

SERPENT STAR

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



SAMHUINN 2018

Welcome to the Samhuinn 2018 issue of SerpentStar!

Hullo everyone!

Another packed edition for you for Samhuinn, art, poetry, a new two-parter and a veritable plethora of event notices. We're a busy bunch the next couple of years!

Bookings are still being taken for the 2018 Assembly in South Australia - a rundown of this year's workshops and lectures can be found on page 4 of this edition. It's always a great event so if you're considering your first one now's the time to book.

With love
Mandy / |\



2018 OBOD Assembly

Proudly hosted by

The Golden Wattle Seed Group S.A.

When: 10 - 14th of August 2018

Where: Glenhaven Park Campsite, Stockport S.A.

For more information and bookings please head to the website at:

www.druidryaustralia.org/assemblies

You can also contact us via email at:

golden.wattle.seed.group@gmail.com

Or phone Tracy on: 0447878688

SerpentStar, Samhuinn 2018

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

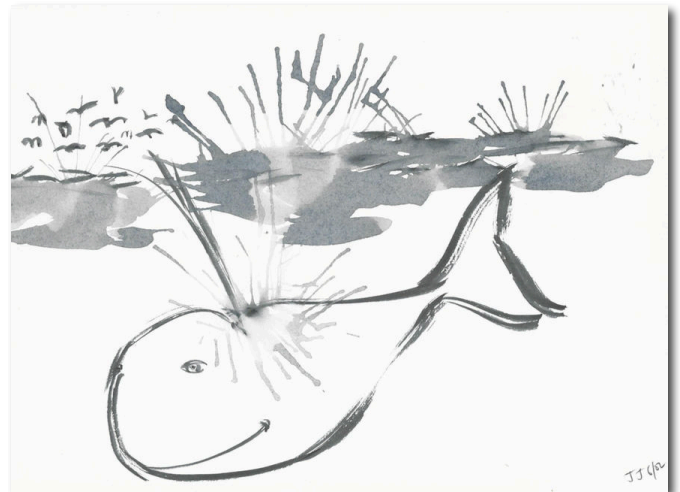
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Enquiries via email: serpentstar.obod@gmail.com

All opinions expressed herein are solely the contributors' own.



Artwork by John Jordan

OBOD in the Southern Hemisphere

Groves and Seed Groups

Brisa del Sur

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

The Cradle Seed Group

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



The Golden Wattle Seed Group

We are a group of OBOD members living in South Australia, with a few members from different druid backgrounds. We are open to interested people who would like to experience or learn about Druidry within our seed group, or in general, and we hold group rituals for the Equinoxes, Solstices and Celtic fire festivals. We also work magic together for world peace, environmental issues, political issues etc. We put emphasis on reciprocity and hospitality in ritual to reaffirm our reverent and respectful relationship with nature, with the spirits of place, the ancestors and deity; offering libations and natural foodstuffs to the earth mother during ritual. Any interests, questions or enquiries you can email Kacey Stephensen at bardofthegreenwood@gmail.com or William Rattley at wildra2003@yahoo.com.au

The Grove of the Summer Stars

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

The Kookaburra Seed Group

Plant an acorn and it will change and grow into an oak tree. Here in Melbourne, Victoria, Australia a new seed group came into being in the beginning of April 2018. It called itself Druid Network Victoria. As well as being an OBOD study group, one of its aims was to invite people from other spiritual paths to come along to its public meetings and become friends of Druids. This networking proved to be highly successful. As the seed group evolved, it became more aware of its place not only as a study group but in the greater global OBOD community. Through consultation with its OBOD members the seed group decided to change its name to more reflect its current status and its future directions. Henceforth this OBOD seed group will be known as The Kookaburra Seed Group. For more information of the groups activities, celebrations, gatherings and meetings as it follows the wheel of the year, please contact the group's Facebook page. Or email: kookaburra.seed.group@gmail.com. The newly elected leader of this group is Maggie Stevens (OBOD).

Macadamia Grove

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

The Melbourne Grove

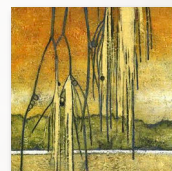
Welcomes all OBOD members (local, interstate and overseas) to its seasonal celebrations. Family and friends may also attend with a member and receive a warm welcome. In 2017 we will be celebrating the seasonal festivals on the following dates: Lughnasadh - Jan 28, Autumn Equinox - March 24, Samhuin - April 28, Winter Solstice - June 16, Imbolc - July 29, Spring Equinox - Sept 23, Beltane - Oct 20, and Summer Solstice - Dec 23. If you would like to join us please send an email to Elkie at whitelk@bigpond.com or Fiona at Fiona.mulholland@bigpond.com

Song of the Eastern Sea Seed Group

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

The Windharp Seed Group

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



Wollemi Seed Group

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

Useful websites for SH OBODies:

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

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

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

OBOD Worldwide

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

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

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

Publications

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

Druid (USA) www.druidmagazine.com

Druidenstein (German) www.feuersprung.de

Dryade (Dutch) www.obod.dds.nl

Il Calderone (Italian) issuu.com/ilcalderone

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

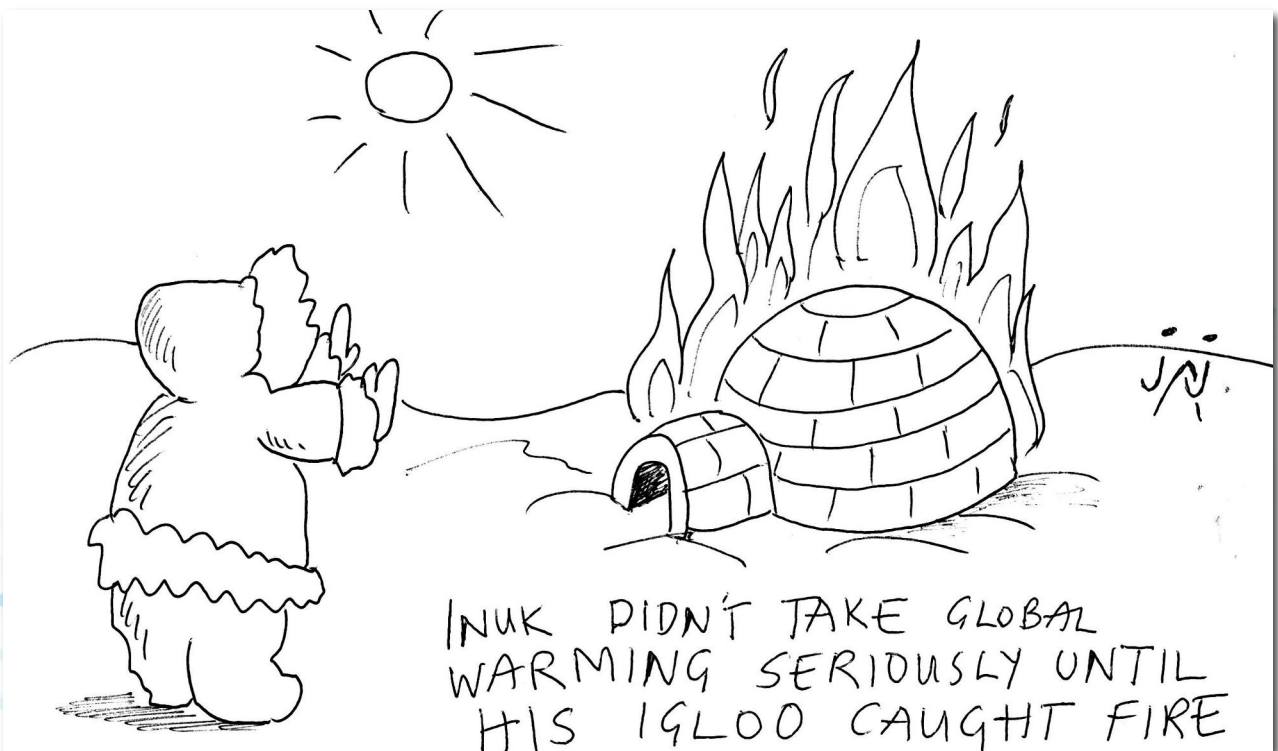
Ophiusa (Portuguese) www.obod.com.pt/ophiusa.htm

Pagan Transitions

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

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

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



Artwork by John Jordan

2018 OBOD Assembly Workshops/Lectures

Awen: and the power to change hearts and minds through creative musical expression with Adrienne Piggott (Spiral Dance) and Kacey Stephensen (Bard)

In this explorative and experiential workshop, Adrienne K Piggott from Spiral Dance and Bard Kacey Guy Stephensen will guide you through theory and discussion on the creative flow of song writing. By singing the Awen together we will compose a song as a group. A great workshop for those looking for inspiration on their bardic path.

Wisdom of the Trees with Julie Brett

The meanings and uses of trees and plants are important in understanding the magic of any land. In this workshop Julie will guide the group in a discussion of the traditional ogham trees and lead us on an oracle walk looking at native plants. This will encourage self-confidence to learn about your local trees and begin or continue the practice of collecting a set of ogham sticks for divination.

Alexandra Tanet (author of 'Living Witchery')

Alexandra will be discussing the similarities and differences between Druidry and Witchcraft as she has experienced them, through her practice as a Wiccan and Druid.

Fencing with Inspiration with Samantha Travis

Sam will bring to light how the art of fencing fits into her Bardic practice.

Working with Sacred Sound with Lesley Gentilin (Raf)

This will be a wonderful experience as Lesley helps us to deepen our practice through working with Sacred Sound in a toning circle.

Deep Listening with Amanda Meadows

Developing the art of listening to the stories of the land and her custodians.

Storytelling & the Great Awen with Michael Vlasto

As we are seated around a glimmering fire, Michael will talk to us about opening up to Awen and Storytelling. This workshop will inspire, and lead into some wonderfully spontaneous offerings for the Bardic Circle that follows it.

Herbal Medicine & the Four Elements with Kate Broderick

This workshop will include discussion and herb tasting experiences to learn about how the four elements are represented in the energies of plant medicines, and how we can use commonly available plants to bring our body-mind-spirit into balance with nature and the elements. There will also be a bit of history, related to how European herbal medicine was practiced according to the four elements for more than 2000 years.

Nourishing the Body as a Practice for Healing the Earth with Kate Broderick and Unanyntji

The body is the Earth, the breath is Air, the blood is Water, movement is Fire. We can see our current culture in many ways destructively uses and abuses the earth and the body beyond the point that is healthy or sustainable. This workshop will look at nourishing the body in different ways as a practice for healing the Earth. We know that our care for the Earth ultimately supports our human health. Let's look together at the mirror perspective and learn how caring for the body ultimately supports the health of the Earth.

Druidry & Modern Physics

By Chris Pingel

*"Here, on the edge of what we know,
In contact with the ocean of the unknown,
Shines the mystery and the beauty of the world.
And it's breathtaking."*

Carlo Ravelli, 'Seven Brief Lessons on Physics'

"In the world of the very small, where particle and wave aspects of reality are equally significant, things do not behave in any way that we can understand from our experience of the everyday world...all pictures are false, and there is no physical analogy we can make to understand what goes on inside atoms. Atoms behave like atoms, nothing else."

John Gribbin, 'In Search of Schrödinger's Cat: Quantum Physics and Reality'

Teaching high school Physics is a long way from working with and understanding the fundamentals of quantum Physics. I make no claims to have much more than a cursory knowledge of only some aspects of the field. But, what I do teach year after year is this: Back in the 1600s a heated debate raged in scientific circles. People were trying to determine what light is. Sir Isaac Newton proposed that light seemed to behave like fast moving particles while others were adamant that light behaved like a wave, travelling ever outwards in ripples.

The argument seemed to be settled in 1800 by an experiment that shone light through two tiny and close together gaps, and a strange pattern was produced on a screen. This pattern was exactly predicted and explained by a wave model. Light as particles was unable to explain this phenomenon at all. About a hundred years later another series of findings could only be explained by treating light as particles. Light has mass, light exerts pressure and light can collide like particles. Waves could explain none of this. We still don't really understand what is going on. In fact, we have what is referred to as a dual theory of light. We know when it will behave like waves and when it will behave like particles.

Into the 20th Century even stranger results from experiments began to show that particles, like electrons and atoms can exhibit behaviour like waves. The structure of the atom itself is best described as waves. So, light can behave like particles and particles can behave like waves. This strange situation became the beginning of modern quantum physics theory. As someone pursuing a path in druidry, and as a Physics teacher, I need to be able to reconcile the modern scientific view of nature and my personal, spiritual understandings.

Let's touch on a few issues and peer through a few doors.

What is Reality?

"While quantum mechanics is arguably our most successful theory of nature, it is perhaps best known for its strangeness. Quantum theory - and its key mathematical tool, the wave function - excels at predicting probabilities for the outcomes of experiments. Yet, after nearly a century of debate, physicists and philosophers of science can agree only that there is no real consensus on what quantum theory actually says about the world. This has led to a cottage industry of interpretations of quantum theory, which now number in the hundreds if not the thousands. At the centre of this quagmire is the 'wave function'. Using the wave function, better known by its mathematical nickname (ψ), physicists can calculate the probability that a quantum measurement will have a particular outcome. The success of this procedure has allowed us to control the subatomic world with unprecedented precision: You can thank (or curse) quantum theory for your iPads, smartphones, and laptops. Yet, unlike classical physics, quantum mechanics can't deliver a single, definite answer to a simple question about the outcome of a measurement. Instead, it returns a probability distribution representing many different possible outcomes. It's only after you make a measurement that you observe a stable, predictable, classical outcome. At this point, the wave function is said to have 'collapsed'.

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/blogs/physics/2015/05/quantum-world-real-world-thing/>

This understanding of the wave function has led to all sorts of dilemmas. If all things are possible and the Universe only settles on one particular outcome when we actually look at it, then shouldn't everything be different and changing all the time? Very recent work seems to be slowly uncovering the obvious - that some aspects of reality are unchanging, while others are subject to the behaviour of the wave function.

One of the explanations of this is the interconnected fabric of reality. Objects are made of a whole array of particles of many types and these particles rely on all other particles, basically everywhere in the Universe, for their existence. Many aspects of this web cannot be disrupted without the rest of reality being threatened. As physicist David Bohm said: *"One is led to a new notion of unbroken wholeness which denies the classical idea of analysability of the world into separately and independently existing parts...rather, we say that inseparable quantum interconnectedness of the whole universe is the fundamental reality."* (from 'Foundations of Physics', 1975)

Fritjof Capra, in his terrific book, 'The Tao of Physics', adds: *"In the new world view, the universe is seen as a dynamic web of interrelated events. None of the properties of any part of this web is fundamental; they all follow from the properties of the other parts, and the overall consistency of their mutual interrelations determines the structure of the entire web."*

So, for us, this is nothing new or surprising. Something that we all take to be true as druids is the wholeness, the oneness, of all nature. All parts are necessary and, as such, all parts are of equal importance. The web of reality can be found within living and non-living things alike. It is easy to imagine the universe as a single, coherent entity. In my mind the energy of the universe is the life force, nwyfre. The law of the Harvest also seems to apply here. The entirety of Nature and existence is determined by the interactions of all its parts. What we say and do reverberates throughout the entire fabric. Our actions affect and influence our surroundings in untold ways. This, in turn, creates responses in the web that will influence us. What goes out as a single word or act, comes back from many directions.

The Many Worlds Idea

'Political Scientist' L David Raub reports a poll of 72 of the "leading cosmologists and other quantum field theorists" about the "Many-Worlds Interpretation". Amongst the *"Yes, I think MWI is true"* crowd listed are Stephen Hawking and Nobel Laureates Murray Gell-Mann and Richard Feynman.

"...each measurement [that we take] causes a decomposition...of the universal wave function into non-interacting...histories or worlds. The histories form a branching tree which encompasses all the possible outcomes of each interaction. Every historical what-if compatible with the initial conditions and physical law is realised."

"...quantum mechanics and quantum field theory are quite unambiguous: the other...worlds occupy the same space and time as we do."

The implicit question is really, why aren't we aware of these other worlds, unless they exist 'somewhere' else? To see why we aren't aware of the other worlds, despite occupying the same space-time, some popular accounts describe the other worlds as splitting off into other...dimensions. <http://www.hedweb.com/manworld.htm#do>

In druidry and witchcraft it is commonly accepted that other realms exist. We have the Otherworld, the Summerlands, the Fairy realm, worlds that be accessed during meditation and so on. It seems that, although these realms have not been discovered by modern science, that science is coming around to the idea that other dimensions can exist beside or in some parallel way to our own. Belief in other realms is partly faith and partly experiential. In meditation it is possible to journey into these realms and interact with the environment and the entities we find in them. I find it satisfying that physics logic seems to support the idea of other dimensions. As with any evolving field of study quantum Physics is discovering new things all the time. As druids, we may just have to wait for more thorough and satisfying explanations.

There is also the issue relating to the law of the harvest. That is, that our actions will have an influence on what we will receive at a future time. If we are open to the possibility of negative attitudes and responses then surely in some other dimensions we are living out the repercussions of these possibilities. Perhaps an important aspect of our inner self work is to actually try to eliminate the negative responses entirely so that they have no probability of occurring. The philosophical questions here are: do we actually have responsibility for our other dimensional selves? Is part of our journey to make sure all possible selves are as free from negativity as possible? What conversations do we need to have to start an understanding of what this may actually involve?



Stay tuned for Pt2 in the Imbolc edition!
(This talk originally given at the 2016 SH Assembly, Bribie Island)

Pic by Sandra (Druid, Macadamia Grove)

Reverence

*I doth mine eyes unto the skies
I feel the wisdom burning
My memories crackle through the night
An esoteric yearning*

*Ancestors come close to the veil
I hear their whispers urging
They come to open my closed eyes
Like a metaphoric learning*

*I am more because I heed the call
Less because I'm churning
Through the misery of their loss
Not a more graceful understanding*

*They came with peaceful guiding light
And left this earth in mourning
Now I seek to release my grief
Heeding their last warning*

*That we hold their hands but for a time
And wisdom we're receiving
We release them onto other realms
With astronomic reeling*

*But their spirits guide us on with grace
With no temporary leaving
And at Samhuin we feel them call
Reaching through veiled ceilings*

*I hear their voices loud and true
No pretension or esoteric leaning
To live on is their message and never doubt
Our universal calling*

*So seek the dead but do not grieve
As they have left us feeling
Connections that will live within
Sentiments, wisdom, healing*

*Stand up proud and view your scene
Your ancestry giving you more meaning
They reside deep down within your soul
You exist to start new meaning.*

Sarah Duffy



Pic by Becca (Bard, Macadamia Grove)

- Masked Torch Light Procession • Giants of the Hills - Petal, Tannus & Rufus •
- Burning of the Wicker Man • Hedgemonkey Morris • Adelaide Empire Band Music Session •
- Hot for Joe Border Morris • Preston's Traditional Punch and Judy •
- Fayre Guisers Mummers Players • Kacey Stephensen • Peter Titchener •

• Spiral Dance •

Saturday 19th May 2018
Mylor Hall & Oval, Strathalbyn Rd, Mylor
From Midday Onwards

The English Ale

Singing • Dancing • Mumming • Guising • Making Merry •

Wear a mask if you fancy and join in the procession to the bonfire

\$25

evening concert entry : \$20 concession
kids 6-16 years \$10 : kids under 6 FREE

Concert Tickets on sale at the hall from 4pm
BOOK ONLINE via PAYPAL

theenglishale.org

The Ale is
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supported by AHC
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Alliance SA



enquiries:
info@spiraldance.com.au

Mythic Tale: Myths of the First People

Danuta Raine and Michael Vlasto

Michael and Danuta have been spending some time together working on the bones and sinews of their course, 'Myths of the First People'. They have both lived with myth and folklore for many years, and their vocations are steeped in the rich soil of ancient tales and how those tales speak to us and through us in this age. The following exploration comes out of their conversations.

What is Myth?

Danuta: *I could barely read two words put together in primary school, but I was enthralled by books of myths and legends. I read every one. They were all shapes and sizes, and covered in that thick plastic that librarians covered book sleeves in. Some had pictures, and some just had words, but every book took me someplace I could almost remember - Greek and Roman gods and goddesses, the great rivers people had to cross in order to pass between worlds, and a dog with three heads. Myth lingers illusively at the edges of memory, suggestive of a life once lived and a song once sung. It captures me, illuminates me, and allows me to see beyond the world into another way of being.*

Michael: Myth has always been the voice of Mother Earth, and all who exist on her, deep within her, and far above her, so it is the detailed and circumstantial account of the origins of all rocks, plants, animals, humans, spirits, stars, all we can sense whether visible or invisible. Myths are the connecting strands of the great jewelled spider's web of circumstance, life, elements, colour, feelings and habits. The truth of them are recognised when we can track through them back to the very beginning of both this sphere we sit on and before seeing the relevant lesson still working today.

Why are myths needed?

Michael: Myths are needed to balance the literal world with the metaphorical world, so one does not erode the other. They are needed to maintain beauty, wonder and a recognition of the unknown, through the observing of the order of existence and conduct of primitive man in the three ages of the stone age, which are now called the Paleolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic. Today we can observe and understand on a deeper level both nature and natural balance of too much, and too little, of sickness and health, in all life. Through seeing the web, we can then expand our vision of the weaving, and so our conduct is changed.

Danuta: *Myths are more than imagination. They are explication, a way of understanding that attributes a real intelligence to the universe. Myths might be homocentric and anthropomorphic, but they do attribute sentience and authority, even divinity, to beings and life forms other than humans. They cause us to see outside ourselves, beyond ourselves and to question our underlying sense of human privilege. They tie us both to our past and our future, and they leave us keys to a way of understanding that no longer exists.*

Where do myths come from?

Danuta: *There are two answers for this. One is very practical: myths are the remnants of the ontological and epistemological understanding of our ancient forebears. They are mostly ancient stories of how things came to be, where we came from, and how we should interact with the rest of the universe—each other, other entities and life forms of earth, the rest of the universe and the deities and intelligences that keep the whole thing running. The other is more spiritual and sees mythic tales as an ongoing conversation between human beings and the other worlds, giving us insight into how to live and be in harmony with all beings.*

Michael: Myths come from everything, yet we—every individual—must learn how to connect and remember, not just read on a screen or a page. This involves slowing down and joining in on a much deeper level, of feeling our place and of recognizing it on the web, so that favourite rock, comfortable tree, or that irritating mozzie, noisy white cockatoo, that strange feeling for no reason, the roar of the waves, the shining star, or the song of the wind, all when we have slowed sufficiently and have an intent to remember, can tell us what they have seen and can remember.

What do you see as the importance of myth and myth telling today?

Michael: The importance of myth cannot be overstressed. It is our ability to aim at the near future, ie 2050, then to create a better world for then. It is our way to readdress our own relationship to nature, so not to damage the strands with our own footprints. It empowers us to create a polite, interrelated lifestyle with everything and everyone. This, I believe, begins with hearing, then thinking about, then acting on our insights which the myths teach us. This is then combined with the observations that nature shows us.

Danuta: *There are many reasons why myth and myth telling are important today, but three that hold my attention are that they hold a thread that unites us with our most ancient cultural heritage. Without myth we would forget ourselves. They present us with an insight into other ways of engaging with reality, helping us to be more mature and resilient stewards of humanity. Thirdly, they unlock alternate forms of awareness that enriches and deepens our human experience.*

Can you explain what First People Myths are?

Danuta: *Curtin seems to have coined the term First People Myths when speaking of the myths of native Americans. While the term First People has come to mean indigenous and traditional owners of ancient cultures and lands, such as American First People and Indigenous Australians, the first people myths are not only representative of these cultures. Rather, according to Sean Keane, First People Myths are tales of a particular form and structure and have their origins in our Palaeolithic ancestry. As we moved from stone, to bronze to iron crafting, the way we saw and interacted with the world changed, and so did our myths.*

Michael: First People Myths are the few great stories which have come down to us unspoiled, which means they were accurately recorded from a bona fide oral source which at its best means a tribal system which has not been shattered by civilisation, and s/he who has the responsibility of holding and of telling one particular corpus or strand of the story tree, in an exact, accurately remembered and specific way of telling it. These are stories from the earliest part of the stone age, as they deal with hunter/gatherer societies, great monsters and simple tools, but most importantly with the transformation of people into animals or objects.

Is it possible for us to experience First People Myths today?

Michael: I wonder about this a lot, and can only say that for most of society, I doubt it. But for the few who understand how the salmon can swim upstream with determination against the river of modern culture, I believe it is possible because myth is ever living. We are the heritage of an unbroken line of at least 100,000 years. Our DNA holds the memories of us as first people. Added to this are the tools we have to use, the first of these being the capacity to live a simple life where we acknowledge nature is far greater than us, so we can begin to experience living with the unknown. The second, being to develop the use of recall of that time, so we can accurately tell people of today what that it is like.

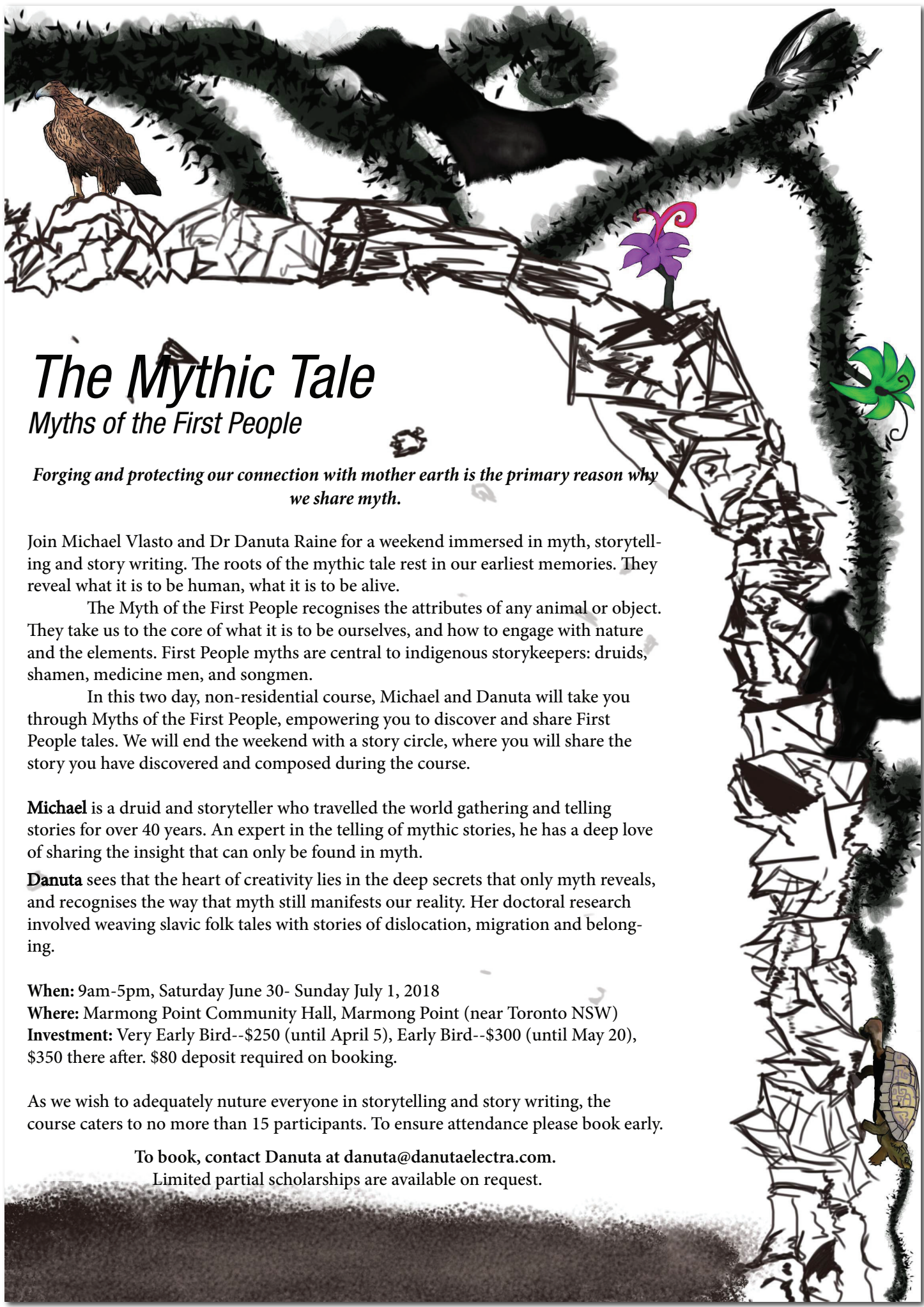
Danuta: *I am not sure if we can completely experience first people myths for ourselves, however it is important to engage with these ways of knowing if we are to understand the way we have come to be who we are and to believe what we believe. We all have very ancient roots. Not one of us is without a paleolithic ancestor. There must be a way of sparking that way of knowing and opening up the door to the ancient ones of earth so we can again listen to their ongoing kennings.*

And Michael leaves us with this last reflection: We are living with myth now, dealing with stories of global warming, population explosion, and demand for the resources of oil, gas and water. These are the monsters of our stories. We are the heroes who much meet and deal with these creatures, kings and queens, and kingdoms. What are our skills? What attributes of the spectrum do we use? Who, or what, holds the pin of forgetfulness, the sword of light, the flying horse? What have these turned into? What are our new powers?



Druid, Michael Vlasto, and ovate, Danuta Raine, are running their first course on the Mythic Tale, Myths of the First People, Saturday June 30 and Sunday July 1 at the Marmong Point Community Hall, near Toronto NSW.

This is an experiential workshop, where participants will be engaging with mythic heritage and firsthand myth gathering through shamanic and creative processes in the beautiful surrounds of Lake Macquarie. Participants will experience aspects of both mythic storytelling and story writing and generate their own telling of a first people myth.



The Mythic Tale

Myths of the First People

Forging and protecting our connection with mother earth is the primary reason why we share myth.

Join Michael Vlasto and Dr Danuta Raine for a weekend immersed in myth, storytelling and story writing. The roots of the mythic tale rest in our earliest memories. They reveal what it is to be human, what it is to be alive.

The Myth of the First People recognises the attributes of any animal or object. They take us to the core of what it is to be ourselves, and how to engage with nature and the elements. First People myths are central to indigenous storykeepers: druids, shamen, medicine men, and songmen.

In this two day, non-residential course, Michael and Danuta will take you through Myths of the First People, empowering you to discover and share First People tales. We will end the weekend with a story circle, where you will share the story you have discovered and composed during the course.

Michael is a druid and storyteller who travelled the world gathering and telling stories for over 40 years. An expert in the telling of mythic stories, he has a deep love of sharing the insight that can only be found in myth.

Danuta sees that the heart of creativity lies in the deep secrets that only myth reveals, and recognises the way that myth still manifests our reality. Her doctoral research involved weaving slavic folk tales with stories of dislocation, migration and belonging.

When: 9am-5pm, Saturday June 30- Sunday July 1, 2018

Where: Marmong Point Community Hall, Marmong Point (near Toronto NSW)

Investment: Very Early Bird--\$250 (until April 5), Early Bird--\$300 (until May 20), \$350 there after. \$80 deposit required on booking.

As we wish to adequately nurture everyone in storytelling and story writing, the course caters to no more than 15 participants. To ensure attendance please book early.

To book, contact Danuta at danuta@danutaelectra.com.

Limited partial scholarships are available on request.



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

2019 OBOD Southern Hemisphere Assembly in Aotearoa New Zealand

Thursday 17th January - Tuesday 22nd January 2019

Garden Spirits

By Tom Robertson (Morfran) with loving assistance from Dawn McKenzie

Our garden required new wooden sides as the previous wooden sides rotted out – so off to the Building Supplies, eight macrocarpa sleepers later and the new sides to the garden were in place. Oh dear, there is a gap on each side where the sleepers don't meet! Dawn suggested I carve some Garden Spirits based on the Wood Spirits I have been carving to give away, to fill the spaces.



Sleepers in place with the gaps showing. And yes, that is a spiral mown into our lawn.



Three carved Wood Spirits, plus the first of the gap filler Garden Spirits.

So I proceeded to carve four Garden Spirits to fill the gaps between the sleepers.

The first Spirit was carved deep into the wood and then the hair added – is it male or female, or maybe both? A quizzical look on his/her face as he/she was placed in the gap. The second Spirit was very definitely male with eye brows upward, and into the gap he went.



The second Spirit frowning as he looks out over the lawn.

The second Spirit was very definitely male with eye brows upward, and into the gap he went.



Wood Spirit in the gap, overlooking the lawn and spiral.

The next Spirit is on a larger piece of wood and definitely female. I worked to achieve a smiling look based on a Mayan Fertility Goddess figure recently purchased.



Female Wood/Garden Spirit smiling

Aotearoa



Inspiration, wisdom and blessings from New Zealand

The last Garden Spirit to be carved was onto two pieces of wood glued together – and of course the wood grains went in different directions, so this Garden Spirit was altogether more difficult to carve. Her expressions showed this, as she questioned my every carving stroke until I gave up and let her be.



Garden Spirit with a questioning look

So the new garden wood surround is now complete, with four beautiful Garden Spirits in place – the carving of them was a joy and definitely a lot of fun. I would like to thank my loving Druid partner and wife Dawn for the idea of creating the Garden Spirits.

*Pitter, patter, splash & splatter
Rain dances on the tin roof
Splosh, bosh, clatter & batter
Pogo rain upon the tin roof
Grey clouds roll down Ruabine hills
To sing on the ol tin roof
Upon our city in the swamp, deluge spills
Heavens symphony plays on the tin roof
From warmth of kitchen, listen & hear
Stories told out on the tin roof
Through windows, oaks stand, witness to bear
Guardians to seasons of the ol tin roof
Connection & a smile under this ol tin roof.*

*Seasonal blessings
Hræfnwulf Eobrunstan
Aotearoa/New Zealand*

Aotearoa



Inspiration, wisdom and blessings from New Zealand

The Wheel of Segais

The Wisdom of the Four Seasons as a Divination Tool



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

www.wheelofsegais.com

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

The availability of the Personal Reader Kit has impacted on when I will be offering the **Wheel of Segais Be a Reader for Others Training**. Each participant will need to receive a Personal Reader Kit by mail before the online training begins, which will be included in the cost of the course as well as a copy of the initial recording from May 2017. The further six recordings are being planned now and I am researching ways that we can be interactive for some of them. I am jetting off to the UK in May to participate in Linda Marson's Tarot Magic in Sacred Scotland tour; attend the OBOD Summer Gathering in Glastonbury in June and run a workshop on the Wheel of Segais (June 4) also in that magical place. My deadline therefore for offering the **Be A Reader** course is now **July 2018**. If you're in the UK or visiting maybe I'll see you there!

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

You can book an online reading or Life Coaching Session through my website

www.wheelofsegais.com

**WE ARE LOOKING YOUR WAY
18TH OBOD SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE ASSEMBLY
FIRST TIME IN AOTEAROA, NEW ZEALAND
17th to 22nd January 2019**

**Proudly hosted by
The Grove of the Summer Stars
With special guests Philip and Stephanie Carr-Gomm**



Philip, Stephanie and some of the gang at Druid Camp NZ 2014

The venue is booked - www.tatum-park.co.nz - the Heads of Department for various tasks have been appointed and we're practicing our *haka* of welcome!

We know it's too early to put up a booking form and there's still the exciting 2018 Assembly to attend with Golden Wattle Seed Group, but our 2019 Assembly is an early one (Lughnasadh) so with less than a year to go before we host you over here, we thought we'd better bring ourselves to your attention!

Please put these dates in your diaries and, if possible, let us know if you're thinking of attending.

Expressions of interest, comments and queries to: pamela@thewoolshed.com

Kingley Vale: an Ovate's visit to an ancient forest

*In the gateway of the yew forest I stood
A cathedral of nature this hallowed old wood
Bone deep grow their roots into the earth
The cycle of life, death and rebirth*

Tucked away in West Sussex on the South Downs not far from Chichester is a magical forest, a ghostly forest, a forest full of secrets. From the car park at Kingley Vale walk along a stony track past farmland and open countryside into a Yew Forest. A grove of ancient trees, which are estimated to be amongst the oldest living things in Great Britain. The Yews in this grove are thought to be between 1000 and 3000 years old, twisted with time and contorted by age and weather.

The day I entered Kingley Vale Yew forest was a mild day in late summer. I walked into a silent, brooding forest where there was no bird song or even the sound of the breeze, not even a mistle thrush to be heard. It was like stepping into a giant cathedral created by mother earth. I knew I was entering a sacred place, and I could feel the guardians around the trees. I silently asked for permission to enter.



Pic by Mandy Gibson

The first Yew I saw was a gnarled, twisted ancient standing sentinel at the beginning of the pathway into the forest. I said my greetings to this tree, I sat amongst them speechless and moved to tears, marveling at the their age and size. The magic was alive in this wood and I spent time connecting to this otherworldly tree. As I sat there I was thinking what it would be like to be in this place at Samhain and then I wondered about all the people that had passed this forest over the centuries as they made their way along the track way that runs along the side of the forest. What had these trees witnessed through the centuries? Romans, Saxons, Vikings? The sense of history was very real and made me think of our own short time on this planet. With the silence of the wood I was transported to another time. One of the ancient trees had fallen over but was still showing green growth, I gently removed a piece of flint from between the roots and I carry it with me still.

I walked on, following the path that led through the yews. A light rain had begun to fall and the smell of the earth was strong. I thanked the Yews, made my farewells then left the grove. From here you can walk up to the Bronze Age burial mounds. There is a younger 'yew' forest here, planted in the Victorian era but still the largest Yew forest in Europe.

This forest hasn't always been treated with reverence. Further up is a section of yew skeletons that were killed when there were used as target practice in WW2. I only found this information out recently and it saddened me greatly to think of pointless aggression and violence aimed at these majestic beings in such a peaceful place.

My time in this forest and meeting these ancient yew trees had a profound affect on me. I close my eyes and visit from time to time, from season to season. It seems even closer in my memory today as the wheel turns to the darker time of the year.

Samhuinn blessings to you all,
Adrienne Piggott

DAMH THE BARD

2019



SPONSORSHIP FOR DAMH THE BARD

Plans are afoot to bring Damh the Bard and Cerri Lee back to Australia in April 2019.

There will be a Sponsor's concert in Adelaide as well as a weekend camp over the Easter Long weekend 2019.

We are looking for 120 people to donate \$50 each so if you would like to be a 'Damh the Bard' sponsor and be part of bringing this amazing couple back to our Great Southern Land you can either donate via Paypal or direct debit.

Paypal login address for sponsorship is
sponsordamh@spiraldance.com.au

or

email us for direct debit details
info@spiraldance.com.au

**Advance Notice
Druid Camp 2019
Friday 19th April - Monday 22nd April
(The Easter Long Weekend)**



**The Wind Harp Seed Group of South Australia is excited to announce
a 4 day camp over the Easter Long Weekend in 2019 with :**

Damh the Bard - England

Cerri Lee - England

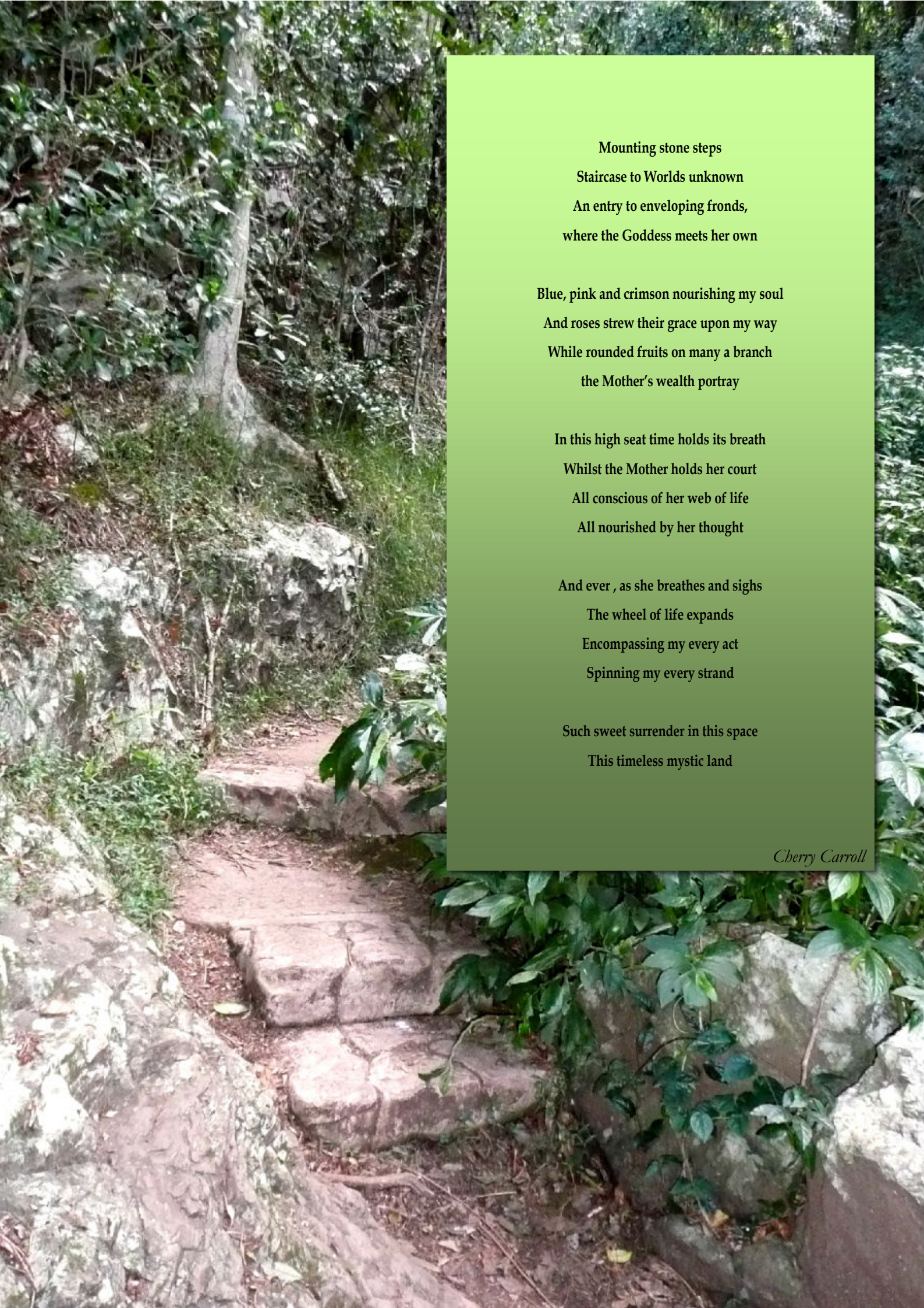
Kristoffer Hughes - Wales

The Camp will be held in the Adelaide Hills.

More info coming later this year!

Expressions of interest please email info@spiraldance.com.au

Please note this camp will be open to anyone interested in Druidry



Mounting stone steps
Staircase to Worlds unknown
An entry to enveloping fronds,
where the Goddess meets her own

Blue, pink and crimson nourishing my soul
And roses strew their grace upon my way
While rounded fruits on many a branch
the Mother's wealth portray

In this high seat time holds its breath
Whilst the Mother holds her court
All conscious of her web of life
All nourished by her thought

And ever , as she breathes and sighs
The wheel of life expands
Encompassing my every act
Spinning my every strand

Such sweet surrender in this space
This timeless mystic land

Cherry Carroll

The History Project Goes to the DDUNG

An update from Elkie

The response from OBOD members to the History of Druidry in Australia since the last Assembly was sufficiently encouraging to warrant taking it further – and so I took it to the Druids Down Under National Gathering (aka the DDUNG). And again it was received enthusiastically, this time by a wider audience.

I brought to the group's attention a submission that Brad Letch in Geraldton had sent me. A nine-page document, its purpose was to save Druid's Hall in Geraldton from demolition. It was a gold mine of information about the UAOD in WA and we all hoped it was successful! Apparently it is still standing but the fascia has been removed. Pete Blake is also following up some leads for us in WA as are other druids there. Pete is also compiling a history of BDO activity in Australia for us.

In SA, Adrienne has located information about a couple of early Groves there, and the story behind Druids Avenue in Stirling and Mt Barker.

In Queensland, Sandra has found an archive of the Australian College of Druidry (ACOD). No longer active on the internet; this file is from 2004. It was run by a man named Corey.

Carole found an article from the National Library of Australia. Originally printed in The Brisbane Courier in January 1889, it was about the UAOD in Brisbane.

In NSW, the Hermetic Druidry website is still active and operating out of Byron Bay.



At the DDUNG meeting, Danuta offered to guide us with the questions that need to be asked before information is disseminated. And a couple of people are checking out museums to see if our things can be stored there for future generations.

Meanwhile in Victoria, Shaz is looking after the ADF contribution for us, and it appears that the AOD website has been recently updated. It now references Ronald Hutton's 'Blood and Mistletoe' (2009). Druid's House is listed in Melbourne's top 15 best unprotected interiors.

At the meeting it was agreed that all original information will remain in my hands for now until we are able to find a permanent home for it. Copies will be sent to Josie for her Wild Hunt article – and there was an exciting new development over the DDUNG weekend: following the successful self-publication of her first book, Sandra is confident that she can create a book for us based on the information we gather. So, all the more reason to participate!

I have extended the deadline to December 2018, and I would love to hear from you – please send an email to whitelk@bigpond.com for a copy of the questionnaire (or see the next two pages for a copy and more information about the project).

Introduction to the History Project

by Elkie White

The Australian Druidry History Project was launched at the Assembly. The catalyst for this project came from Josie Winter, who instigated the successful Pagan Collective of Victoria (PCV) which I have recently been given the honour of joining as a representative of OBOD.

Josie was asked to write an article for The Wild Hunt on *'Druidry in Australia'*, and needed my answers pronto. The first question was, "Tell me about the history of druidry as a spiritual practice in Australia?" Obviously I could not do justice to such an important question in 24 hours and so I offered to create a questionnaire for the assembly, with the view that if the interest was there, we could then extend it to other groups and individuals.

Well the interest was there, and I thank everyone at the Assembly for their support. I took four completed questionnaires home with me and have been receiving a steady stream of them since. A delightful trend has already emerged in regard to the question, "What do you think is distinctly 'Australian' in regard to druidry?" The responses have embraced not only the physical distinctiveness of Australia (soil, seasons, animals, plants etc) but also its emotional/spiritual distinctiveness (equality, tolerance, light-heartedness, humour, mateship etc). It will be fascinating to see how this develops.

Josie has decided to mostly leave the history question on the back-burner for now, but intends to put together a more thorough piece at a later date. I sent her a draft questionnaire to her for comment, and in response she alerted me to the need for facts and figures for the history nerds, and so I pass on her request, to you, for names, dates and places, wherever possible. I also sent a draft to David Waldron, who is a history lecturer at Ballarat University. David replied that it was a good questionnaire, and asked whether druidry was worth seeing as distinct to other pagan groups. And so I have included that query in the questionnaire. I sent it to OBOD HQ seeking their support and Philip suggested that we advertise it on the OBOD Facebook page, and in Touchstone, in order to reach more people. I also wrote to Mandy seeking permission to include her idea for a special edition of Serpentstar, which she kindly gave me.

For those of you who weren't at the assembly here it is, and you are invited to participate - please do! You can print the questions as here presented or, better still, write and ask me to attach the questionnaire to an email. It is in Word and thus very easy to edit, according to your needs. My address is whitelk@bigpond.com and I hope to hear from you.

Towards a History of Druidry in Australia: The OBOD contribution

Preliminary notes:

Welcome to the Australian Druidry History Project! The catalyst for this project came from several sources including Josie Winter's article for The Wild Hunt and Julie Brett's book on Australian Druidry. Through this questionnaire, you are invited to include your story and perspective. You do not need to answer every question but just the ones that you feel comfortable with or that you feel are important. It is only out of our personal stories that an authentic understanding of druidry in Australia can emerge. To save paper, the questions have been packed into one sheet of paper (**the next page**). To write more, simply cross-reference to additional sheets. If you prefer, send me an email and ask me to send you the questionnaire in Word format as an attachment. That way you can answer straight into the document.

Please return, with your responses, to Elkie: whitelk@bigpond.com by December 2018. Thanks.

Your name:

Email contact:

- Are you happy to be contacted in regard to this project?
- Please describe where you live: city/town/district/State/Territory/general ecology
- What is your local indigenous language group/cultural tribe?
- Do you have any contact with them?
- Generally speaking, do you support the idea of writing a history of druidry in Australia?
- What value might it have?
- What should it include?
- When did you join OBOD?
- How far along the course are you?
- Why did you join? Why not some other druid group? What do you like about OBOD?
- When did you realise you were a 'druid'? And how did that feel?

- This project ties in with the 20th Anniversary of SerpentStar, a newsletter for OBOD members living in the southern hemisphere. You can write the answer to this question and also submit it for inclusion in the special edition of SStar coming out in summer this year. The question is: What was your first OBOD experience in the SH? Or, here's how Mandy put it: At Alban Hefin 1997, our very own SerpentStar was born. To celebrate there will be a FIFTH issue this year, released at Alban Hefin, our official 20 th birthday. For this special issue I am seeking special content, and the theme is 'My first OBOD experience in the Southern Hemisphere'. As always, stories, poems, photos, artwork and musings are welcome.

- As a possible starting point to the above: when did you first meet another druid or member of OBOD? Describe that encounter.
- What do you know about the history of druidry in Australia? *This is a key question and so please answer it to the best of your ability. Single sentences and full essays are both welcome, and everything in between. Point form is also okay, but for the history buffs please include names, places, and dates wherever possible.*
- Would you be willing to research the history of druidry in your local area for this project?
- Are you involved in any other groups (related to your druidry or spirituality – including historical societies, other spiritual groups, environmental groups, social justice groups)?
- Do you see any link between the druidry that you practice today and the druidry that was practiced by the United Ancient Order of Druids in the early years of European settlement?
- Why do you think druidry is becoming more popular in Australia? What do you think people are looking for? Has this changed over the years?
- What do you think is distinctly 'Australian' in regard to druidry?
- Where do you see druidry in the future of Australia? Or, what do you vision for us in the future? Where would you like it to go? Can you relate your ideas to what druidry in Australia has been in the past?
- If someone asked you to specify what a druid is in 3 sentences, what would your 3 sentences be?

As members of OBOD we are not asked to be anything other than that. However some people attach the following words or phrases to druidry, hence the question: How comfortable are you with the following words? Please rate each from 0-10, with 0 being the least comfortable, and 10 the most comfortable.

- druid
- pagan
- eclectic (druidry)
- home-grown (druidry)
- "nature-based spirituality"
- the word 'religion' (in regard to druidry)
- Related to the above, do you think that druidry is worth seeing as distinct to other pagan groups?
- What further questions would you like to see included in a questionnaire about the history of druidry in Australia?

If your own story is not included in the above questions please feel free to write it on as many extra sheets as you like.



The 19th OBOD Assembly – 2020 – Announcement

The Melbourne Grove is delighted to announce that we have found a lovely venue for the 2020 Southern Hemisphere OBOD Assembly! It's booked already so that you can start planning. It will be held over the Anzac Day weekend, from April 24 to April 28 2020, in Gembrook, east of Melbourne.

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



| | |
|--|-----------------------|
| Goddess of the Southern Land | A Piggott |
| Serpent Energy | A Piggott |
| Wickerman / Landlord's Daughter | A Piggott / P Gooding |
| Song of the Trees | A Piggott |
| The Sheringham Mermaid / Bay of Soles | A Piggott / P Gooding |
| The Children of Lir | A Piggott |
| Soul's Gateway | M Adamson |
| King Orfeo | Traditional |
| Dark Days and Heys / Tampered Twilight | A Miller / P Gooding |
| Elen of the Ways | A Piggott |
| Mallee My Mother | Wyverne Ogma Vyvyan |

Featuring:

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

To order go to :

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

or for more information :

info@spiraldance.com.au

THE GREEN ALBUM

Tuatha Dea and Nightsong Studios Presents:

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

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

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

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

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

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

or you can buy a physical album via

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



RAINFOREST TRUST® *Hero*

The Green Album

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

Issued June 20, 2016

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



RAINFOREST TRUST®

Dr. Paul Salaman
Chief Executive Officer



Okapi

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



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♦ PUBLICATIONS ♦ WRITING ♦

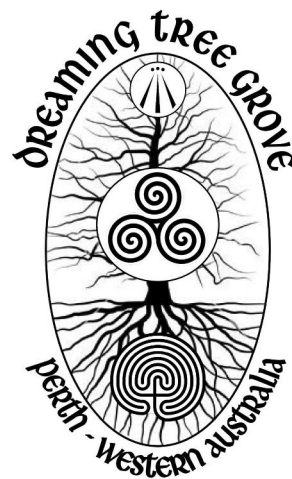
www.toddwilliamdearing.com
todddearing@gmail.com
0405 115 279

Located within the Perth suburb of Banjup, Western Australia, Dreaming Tree Grove is a nature-based spiritual group grounded in Druidry, inspired by a "shamanic worldview" and a love of being immersed in natural surroundings. We view Druidry's journey through bard - ovate - druid as a creative and experiential journey, one that explores not just the Self in nature, but the nature of Self. For us, our spiritual path is one of integrity and service, of celebrating life and recognising the interconnection of all things.

Although we are affiliated with the British Druid Order, and while we acknowledge the traditions of our path, and the mythic cycle that weaves its way through our tradition, our connection to place is here within the bio-regional movements of nature that create this part of the Southern Hemisphere. So we explore our spirituality and practise through these sacred lands here in the south west of Western Australia, and therefore our approach reflects this.

To find out more about the Grove, about joining us, and our training program, visit our website:

<http://dreamingtreegrove.wixsite.com/dreamingtreegrove>





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

serpentstar.druidryaustralia.org/about





Anam Cara Soul Space

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Consultations are available at my practice in Auckland, New Zealand, or from anywhere in the world using Skype.

Please visit my page
www.facebook.com/anamcarasoulspace/
for more details.





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Maidenhood ~ Motherhood
Blessingways ~ Baby Namings
Cleansings ~ Cronings
Divorce ~ Funerals
Transition & Initiation Rituals

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





Anne Conroy

REGISTERED CELEBRANT

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

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



www.ritualcelebrant.co.nz
Ph: 021 781 873
E: anne@ritualcelebrant.co.nz



Member of the Order of Ovates Bards and Druids



Member Celebrant's Assn. of New Zealand

Creating meaningful ceremonies and lasting memories

Pamela Meekings-Stewart

Registered Marriage and Civil Union Celebrant
New Zealand

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

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

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

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

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



Tying the knot

Two lives entwine

Tying the knot

Two families entwine

Binding our futures together



Contact: pamela@thewoolshed.com

Thewoolshedretreats.co.nz

Tel: ++64-4 2399234



Need some time out from your day to day life?

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

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

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

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

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



And finally...

Samhain Incense

4 parts Dittany of Crete ~ Underworld and love

1 parts Myrrh ~ raise spiritual vibrations

1 parts Frankincense ~ Aid spirit to Divine Light

1 parts dried Catmint ~ Sooth sorrow and heartbreak

2 pieces dried Holly leaves ~ Rebirth

1 part dried Cypress ~ Aids crossing

1 part dried Rosemary ~ Remembrance of the dearly departed

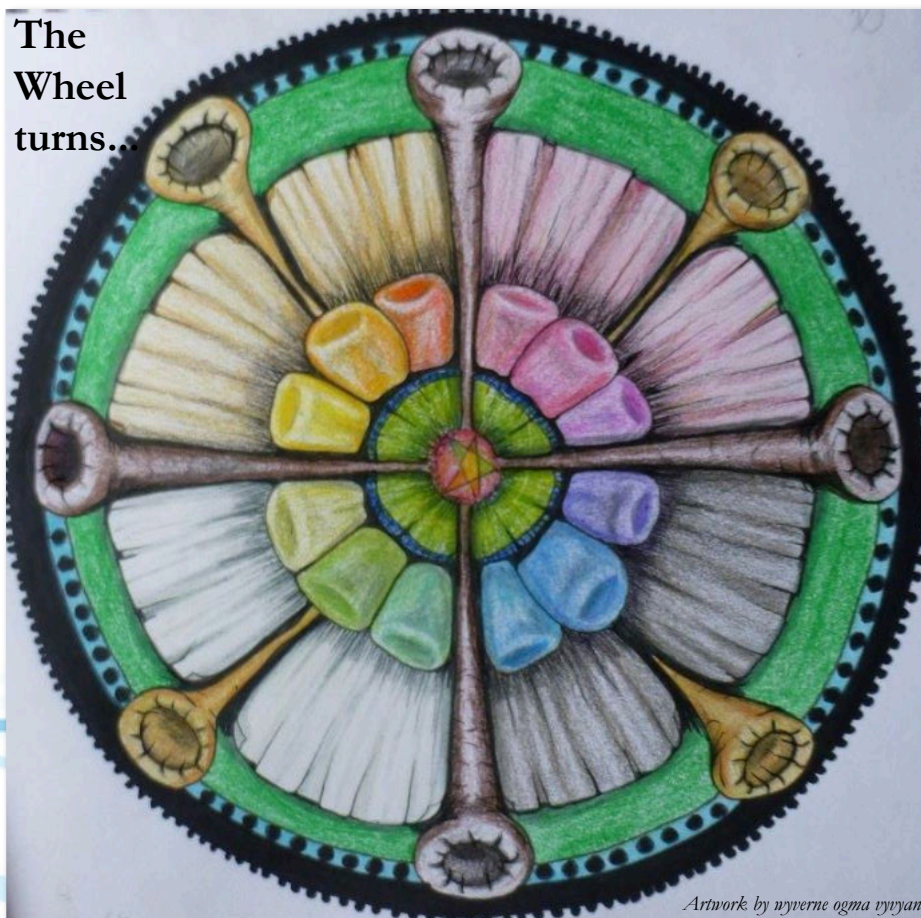
1 part dried Birch bark/leaves ~ Rebirth

3 drops Angelica essential oil ~ Protection

*Frankincense and Myrrh can be frozen 24 hrs before use and will shatter easily when grinding.

Best wishes
Kath Moss

The
Wheel
turns...



Artwork by nyverne ogma vyryan

Samhuinn...was a time of no-time. Celtic society, like all early societies, was highly structured and organised - everyone knew their place. But to allow that order to be psychologically comfortable, the Celts knew that there had to be a time when order and structure were abolished - when chaos could reign. And Samhuinn was such a time. Time was abolished for the three days of this festival, and people did crazy things - men dressed as women and women as men. Farmers' gates were unhinged and left in ditches, peoples' horses were moved to different fields, and children would knock on neighbours' doors for food and treats...

But behind this apparent lunacy, lay a deeper meaning. The Druids knew that these three days had a special quality about them. The veil between this world and the World of the Ancestors was drawn aside on these nights, and for those who were prepared, journeys could be made in safety to the 'other side'. The Druid rites, therefore, were concerned with making contact with the spirits of the departed, who were seen as sources of guidance and inspiration rather than as sources of dread. The dark moon, the time when no moon can be seen in the sky, was the phase of the moon which ruled this time, because it represents a time in which our mortal sight needs to be obscured in order for us to see into the other worlds. The dead are honoured and feasted, not as the dead, but as the living spirits of loved ones and of guardians who hold the root-wisdom of the tribe.

The deadline for contributing to the Imbolc issue of *SerpentStar* is 25 July. The Imbolc issue will be released on 1 August 2018.

Text sourced from Druidry.org