonies and deep grove work, but all the while the call uppermost has been for justice and the values have been those of the Druids' prayer. Last week we saw another person found guilty for the second time and sentenced for 9 years, on top of 9 years previously. There are 3 more trials to come. Healing has come with the justice. We have no feelings of bitterness or revenge. We have protected ourselves by simply calling for justice, and taking into our hearts the values of the Druids' prayer.

One day, when we meet in groves I will be happy to talk more of this. For now, remember the love of all existences, God, Goddess and all Goodness.

Sooty Owl





INDUSTRY

purifying bonfires

fertility

Bealtaine



A vibrant collage of nature and garden imagery. At the top, a hay bale sits next to a tree trunk. Below it, a variety of flowers are shown, including a large red flower, a cluster of red berries, and several pink and purple blossoms. A black and white bird is perched on a branch in the center. In the lower left, a kangaroo stands in a grassy field. In the lower right, a woman in a long, light-colored dress is depicted. The background is a mix of green foliage and garden paths.

Green fire compost heap

beauty unfolding

abundance

Blessings



Usurpers  
and  
destroyers  
beware -



Sharonlee Photography 2013

# Strange SHAPES

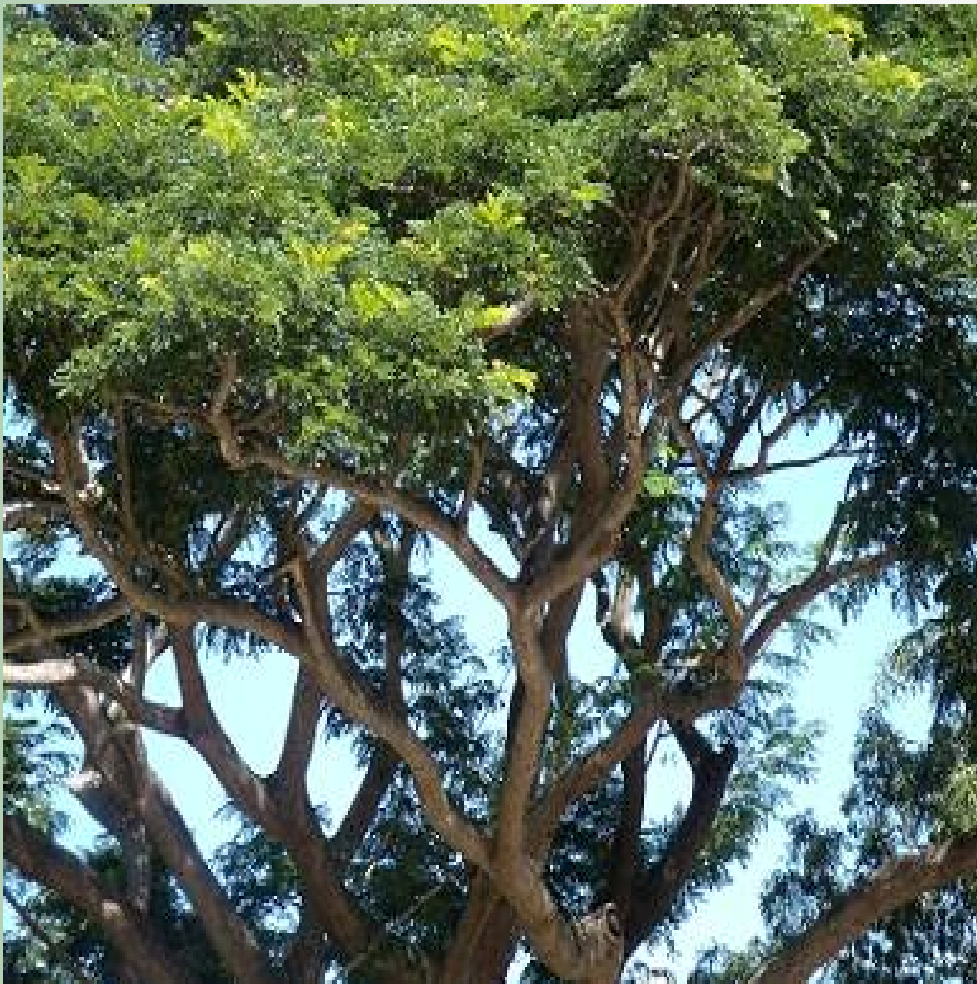
are  
appearing  
in the  
forests!

- by Anifail



[fearlesssummeraus.net](http://fearlesssummeraus.net)





Humans are magical beings. We grow organically out of our ancestry and landscapes, trailing power and beauty behind us like falling stars. Then when we get here, we proceed to integrate everything around us into something miraculous: an imaginative experience.

We do this by entering into relationships with everyone around us: other human people, the animal people, plant and fungus people, rock, stream and star people. And then there are the bustling crowds of lesser-known but clearly knowable folks: the goddesses

**National forest skillshare**

Get prepared for a summer of activism...

**5 days of training, workshops, talks, films  
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**November 30 - December 5**  
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and gods, the nature spirits, faeries, guardian angels, dream visitors and muses, just to name a few.

And within the sacred universe that is the imaginative experience of each human individual, every relationship with these others is mediated by symbols: linguistic, mythological, musical and of course magical. These symbols guide us to live well, to heal others, to restore where harm has been done and to resist where harm is intended. Contemplating the meaning of these symbols leads us into study, friendships, love, pain, campaigning and direct action. Strange, but true.

And sometimes they come suddenly into the lives of those who have tried to ignore their quieter manifestations. These poor folks are set upon by vagabonds wielding flags and masks, chanting spells or shouting slogans, or are simply frustrated and confused by unexplained reports of unauthorised activities, of disrupted production. Sometimes the very shape of power relations is changed, and people can live more freely.

When life calls to life, bonds of undying kinship and solidarity can and must be formed. When life calls loudly to life and the call is returned, sometimes strange shapes appear.

Strange Shapes in the Forest -  
Nature spirituality inspiring and supporting material protection of trees.

I was inspired to undertake this project when I heard about the new national forests campaign Fearless Summer Australia. I thought, what part can Druids play in this and similar struggles around the world?

So I need your help. I am asking you to please share your experiences and ideas: a forest defence action with a spiritual

dimension (explicit or implied), a bit of symbolism that unites tree reverence with standing up for your beliefs, ways for city pagans to support forest activists, and other creative work of interest to all us tree-huggers who have plenty of love but have run out of patience. If I know my audience, I suspect some wonderfully strange ideas have already begun to take shape!



More info at [shapes@atthefarm.org](mailto:shapes@atthefarm.org)  
[facebook.com/StrangeShapesInTheForest](https://facebook.com/StrangeShapesInTheForest)  
[druidry.org/events-projects/sacred-grove-planting-programme](https://druidry.org/events-projects/sacred-grove-planting-programme)

## MUSIC IS MAGIC

• \* The Essence of The Druids Dreaming \*

By  
MiC Lee-Price AKA Michala Lee  
(Mystic Mish)



Since the primeval time, primitive man has used some form of music in Ritual. Whether chant, drumming, didgeridoo, pan pipes or guttural songs music has been a very important part of Magic.

Like our Ancestors, Musicians speak to their Deity or Deities through their Music. The Shamans and Druids lead Rituals with



Music. The Druids were healers, prophets and Clan leaders, They had the Ovates and lawgivers but the most important member of their order was their Bards; their poets and musicians; their soul singers.

Music helps people forget the troubles of the world and their own personal problems for a while.

People find solace in song and contact with their deity or deities in chant.

Music is the Spiritual Essence of Worship. No Matter What path you follow.

*In 2008, I stumbled across a man who inspired me to follow that Dream and negotiated with him for almost a year for him to come to Australia and bring with him his unique style of Music.*

Music Gives a Soul to the Universe, Wings to the Mind, Flight to the Imagination, and Life to Everything.

Music can help Bring about Change.

Music has changed my life in many ways. I was fortunate to have been taken under the wing of some notable and even notorious people during my youth.

As a young musician, I played in bands as a member of , or a session musician with, Dingo, Lunar Sea, Gold Rush, Radio Birdman, as well having worked as a roadie for Billy Thorpe and the Aztecs, Brian Cadd, Stevie Wright, Richard Clapton, my good friend Barry Leef and several others.

Music has always been an important part of my life and my

spiritual path. To me without Music there is NO Magic.

I have always had a Dream, to have a Gathering of Musicians; to orchestrate a Cultural Festival. Not to big-note myself but to fulfil a Dreaming.

In 2008, I stumbled across a man who inspired me to follow that Dream and negotiated with him for almost a year for him to come to Australia and bring with him his unique style of Music.

With the assistance of my ex-partner Dragonfly we began to structure an Event featuring this talented Bard and include as many brilliant musicians as we could to create another “Woodstock” or “Sunsbury”, but it took time and money.

It was a massive task and many times I felt like giving up. I would have if it had not been for Dragonfly who took over the task as Administrator and Event Co-Ordinator leaving me to be the Creative Director.



There were many hurdles to get over to ensure the Musical Gathering happened. Our first venue was closed because of Fire Restrictions.

The second venue that Dragonfly had source reneged on the verbal agreement between them and her and refuse us permission to hold the event because they “Didn’t want us kind of people using there campsite and ground as they knew what Pagans got up to”. The final venue was a small Hall in the Adelaide Hills.

With open arms Pagans gathered to Welcome [Damh the Bard](#) and his lovely partner Cerri Lee to Australia for the very first time.

Unfortunately due to the heat wave and the changing of venue several musicians and bands pulled out of the event.

Yet still the Gathering; The Druids Dreaming happened.

On stage musicians and performers such as [Wyverne Ogma Vyvyan](#), Jamie McPherson, [Burn'Collect](#), Lizzie Rose and the sensational [Wendy Rule](#) gave there all on that smothering hot day.

The evening was brought to a brilliant conclusion by the remarkable word-smith and musician himself [+Damh the Bard](#)

What a magnificent day and what a mind blowing event. The Druids Dreaming Happened. Magic Happened and Music is Magic.

The Druids Dreaming continues and lead me to create [The Pagans For Peace project](#) . I am blessed to have so many great musicians as friends, pagan and otherwise, especially a man I have come to admire, [Damh the Bard](#) who is and forever will be, not only a friend but the Patron of The Druids Dreaming.



# SerpentStar needs you!

More of **A MAGAZINE** than a newsletter,

## SerpentStar

comes out **4 times** a year at each of the **Fire Festivals**,  
**IMBOLC**, **Beltane**, **LUGNASADH** and **SAMHUINN**.

All *content* comes from you—the readers.

**CONTRIBUTIONS** are *eagerly sought*. Send your articles, poems and creative writing, cartoons, reviews, art and photography, info, events, news, links, and anything else to do with being *bards, ovates and druids* to [wyverne@gmail.com](mailto:wyverne@gmail.com).

Please make sure your contributions do not violate copyright laws.

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r o wyverne to PMB2 Angaston SA 5353 Australia or use Paypal.  
**PLEASE DO NOT MAKE OUT CHEQUES TO SERPENTSTAR.**

*Opinions expressed in SerpentStar are contributors' own and not necessarily the opinions of the editor or of the Order of Bards Ovates and Druids. Printed at the Swan Reach Area School library with a lot of very kindly help from school librarian Leanne.*

**Deadline For LUGNASADH issue: 29th JANUARY 2014**



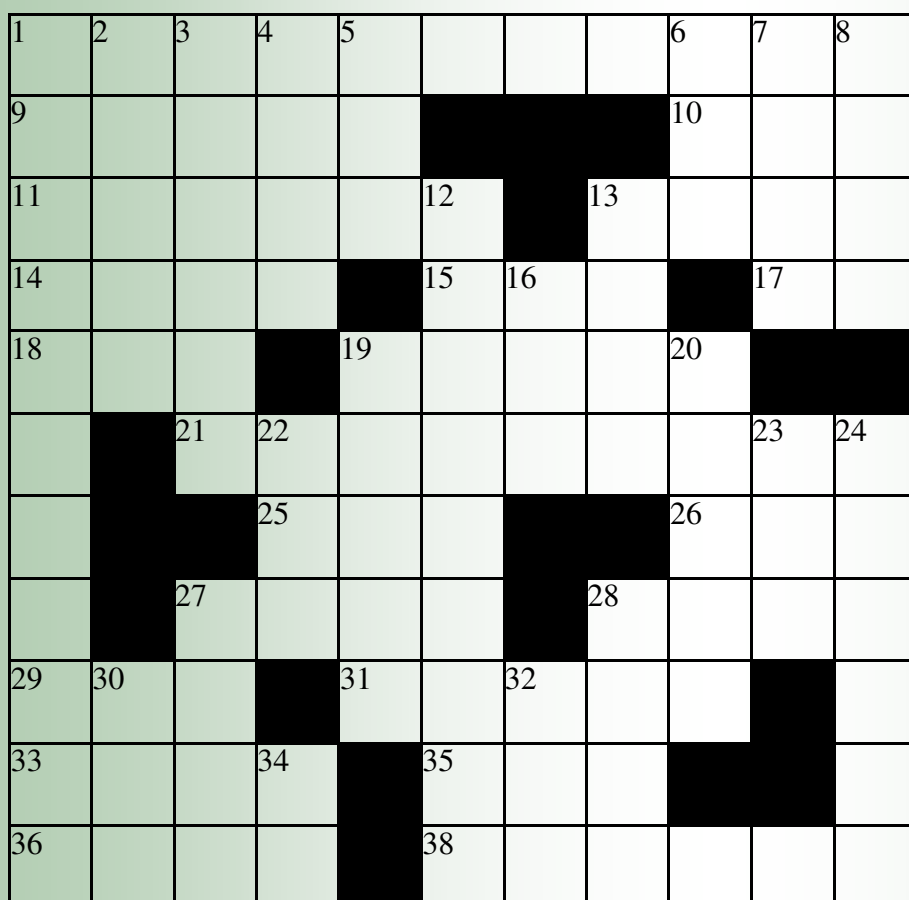
## Clues Across

1. Mutuality (11)
9. Wipe out. (5)
10. Call like a dove. (3)
11. Smearing with mud. (6)
13. Paramour. (4)
14. Freezes. (4)
15. First number .(3)
17. Learned person's title. (2)
18. Abbrev of boys name. (3)
19. Where eggs form. (5)
21. Medieval beverage. (5,4)
25. Conifer. (3)
26. Anglo-Saxon rune. (3)
27. A boy's school. (4)
28. Despicable. (4)
29. A tree.
31. Numbers. (5)

35. Must have. (4)
35. By no means. (3)
36. Seat of ancient Irish kings. (4)
37. Spirits of the dead. (6)

## Clues Down

1. Recalling to mind. (11)
2. Heather. (6)
3. Minds (archaic). (6)
4. Egyptian Goddess. (4)
5. Writing tool. (3)
6. Frozen water. (3)
7. A witch's familiar. (4)
8. Belonging to you. (4)
12. Controlling. (9)
13. Level ground (4)
16. Negative answer. (3)
19. Vegetable.(5)
20. Abominable snowmen. (5)
22. Frequently. (3)
23. Suffer. (3)
24. Hairstyle. (6).
- 27, Irish Goddess (4)
28. Refuse. (4)
30. Meadow. (3)
32. Japanese theatre. (3)
34. Short for father.



Answers on  
Page 39

# The Paper Edition



Reading our Chief's annual review this year it is interesting to note that this year celebrates the 200th edition of Touchstone, the official newsletter of the Order.

Touchstone is available only on paper, and has not been put on-line. Why, you might wonder? One reason is that people

are more likely to read and enjoy a paper magazine left casually on top of a coffee table, or floating around the kitchen than something on-line. That's no doubt true. With everything on the web so very interesting and so easy to access, most of us have a long list of sites and pages we have bookmarked or kept starred for future reading—which we almost never get around to! Research has shown that, in general, magazines that have a paper component are more likely to remain successful than those that haven't.

Clearly there's a psychological factor that can't be ignored. Even this far into the computer age, with most young people computer literate from

infancy, people maintain a strong link to the printed paper page. However smart your phone, or slick your tablet, still for many people there's more magic, more mysterious appeal in the enduring, unchanging, reality of a hard paper copy.

SerpentStar can be shared on-line. We share urls and links to this and that all the time, knowing that some of them won't be looked at, except by a few hard-core web users, and

*Touchstone is our English language magazine. It is published monthly (eleven times a year, with no edition in December). It is 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.*

even they get jaded with looking too much at the shiny screen. But give someone a copy of the magazine to read and chances are they'll enjoy every page, refreshing as it is to do without the hype and technology of the world wide web.

Times are changing. We no longer have to feel guilty about making reasonable use of our natural resources. We know now that we must go carefully, and we're finding better ways. Ecologically sustainable paper and technology are much more readily available now. There is much less pressure now than there was a while ago on the natural environment, as renewable resources are discovered and fragile forests and endangered species given protection. It's still a hard fight on some fronts, but we no longer have to go without the luxury of paper. I'm not talking about waste or excess, I'm talking about life-enhancing use of nature's gifts.

SerpentStar is free on-line as a pdf file from

<http://serpentstar.wordpress.com/>

The real A5 paper edition can be posted directly to your letter-box. Due to increasing costs partly due to the increase in size as it grows and evolves offering more interesting, stimulating, exciting, magical, enchanting and informative than ever, the price of a year's subscription has risen slightly - but still a year's paper subscription costs \$15.00 (in Australia), \$17.50 (New Zealand and the Pacific), \$20.00 (For the rest of the world) in Australian dollars made out to:

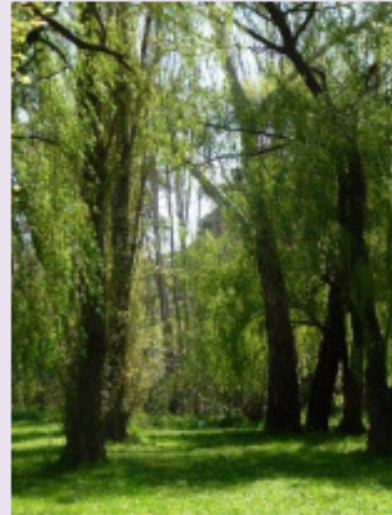
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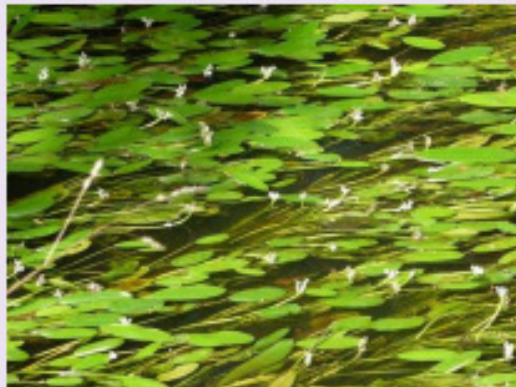


# Earth Energies and Sacred Space Workshop: Course Report

A few weekends ago I, along with several others, attended a two day course run by Lucy Crawford- Sandison of Hafren Geomantica and spent the weekend learning about earth energies and how to read and interact with both their material and spiritual aspects.



We started at Bridgewater in the Adelaide Hills with a seminar about various sacred sites, nature beings, and the earth energies that activate them and also about the networks of global earth energies, and how they affect our health and either energise or calm us. For example large trees or tower like structures (like obelisks) channel Schumann resonance from the atmosphere and into the earth. A large tree with a rounded canopy will channel a calming energy, whilst a large tree with a pointed canopy will channel an energising and invigorating energy. To take advantage of this one decides whether they need energising or calming and settles under the appropriate tree! We did some exercises to create pathways in the earth energies. Half of us walked and sang along a flower form, and the other half along its stem (with a closed doorway in between). Then we had to try and dowse the other group's form without having seen it. We then used the whole form to meditate around, and made a temple to the 7 directions. From this we learnt about how rituals leave inscriptions in a place.



Lucy taught us how to prepare oneself on four levels to increase whole body perception and prepare ourselves to become aware of the subtle organs of perception. This included physical preparation, etheric preparation, astral/psychic preparation, spiritual preparation and boundaries and closing. By using and following these guidelines one is able to attune with the energies of the earth and nature spirits in a safe and respectful manner.

We spent some time practising with dowsing rods which was great fun and gave very instantaneous answers to various questions which was very validating to everyone. It's always very gratifying and encouraging to have success at something one is new at.

We moved into the countryside and spent a Saturday afternoon at Bridgewater and Sunday at Mylor, working around the oval and creek areas. There is a lot of life around this part of the Adelaide hills and it was a lovely place to do this work at. The air was full of spring and the trees and creeks seemed very responsive to our attention and singing. Lucy showed us that there are natural landscape temples in the landscape, and we found a Moon and a Sun temple along Cox creek. These were orientated differently and had different energies. We learnt about altar sites within them. These are usually located on blind springs and have a beautiful spiral earth energy pattern with haloes. In the moon one we sang the 'song of Ellen', just in front of a blind spring, and the whole



atmosphere of the landscape temple reacted quickly. We found other interesting places such as a 'Jack in the Beanstalk' site, and held an earth blessing at the Rainbow serpent ponds. Lucy showed us how we could dowse for water channels running into the creek itself and banding patterns. It was interesting to line up and walk slowly with our dowsing rods and see them simultaneously turn in the same direction as we moved across one of these channels. We also learnt how to try and dowse with our whole bodies and no rods.

We also dowsed for earth patterns in the landscape which were enhanced by our sounding of certain chants. Whilst we observed, Lucy was able to dowse the pattern which emerged like a gift to us – earth jewellery – which is very beautiful and very complex as you can see.

Whilst my poor words have not done this weekend course the justice it deserves, it was a great weekend and we all learnt a lot about how to perceive and interact with nature. I would recommend anyone who is serious about learning about earth energies and sacred space take the time to attend one of Lucy's courses as they are very informative and you come away with very practical knowledge that can be used in everyday life.

Sarah Marshall

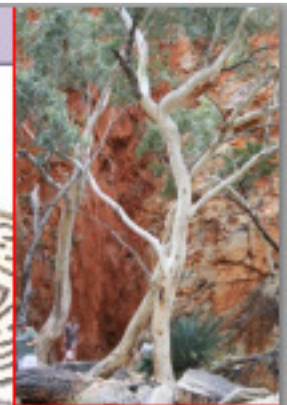


*This etheric earth energy pattern emerged when our group chanted on a very lively throat chakra site in a natural landscape temple along the creek at Mylor. ....with the wonderful help of our allies and the nature spirits of the place. This is a lovely gift of etheric jewellery, and reminds us that our singing is heard in many realms.*

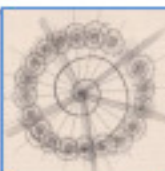




# HAFREN GEOMANTICA



## Earth Energies and Sacred Space Workshop



2 day workshop on November 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> 2013  
10.30am- 5.00pm Location: Bridgewater-Mylor



*Learn how to detect, interact with and energise earth energies. Learn how to find places of special qualities in the landscape. Learn to understand nature consciousness, and sacred space energies. Learn how the effects of focussed thought, meditation and sacred sound affect the earth energies and the consciousness of a landscape.*

### **Including :**

- An Introduction to earth energies and the levels of consciousness of a place.
- Typologies of earth energies and their influences on places: ley lines, earth grids, vortices, blind springs, track lines, altar points, water lines, ritual inscriptions, geo-spirals, earth chakras, crop circles, positive and negative polarities.
- Typologies of elemental consciousness, nature guides, and mythical creatures.
- How to prepare to open your subtle perceptions to walk in nature with broader perception. How to detect different earth energies using dowsing rods and body perception.
- How to communicate with trees and creeks.
- Sacred Space Archetypes and the effects of sacred sound.
- Natural and manmade structures for channelling cosmic energies in to earth energies and healing sanctuaries.
- Making individual and group temporary landscape sacred spaces for supporting the earth's energies, and for interacting with nature consciousness.
- Nature divination and the ancestral traditions of the wisdom of nature.
- Creating etheric earth patterns, using earth chakra sites and sound.



This is a level 1 & 2 workshop of 3 levels. Cost: \$280 / \$240 C  
Partner : \$10. Contact : Lucy Crawford-Sandison 0408 849 259  
[hafren@westnet.com.au](mailto:hafren@westnet.com.au)    [www.hafren.com.au](http://www.hafren.com.au)







# HAFREN GEOMANTICA

**Welcome participants,**

To our upcoming weekend of communing with nature,  
learning geomantic skills, laughter, and sharing in  
attuning ourselves to subtle energies and other realms of  
experience....

*Please can you confirm your booking by Nov 1st*



## **What to bring:**

Please bring some paper, a note book, pencils, a dowsing pendulum and a special object or stone that you like to walk with in connecting with nature. I will supply some dowsing rods. Morning and afternoon tea will be provided, but you will need to bring some portable lunch, (as we may be in the landscape for lunch). As we will be doing fieldwork along Cox creek, and also around Mylor Oval, suitable outdoor clothing is needed.

## **Where to meet:**

At the Hall of the CC Church at 3, Anzac Ridge Road Bridgewater (directly above Bridgewater oval Carpark). You can park at the Oval, or in the church driveway, or behind the church (the turning is off Old Mt. Barker road). Please note that we will be carrying out some of the fieldwork at Mylor, and if you are not bringing a car, you will need share a ride with others on the day.

## **Payments:**

Please contact Lucy on [hafren@westnet.com.au](mailto:hafren@westnet.com.au) for confirmation and payment details.

This course will be offered again in the third or fourth week in January 2014. The date is to be confirmed.

Anyone interested, contact Lucy at [hafren@westnet.com.au](mailto:hafren@westnet.com.au)

## Seeing in the Dark

### Using the Eyes and Ears of Our Hearts

Antonia Newlands

Shamanism comes from an ancient Siberian word meaning to see in the dark. It refers to the ability to see beyond aspects of our physical world into dimensions where formless spirits and energy can interact with our daily lives. It is based on a respect for all things, both seen and unseen, and their relation to the ultimate universal energy which flows through and all around us. This is variously called God, the Goddess, the Ultimate Spirit, Allah, Hashem, Love and so on, as shamanism describes a mode of living rather than a religion. This mode of living is generally associated with ancient hunter gather or present day indigenous societies but as all things, it can be directly applicable to our modern lifestyles.

Shamans believe that by honouring all existences (does this sound familiar?) we can understand ourselves more fully and our place within the universe. This understanding brings balance and healing within ourselves which then extends all around us. When we are connected with the universal energy our life seems to flow more easily, things go our way, we feel happier and healthier.

Shamans tend to refer to this flow as 'power' and believe we can



tap into this power more easily if we connected with the non-physical realms and are direct communion with the loving formless spirits who can be found there. These formless beings have been described throughout history in a number of different ways, eg.

Guardian Angels, Power Animals or Totem Animals. Although there are many different descriptive terms for the non-physical realms, those of Celtic ancestry refer to it as the Otherworld and this is comparable with the Australian concept of the Dreaming.

The Otherworld and the physical world reflect one another as though the two are merely separated by a veil. We can learn to travel through this veil and interact with these compassionate formless beings.

All human individuals have at least one Power Animal. In addition to helping us tap into the power of the universe, they also provide us with more personal gifts which assist with our emotional strength and focus. They are similar to our friends in the physical world, there to provide love and support and sometimes give us the honest truth that we all need from time to time. When the power flows through us via our Power Animals, it feels like everything in our lives is going right, we notice many happy 'coincidences' and our life seems to go more smoothly. Different families, groups of people and even work organisations have their own Power Animal and are happy to share their wisdom with us if we ask.

Within the Otherworld, there are a variety of Spirit Allies in addition to Power Animals. These include guardians of the physical land, presences who love and protect various parts of the countryside including, rivers, lakes, springs, seas and trees. It is possible to meet with the guardians of your home and learn to live in harmony with them. Those who work in the shamanic traditions also consider that our ancestors are present in the non-physical realms once they have passed on from human physical form. There are also those who act as teachers and mentors to a large number of people and are known in some traditions as Spirit Guides, Gods, Goddesses or Archetypes.

There are various ways for individuals to go about interacting with Power Animals, Ancestors and Spirit Guides or for travelling within the various worlds. The techniques used within shamanism are ways among many. The key way of establishing a communion with the Otherworld in the shamanic tradition is via the 'shamanic journey'. This is a ceremony which focuses our intention to travel comfortably beyond our physical bodies, meet with our Spirit Allies, exchange greetings, wisdom and/or healing and then return to our bodies safely.

A journey can be undertaken alone or in a group where a meditative receptive state is attained. This will include the use of repetitive drumming, chanting, rattling as appropriate. This can be done by lying or sitting down or even dancing.

A tradition model of travelling throughout the Otherworld uses the layout described as Lower, Middle and Upper Worlds. However, things may not appear in that way to many when they journey to the Otherworld. It does however provide a useful framework to get started.

There are a large number of similarities between those who walk the path of Celtic Shamanism and the path of the Druid. Some may even say that they are identical as the Otherworldly characters who can be met on a shamanic journey to the Celtic realms are equally likely to be present in a Druid Grove. Ultimately the decision is to be made by the individual. Both paths can be enhanced by the study of books and by sharing but are ultimately of direct revelation. The messages and images experienced by one person on a journey or in a druid ritual are intended for use and interpretation by that particular person alone. Both spiritual practises provide us with a joyous and enlightening way of experiencing the beautiful world that we live in- so let us keep travelling and explore!



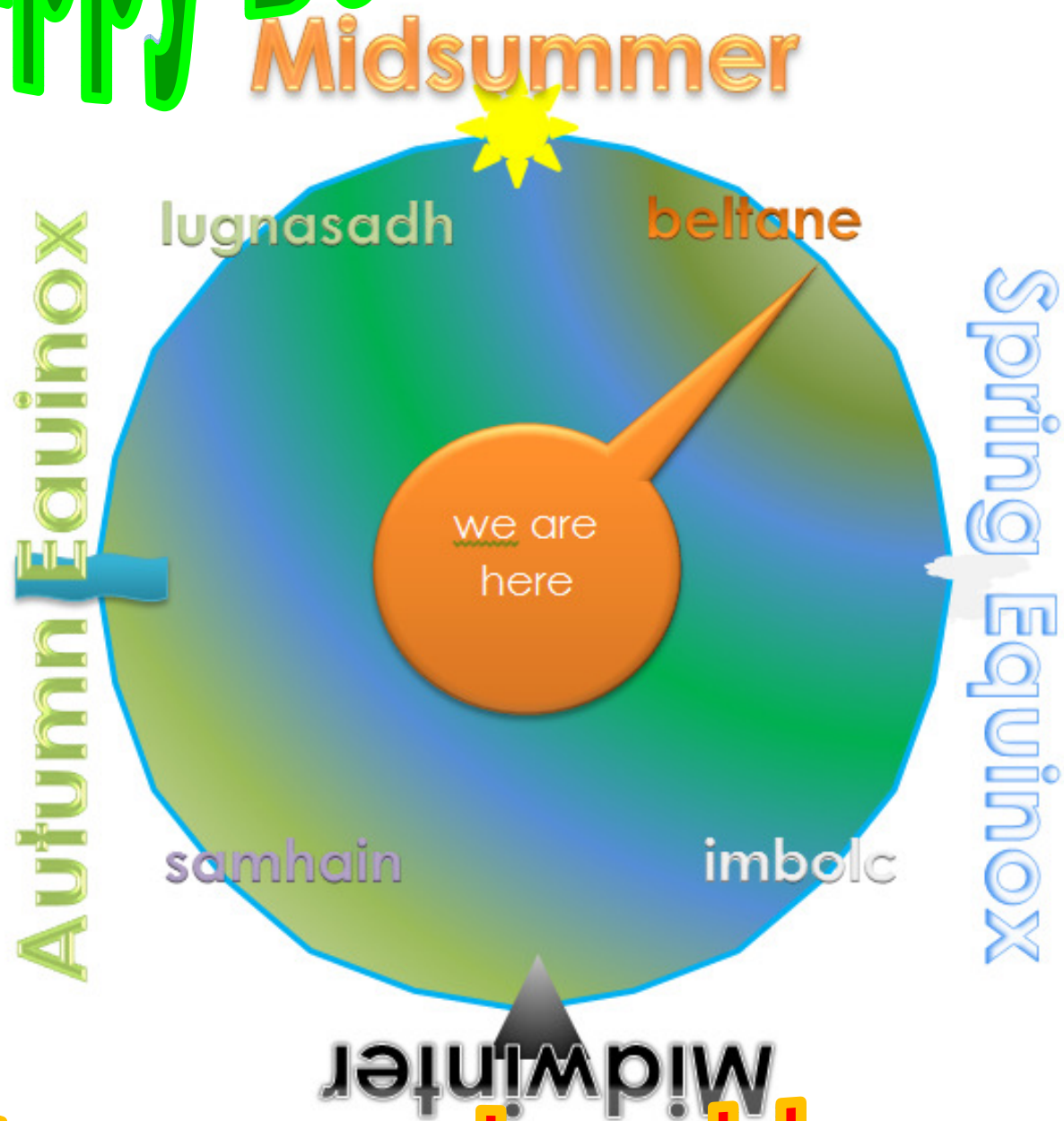
The Celtic Myth Podshow is a magnificent production bringing us tales and legends of ancient Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Cornwall, Brittany and the Isle of Man, all about the heroes and heroines, gods and goddesses, druids, faeries and magical beings of folklore and myth. Come and join Gary & Ruth and their friends as they tell you the great stories from Celtic legend. The series started with the Book of Invasions from the Irish Mythological Cycle, which is now complete, and we're progressing on to Welsh Mythology with the First Branch of the Mabinogion.

NB: This Podshow and the website are, and always will be,  
**KID-SAFE** and **FREE**.

1000's crossword puzzle

<sup>1</sup> R	<sup>2</sup> E	<sup>3</sup> C	<sup>4</sup> I	<sup>5</sup> P	R	O	C	<sup>6</sup> I	<sup>7</sup> T	<sup>8</sup> Y
<sup>9</sup> E	R	A	S	E				<sup>10</sup> C	O	O
<sup>11</sup> M	I	R	I	N	<sup>12</sup> G		<sup>13</sup> B	E	A	U
<sup>14</sup> I	C	E	S		<sup>15</sup> O	<sup>16</sup> N	E		<sup>17</sup> D	R
<sup>18</sup> N	A	T		<sup>19</sup> O	V	A	R	<sup>20</sup> Y		
I		<sup>21</sup> H	<sup>22</sup> O	N	E	Y	M	E	<sup>23</sup> A	<sup>24</sup> D
S			<sup>25</sup> F	I	R			<sup>26</sup> T	I	R
C		<sup>27</sup> E	T	O	N		<sup>28</sup> V	I	L	E
<sup>29</sup> E	<sup>30</sup> L	M		<sup>31</sup> N	I	<sup>32</sup> N	E	S		A
<sup>33</sup> N	E	E	<sup>34</sup> D		<sup>35</sup> N	O	T			D
<sup>36</sup> T	A	R	A		<sup>37</sup> G	H	O	S	T	S

# Happy Beltane everyone!



# Have a magic midsummer!