

WITCHTOWER

Summer Solstice/Lammas 07

Vol 3 Issue 4



Come sit by
the fire,
for a tale will
unfold, as we
explore the
York Story
Telling Moot!

Strawberries...
Good for you and your skin!

*Reviews, Interviews, News Updates, Ancient Wisdoms
plus all your other regular favourites*

The Pagan Network Magazine

Witchtower

Vol 3 Issue 4

Summer Solstice/Lammas 07

Published by
Pagan Network

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tee

Editorial

Summer is here and we've seen little sign of the sun yet. So why not bask in the warmth of our current issue.

Dig out the barbecue as we explore Paganism and Food by Yvonne Aburrow. Still feeling peckish, why not toast some marshmallows over the flames whilst reading all about the Fire Element provided by Julia Wren. Then finish up by making yourself comfortable, with a glass of wine or apple juice, and let your imagination travel back into the distance past with Jools account of the York Story Telling Moot.

I hope you enjoy this issue and don't forget to get those entries in for the competition!

Blessed Be

Twilightgirl
Witchtower Editor

Cover Artist - Twilightgirl

Melanie (aka Twilightgirl) is a woman of many creative talents. She is a digital artist who has seen her work published in magazines, calendars and cd covers.

She also enjoys expressing her creativity through graphic design, film production, writing and making/designing Pagan cards. She is expanding her card making into a business and will soon be opening an online shop.



More about Melanie and her work can be found at
www.sensorychaos.co.uk

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COMPETITION

To enter the competition you need to select a title from the list below and take a photograph of what that title means to you or a photograph that best represents the title.

There will be three winners, one winner will be chosen per title. All winning photographs from this competition will be shown in the next issue.

To submit your photograph email it to the witchtower@gmail.com along with the title you have chosen so we know which category to judge you under. Photographs can be any size as we can always resize them for the issue. Photographs must also be your own (no stealing them off the internet!).

This competition is open to all Full Members and Subscribers of the Witchtower. The closing date for this current competition is the 5 September 2007.

So choose your title and get those cameras clicking!

Summer Solstice/Lammas Issue (Choose from the following titles)

- 1. The Goddess in her many colours**
- 2. Monument**
- 3. The Wheel Turns**

The three prizes for this issues competition will be the Pentagram shown (made from fine pewter, nickel free)



Paganism and Food

Food is the product of the earth; the earth is a mother goddess, literally the matrix of our physical existence. We are all products of the stars: earth, animals, plants; all the elements were forged in the reactions in the heart of stars. We are what we eat, so it is important to eat healthily & well

Cooking and eating connect us to the earth and each other. All shared festivities involve special and symbolic food. In Paganism, the body and the earth are sacred; spirit is immanent in matter, not transcendent and beyond it.

Dieting is DIE with a T

The modern fad of dieting was invented in the 19th century by fundamentalist Christians, but the idea of abstinence and self-denial is rooted in transcendent monotheism, as can be seen from the stories of medieval saints who starved themselves to death (see *The Forbidden Body: Why Being Fat is not a Sin* by Shelley Bovey). In most of Africa, when western women visit, African women are seriously worried by how thin the western women are. The Third World is often given as a reason why we should be thin - this is just an excuse for being obsessed by thinness.

Comparison with other cultures

In our culture, we consume to excess (mostly possessions rather than food) but we don't know how to enjoy the simple pleasures of life - sharing food with friends, dancing round bonfires, swimming naked in the sea. We have largely lost of the art of just being, obsessed as we are with possessing stuff. This - in my view - is because we have lost our connection to the earth. Luckily for us Pagans, our path is about reconnecting with the earth and the cycles of the seasons. How do we do this? By celebrating the festivals, the cycles of the Sun and Moon, talking to the trees... How do you celebrate a festival? By feasting.

Other cultures have a more sensible attitude to food. Without the puritanical inheritance which is evident in Britain and America, they still enjoy cooking and eating. In Italy, socialising is done with food accompanied by wine. There is also a tradition in many countries of noisy

appreciation of food - belching and even farting were considered a compliment to the chef in many cultures.

In most major religions, there are special foods for their religious festivals - the Passover meal in Judaism, the barfi sweets at Diwali in Hinduism, the feast of Eid Al Fitr after Ramadan when the new moon rises, Christmas pudding, etc.

In ancient times the Goddess was often depicted as fat, with big curvy hips and breasts. She is the fat of the land, the valley overflowing with milk and honey.

Seasonal festivals

Paganism, or more specifically the folk tradition, which is 75% Paganism and 25% Christianity, also has traditions of specific food at the festivals.

Samhain - apple-bobbing (the apple is the food of the underworld, because it symbolises eternal youth, the Land of Apples, Avalon). Nuts for divination.

Yule - Christmas pudding, chestnuts, the wassail bowl (mulled ale or cider, sometimes with lambswool which is stewed apple), roast boar (the sacred beast of Thor), roast goose (goose was the sacred bird of Odin)

Imbolc - the name is derived from ewe's milk, as this was the time of the year when the ewes lactated.

Spring Equinox - Easter eggs, Simnel cake (Mothering Sunday, originally associated with Lady Day, 25th March)

Midsummer - strawberries (fruit of the sun)

Lammas - bread, beer (products of John Barleycorn)

Autumn Equinox - cider, blackberries, roast goose at Michaelmas (Odin again)

Rites of passage (birth, initiation, marriage, death)

Rites of passage also have traditional foods: there is always a feast and a cake and plenty of wine or champagne. The Romans gave walnuts to newly weds to symbolise fertility. The initiate of the Eleusinian Mysteries was shown an ear of corn to symbolise (presumably) the cyclical nature of life.

The environment

As Pagans honour the earth, good food goes hand in hand with protecting the

environment - organic foods are better for our bodies and better for the earth. Free range eggs & meat give the animal a better life and they taste better.

Cooking and alchemy

The process of cooking is like alchemy - the transformation of ingredients into a new thing, the stirring of the cauldron of knowledge, the production of the magic potion. There are three main stages in alchemy - the Nigredo or blackening (well that usually comes last in cookery but never mind); the Albedo or whitening (just add flour); the Rubedo or reddening (that's how you know to add the tomatoes). Anyway cookery is a kind of magic, and the stirring of the pot can be used for scrying, meditation, or spells (see *Witches Abroad* by Terry Pratchett).

Food & healing (nutrients, herbs, etc.)

Most food, unless it's laden with chemicals, is good for you. It contains protein, vitamins, carbohydrates, fibre, etc. It smells nice when it's cooking and some of it even has medicinal properties. The proverbial chicken soup of Jewish mothers really exists and is very effective, I'm told. Herbs have been used for thousands of years as medicines - a Neanderthal burial included herbs for the various ailments the deceased was suffering from.

Symbolism of food

Nuts - fertility, the Child of Light within the womb of the Goddess
Apples - the Underworld, the Land of Youth
Pork - sacred to Thor and Cerridwen
Goose - sacred to Odin
Strawberries, oranges - the Sun
Wheat, bread, beer - John Barleycorn, the harvest
Cider - ecstatic frenzy or seidr
Honey & mead - ambrosia, nectar, the food of the gods (bees are the messengers of the gods)

As the ancient Sumerian blessing has it "May you be filled with honey cheese".

by Yvonne Aburrow

BEYOND THE GRAVE



A GHOSTLY DAY OUT

Me and my family decided to go on a day out to an old Civil War home that is said to be haunted. Normally I don't believe in ghosts and all that, but immediately upon stepping into the house I felt something I can only describe as odd. The hairs on the back of my neck stood to attention.

Then as we were looking around the house from the corner of my eyes I kept seeing lamps flicker. This happened in several rooms but whenever I turned to look directly at the lamps they stopped flickering. One room in particular I found to be very cold and didn't want to stay in it. I felt like I was being watched.

My mother was taking photos of the house and grounds and later when we had them developed there was a ghostly like images on the photos. Most of the ghostly images were located around the rooms where I had seen the lamps flickering. It was very creepy!

By Sam

A NEAR MISS

This story took place in Scotland. A friend of the family was driving to a mates place one night. As he came over the crest of a hill he suddenly caught sight of a male figure standing in the road directly in front of him. He braked and swerved but failed to avoid colliding with the man. The car finally came to a halt and he jumped out but found no sign of the man. There were skid marks on the road but no damage to his car even though he was positive he had hit someone. At that time he then realized he was at the exact location where a man had been fatally injured in an horrific road accident the week before. The car the man was driving collided with a stationary earth-moving vehicle and burst into flames.

By Luna

MY FIRST EXPERIENCE

My paternal grandmother had died and my father was not coping with her death. My younger brother came and called us, saying granny was in his room. She was there with a few others. Although I could not see the spirits, I could feel them. The air was ice cold in places, a body width.

Suddenly my mother started talking to my father as if she was my Grandmother She told him she was fine and to move on. When she finished talking, my mother collapsed. She had no memory of what had been said. The cold air had disappeared when my Grandmother left.

This was my first major paranormal experience, and hopefully I will experience others throughout my life.

By Anonymous

LID OFF THE CAULDRON

A round up of all the news happening over at Pagan Network

Following a further reshuffle on the forums, we have now merged some of the smaller unused sub forums into the main ones. We have also developed our Teen board on the forums and Morti (a teen herself) will be moderating this board, So if you want to chat about anything to do with being a Teen just pop on over.



Pagan Network would like to thank all full members for their support, so from the 1st May, if you are a full member you can expect an extra surprise around your birthday in the form of a Pagan Network handmade Birthday Card. These are kindly made and donated by Twilightgirl who will soon be opening an online shop selling Handmade Pagan Cards.



Thinking of going to the next Pagan Network AGM? Well this year we're making an event of it. The event is called Helabaloo and will be held on the 6 October 07 in York. There will be talks, workshops, stalls, banquet and Ghost Investigations! The Pagan Network AGM will be taking place on the 7 October 07 so why not make a whole weekend of it. If you wish to attend the Helabaloo event the cost is £57.50 per person and includes all food and entry to the hall, workshops and talks. More information about Helabaloo and the Pagan Network AGM can be found on the forums.



Member of the Month is your chance to give a pat on the back to someone else on the forum. It can be someone who has been particularly helpful, has taken time to explain something complicated or who has patiently explained the basics time and time again. Alternatively it could be someone who consistently produces insightful posts, thought-provoking threads or just someone who you think is a credit to the forums. All members can vote for someone to be Member of the Month - watch out for the voting poll on the forums.

Winners of the Member of the Month since our last publication have been Morti, Jools and Shewolf



Creative Member of the Month is given to a member who the Pagan Network Judges (Twilightgirl and Deadly_Whispers) feel that their creative work really stands out from the crowd and that they have repeatedly offered insight into other work as well as accepted praise and criticism for their own work in a mature way.

Members who win the Creative Member of the Month will have their creative work, whether it's a poem, story or artwork appear in the Pagan Network Witchtower Magazine. They will also have their work appear in the Pagan Network Calendar 2008.

Winners of the Creative Member of the Month since our last publication have been Seawitchartist, Trap and Ivory RavenMoon

INTERVIEW WITH A

A series of interviews with members of the Pagan Network. Here, Telesillawitch puts the questions to Giomannach

PN: Name / username
TH: Tony Hall/Giomannach

PN: What age are you and where do you live?

TH: A very young at heart 37, from Stafford in the UK.

PN: How would you describe your spiritual path?

TH: An eclectic mixture of Wicca and Witchcraft.

PN: Just so readers know, would you explain briefly what those two terms mean for you and how they differ as far as you're concerned?

TH: Wicca is a modern and popular form of Witchcraft created by Gerald Gardner in the 1930's? (might be out on the date), whereas Witchcraft is as old as time itself. Wicca has quite strict rules to follow and to be in a Gardnerian coven you would have to be initiated. Witchcraft is more relaxed and you can make of it what you will. For myself I took some of the things about Wicca that I liked and incorporated them into traditional Witchcraft.

PN: How did you get involved with this path? What's your history? How did your personal background influence this?

TH: I took my first steps down the path in October 2002 after being fascinated by the whole subject all my life. I had become very disillusioned with organised, male dominated religions, by their corruption, greed and narrow-mindedness and wanted to change my life for good.

As far as history and background goes on my mothers side of the family several members have had varying "gifts" and this can be traced back to my mum's grandfather who came from several generations of travellers and gypsy folk.

PN: Has anyone ever made assumptions about you (good or bad) because of being a pagan? What were they?

TH: Very occasionally and it is the usual preconceived ideas about witchcraft, the devil etc etc that we all get from time to time. Sadly is always from the Christian and Catholic members of society in Stafford of whom we have a large number.

PAGAN

HOW PAGANISM FITS INTO YOUR LIFE

PN: What do you do for a living? Is there any conflict between your work life and your spirituality?

TH: I work on the counter of the main Post Office in Stafford high street. I don't get any problems about anything at work; they wouldn't dare as I am the union rep LOL.

PN: What are your hobbies and interests?

TH: How long have you got *grin*

Well my main ones are travelling the UK and abroad, camping, walking, mountain climbing and photography. Keeping fit, reading, playing and writing music, playing keyboards, dj-ing, computer games, good food, gardening, visiting theme parks and riding rollercoasters and other white knuckle rides

My specific pagan interests are runes, herbs, candle-magick, the sabbats, moon lore, making candles, writing rituals and visiting as many sacred places as I can in the UK and abroad.

PN: What about your family and friends? Are they of similar spiritual paths to you, or are there differences?

TH: My family are all pretty open minded and very supportive in what I do and the path I tread. I am quite a solitary creature and just have a few close friends but they too are very supportive and accepting.

PN: How would you rate the importance of the following aspects of your life? (Use percentages, total equally 100%)

TH:
 - Time with family - 15%
 - Time with partner(s) - 15%
 - Time with friends - 15%
 - Spiritual time alone - 15%
 - Spiritual time with others - 15%
 - Your work, career, or time in education (if a student) - 10%
 - Hobbies and pastimes - 15%

BELIEFS

PN: Do you believe in the existence of a "deity"? If so, have you ever had any divine experiences?

TH: Absolutely - I believe in the existence of the goddess and god as well as all the other deities and have had enough dreams and seen enough signs especially from Hecate to have no doubts about their existence.

PN: Do you believe in the existence of spirits - human or non-human? Have you ever had any experiences of "spirit"?

TH: Again absolutely - I have not "seen" a ghost but can sense atmospheres and presences and have good/bad feelings about places for no apparent reason.

PN: Do you believe in the existence of magic? As a believer, how would you explain it?

TH: We see magick all around us on a daily basis; from a single snowflake falling to a mighty Oak tree arising from a single acorn. Nature is the most magickal thing there is and it is both arrogant and foolish for the human race to toy with it, destroy it and think we can better it!

To create Magick is to harness the natural energies of the planet in conjunction with your own and then visualise and hopefully get an end result. Magick itself is neither black or white, it is the intent of the user that makes it "good" or "evil".

PN: Do you practice your spirituality alone, in a group, or both? Was this a deliberate decision or a necessity? And if you've done both, which do you prefer?

TH: At the moment I practice alone although I have had spent time in Covens both as a regular member and also leading them.

I prefer being part of a Coven mainly because of the advantage of many mind and greater resources. I also enjoy being part of a close-knit group of people. It is nice to share resources, information, knowledge etc and also more practical within rituals for calling the quarters, casting the circle etc. It is also nice to learn as part of a group as you can help each other out.

PN:Do you believe in the reality of curses? Would you ever do one? What types of spell would you include in your concept of a 'curse'?

TH:I am open-minded on the reality of curses having never experienced one but I have seen too much to write them off as "hocus pocus nonsense".

However even if they did exist I would NEVER cast one on anybody myself. Besides there would be no need of you believe in the threefold law as they would get what they deserve anyway!

PN:So do you think the law of three-fold returns exists?

TH:I don't know about "threefold" but without a doubt what you give out comes back to you with a vengeance!

ACTIVITIES

PN:What practices are regularly incorporated in your spiritual life? (E.g. meditation, prayer, ritual, magic, visualisations, trance work...)

TH:I meditate and cleanse my Chakras daily as well as performing Reiki on myself or I feel I need a "pick me up" LOL! Sometimes I just meditate to music and sometimes I use my Goddess cards, which give the meditation a direction and an end result.

PN:What festivals, holy days, special occasions etc do you mark as part of your spirituality?

TH:I observe all the eight Sabbats and regard Samhain as my new year. I like to spend at least one of them in Glastonbury, usually Beltane which is quite magical up on the Tor and at the Chalice Well. I also observe the esbats both full and new and this year I intend to also observe days which are sacred to Hecate and Hades, my patron god and goddess!

PN:Have you ever done magic to get something and did it work?

TH:Yes but only minor things as there are plenty in the world whose need is far greater than mine. I have had some pretty spectacular magick done for me though in fact I wouldn't be living with my partner now without it!

PN:Do you spend much time in nature, in the wild? Do you spend enough time out there?

TH:I love the countryside. Cornwall, Southwest Eire, Scotland, Skye, North Wales and my favourite place of all the Lake District. I don't spend nearly enough time in the country-

side and could happily walk and climb the mountains, valleys, forests and rivers all year.

PN:Do you think paganism works better in the country than in the city? Why?

TH:It will always work better in the quiet of the countryside because of the clarity of mind and peace and quiet the countryside gives you. The joy at being close to nature and in beautiful surroundings and the lack of negative energy that you are bombarded with in the city on a daily basis!

IDENTITY ON PAGAN NETWORK

PN:How long have you been a member?

TH:Since December 2002 but I have only really posted and read regularly in the last few weeks (smacks hand)

PN:Is this your main online hang-out? Where else do you go to regularly (especially pagan / Wicca / magic-related)?

TH:I have my own Live Journal and many friends on there who I post and chat with. I also do a lot of pagan shopping online as well as regular visits to sites about Glastonbury, Deities, Kindred Spirit (the magazine) and the Findhorn community.

Non magical sites I visit include the European Coaster Club homepage, a club I am a member of. Rideas (another rollercoaster site), Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth, Oxfam, BBC homepage, weather pages, camping and travel sites, online music stores and lastly Arsenal FC homepage as I am a big Arsenal fan LOL

CONTENTIOUS PAGAN NETWORK QUESTIONS

PN:How do you define the term "Wiccan"? How do you feel about the idea that Wiccans are people who have been initiated into a lineaged Wiccan coven?

TH:I think that is a load of cobblers and you do not need to be initiated into a Coven, lineaged or not, or even in a Coven for that matter to practice wicca and call yourself a Wiccan. Wicca, wicce, wicker, whatever you want to call it is just a name that Gerald Gardner (no offence) decided on when he wanted to kick start paganism into the 20th century and make it new, exciting, acceptable and an alternative to mainstream religion.

And anybody can practice the Craft no matter what colour, race, religion,

sexuality or disability. What matters is that they put some effort into it and that their intentions are honest and good.

PN:Personal morality is obviously very important to you. However some would say that the practice of witchcraft should be conducted outside an ethical framework, rather than being fit into a "mould" of morality (which might be viewed as a bid towards "acceptability" by those that believe all Pagans are devil worshippers). What's your take on that?

TH:Whatever religion you practice you should be ethical and have morals about what you do and believe in. It doesn't mean we are trying to "fit in" or be "accepted", just that it is important to know the difference between right and wrong as in all walks of life!

I might have strong morals but I don't feel the need to be "accepted" anymore than anybody else on here. It's my life and I live it how I feel comfortable with!

PN:Is Wicca and paganism generally too "fluffy"?

TH:If there was no diversity within paganism it would be like all the other mainstream religions that we have left behind. For example there are some that might argue the Gardnerian way of Wicca (skyclad rituals, initiation etc) are over the top and too serious. Others would say that Titania Hardie is about as fluffy as you can get. The point is whatever our personal view on the subject it is not for us to judge what is right or wrong for others. We get enough of that from mainstream religion as it is!

PN:How involved are you with the Pagan "scene"? What are your views on the Pagan community - its strengths, weaknesses and any issues facing it?

TH:Stafford is a bit of a spiritual no-mans land LOL although I have just discovered a monthly Moot here which I am keen to try out. Unfortunately I don't drive otherwise I would definitely become more active in the Pagan community.

I think we should embrace our internal diversity and avoid becoming judgmental and proselytising like so many other religions. And it is about bloody time that all pagan paths were made recognised religions and given time off for our holidays and solstices as they are important to us.

AND FINALLY...

PN:If you had to express one spiritual learning only to pass onto the

next generation, what would it be?

TH:The art of meditation and relaxation

Being at peace with yourself and relaxed is vital during rituals or doing solo work, so it is very important to learn how to do it. A calm mind and relaxed body works wonders.

PN:Are there any other things about your path that you would like to share?

TH:I would just like to impress again the importance of accepting the

diversity in paganism. Our paths are all different and we should accept those of others no matter what we think, as it is not for us to judge whether something is too "fluffy" or too "serious". What is right for one may not be for another so accept it, live and let live.

Once we become judgmental of others we are no better than the organised "male-led" religions of the world.

And regarding my own path, well I have no regrets at all and could never go back to the life I led before. I believe everything happens for a

reason and have had many signs over the years from my chosen deities when unhappy or in need of help. And through them I am becoming a better person, more aware of others around me and the planet I live on which is a truly magickal place.

Yes our planet is a magickal place so please look after it and everything that we share it with; animals, planets and fellow humans, and try to reverse some of the damage we have already done before it is too late!

Pagan Network Full Members Discount Scheme

One of the advantages of becoming a Full Member of Pagan Network is that your membership card entitles you to discounts at shops taking part in our Discount Scheme.

If you run a shop (on or offline) and would like to take part in the scheme please contact Rainbowleigh, our Shop Liaison Officer to discuss further details on 0116 2852383

Below is a list of shops currently taking part. Further details can be found in the Full Members forum.

- Black Cats and Broomsticks (online shop only)
- Halcyon Daze - Wales
- Madeline Rose - Leicester
- Opal Moon - Glasgow
- The Gem Tree - Leicester
- The Magik Thread - Nottingham
- The Witch Path (online shop only)
- Solstice Designs (online shop only)

- Moonshadows Realm (online shop only)
- Hippypottermouse - Leeds
- New Aeon Books - Manchester
- Pentacle Magazine (online only)
- The Heathern Peddler (online shop only)
- The Thrifty Pagan (USA)
- Witchcraft Ltd - Glastonbury

Heathen Tees

Email - sales@heathenpeddler.co.uk
 Website <http://heathenpeddler.co.uk/tees>
 Tel 07940113591

A range of T-shirts with Heathen, Pagan, Viking and Celtic designs
 Screenprinted by hand

Examples of designs shown:

- VREZIA (with a figure)
- Runs On MEAD (with a mead horn)
- (with a horse and rider)
- DEATHBERRY (with a tree and text 'YOU CAN TAKE IT WITH YOU')
- What Would LOKI Do? (with a figure)

Classifieds

Black Cats and Broomsticks

(online only)

18 Berry Edge Road, Consett, County Durham, DH8 5DS
<http://www.blackcatsandbroomsticks.co.uk/>

Halcyon Daze

55 Wellfield Road, Roath, Cardiff, CF24 3PA Tel: 02920 454432
<http://www.halcyon-daze.biz/>

Halcyon Daze (The little shop of calm)

1 Westgate, Cowbridge, Vale of Glamorgan Tel: 01446 771166

Hippopottermouse

The Corn Exchange, Call Lane, Leeds, LS1 7BR
<http://www.hippopottermouse.co.uk/>

Madeline Rose

121 Kirby Road, Leicester, LE3 6BE
 Tel: 0116 2536320

Moonshadows Realm (online only)

<http://www.moonshadows-realm.co.uk/>

New Aeon Books

95 Oldham Street, Manchester, M4 14W Tel: 0161 839 9293
<http://www.newaeonbooks.co.uk/>

Opal Moon

De Courceys Arcade/Cresswell Lane, Glasgow, Lanarkshire,
 G12 8AA
 Tel: 0141 3386010

Pentacle Magazine

<http://www.pentaclemagazine.org>

The Gem Tree

Ground Floor, Indoor Market, Leicester, LE1 5HG
 (They are open Tuesday to Saturday 9-5)
<http://www.thegemtree.com/>

The Heathen Peddler

<http://www.heathenpeddler.co.uk/>

The Magik Thread

29 High Road, Nottingham, NG9 4AF
 Tel: 0115 9490673 or 0115 9394777
<http://www.themagikthread.co.uk/>

The Thrifty Pagan (USA)

Green Street, Fairhaven, MA02719,
 United States
<http://www.shop.thethrifypagan.com/>

The Witch Path (online only)

<http://www.thewitchpath.shop.co.uk/>

Witchcraft Ltd

10 Benedict street, Glastonbury, BA6 9EX
<http://www.witchcraftshop.co.uk/>

Solstice Designs (online only)

<http://www.solsticedesigns.co.uk/>

How to Advertise in the Witchtower

With the Witchtower magazine being downloaded by hundreds of our members on each occasion, what better way is there to advertise any items for sale, your shop, course, magazine, or website?

We have recently reviewed our advertising rates and plan on opening a classified section shortly in addition to our normal standard adverts. So if you would like to take advantage of our great advertising rates please contact Melanie (aka Twilightgirl) at the witchtower@gmail.com to discuss your needs.

The discounted rates shown below are for shops who decide to join the Full Members Discount Scheme.

Standard Advert Size

	Standard Rate	Discounted Rate
6cm x 4cm text box	£3.00	£1.50
Half page	£10.00	£5.50
Full page	£15.00	£7.50
Inside Back Cover	£20.00	£10.00
Back Cover (full colour)	£30.00	£15.00

Classified Adverts

To advertise in the following sections:

Sales & Swaps, Moots or Websites you can do so for a maximum of 30 words/numbers. The cost of this is £1.00 per issue. You can pay in advance for one years worth of advertising (4 issues) for £4.00

Shops, Courses or Magazines you can do so for a maximum of 50 words/numbers. The cost of this advert per issue is £2.00 plus 10p per word after the maximum 50.

Please note that Pagan Network does not accept responsibility for advertisers. Please use your own judgement and if in doubt contact the advertiser first before handing over any money. Pagan Network can also not accept responsibility for the content of websites.

Advert Design?

Do you run a business, be it with or without a website?

Do you run events/moots and would like to promote them more?

Are you a crafter who sells your wares?

Have you always wanted to place an advert in the Witchtower magazine (especially now we have reduced our advertising rates) but you've never been sure how to put together an advert? You're worried about all the work involved in doing this or you don't feel you would be creative enough?

Then look no further...

The Pagan Network Graphics Department are offering to design adverts for you. The cost of each advert will depend on size and complexity, but on average the cost will be between £2.00 and £5.00 per advert. However if you are a member of the Shop Discount Scheme you can have an advert designed for FREE!

So how does it work?

1. First pm Twilightgirl (or email at sensorychaosdesign@gmail.com) with your request.
2. Twilightgirl will discuss with you what information you require on the advert and size of the advert. (please note that payment will be required at this point).
3. Twilightgirl (or her team) will then draft up some advert designs for you to look at.
4. You provide feedback on the advert designs (ie which one you like) and on anything you want "tweaking".
5. The advert will be completed and emailed to you in either a jpg format or pdf.
6. At this point you can sort out how many issues of the Witchtower magazine you want your advert to be placed in (payment for advertising will be required at this point).

Regional Representatives

Pagan Network has a number of Regional Representatives based around the country who organise moots and events for members as well as liaising with other groups. If you are interested in becoming a regional representative please see our vacancies section for more information.

CURRENT REPRESENTATIVES

Rainbowleigh
Europa
Akasa
Belladonna silver
Joolz
Ravenous
Snellous
Donyea
Deadly_Whispers
Andy Norfolk
Moyne
Julia Oakmoon

AREA COVERED

East Midlands/ Leicestershire
Wales and at the moment NI
Devon
Scotland
North yorkshire
West Yorkshire
South Yorkshire
Lancashire
Channel Islands
Cornwall
Kent
Bristol, Somerset, Gloucestershire & Dorset

Mount Olympus

A Meditation by Sarah Rooke

A meditation taken from the Berengaria Order of Druids Book of Lights and Shadows

I love the Greek mysteries; sadly they are often overlooked in favour of the Celtic and Egyptian. The Greek mysteries are of the Heroic Path and are rational. Greek mythology provides us with a wealth of legends concerning the Classical Gods of Mount Olympus. There are also many psychological facets to this Path. (Indeed, Hollywood has been fascinated by them, note the many TV/films around on the subject)

The twelve Olympians or the Dodecatheon were: Zeus, Poseidon, Hephaestus, Ares, Apollo, Hermes, Hestia, Hera, Athena, Artemis, Aphrodite and Demeter. Each carries certain extrovert/introvert as well as anima/animus traits

First, light some incense, do your usual protections. Sit on a chair or lie down on a bed. Visualise that you are on Mount Olympus with the Gods of Ancient Greece. For we are all Gods in the making, Remember how Dionysus was a mortal with all his faults, before he underwent tests and trials to prove his worth and be accepted as one of the Gods. Also consider Hercules, with his 12 labours

You are dressed in white Greek robes as the Gods are, and you see many of them gather round a pool in the centre. You are curious and look to, and see that they are monitoring events on Earth with interest. Then they notice that you have joined them and they greet you with a family's welcome, for you are much a part of them, as they are of you.

One of the Gods then speaks to you and offers you a gift. Take note of which God/Goddess this is, for this is your Tutelary Deity in the Greek tradition who watches over you and guides you. They also provide a key to yourself on your spiritual journey. The gift is also personal to you and will aid you in future quests, so mark and use it wisely.

Hebe and Ganymede, the Divine Cup Bearers, then offer you some ambrosia and nectar to partake of from golden vessels. You do so, and feel sustained by the food and drink of the Gods. You may then stay awhile and ask any questions that you may have

When you feel it is time to leave, the place becomes shrouded in mist and the Gods begin to fade. Then you are back in your own time and place.

Subscriptions Options for Web Members

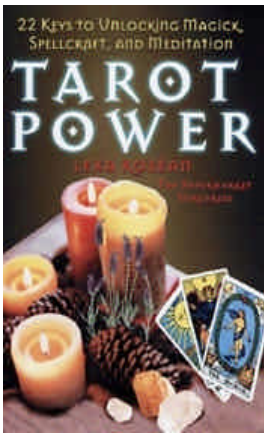
All full members receive access to a PDF version of the Witchtower Magazine on its release date as part of their membership (and a printed version once funding has been secured in the future). However, web members can only access the free PDF version of the magazine after a significant time period has passed, and by this time a lot of the information in the magazine is out of date...

So, if you would like to receive a PDF version of the magazine on its day of release, without having to become a full member, you can subscribe to the magazine. An added benefit of subscribing is that all subscribers and full members are allowed to enter the competition too, but web members are not allowed.

The cost of subscription for the PDF version of the magazine is either £1 per PDF issue or £4 for one years worth of PDF issues as released. When funding is available for the printed issue, subscribers can pay £2.00 an issue or £8 a year. Otherwise the magazine (when printed) can be bought at anytime for £2.50 if you don't subscribe.

If you would like to subscribe to the magazine please email the witchtower@gmail.com and we will provide you with payment information.

Book & Film Review



Tarot Power: 22 keys to unlocking magick, spellcraft, and meditation.

by Lexa Rosean.

224 pages

Citadel Press Inc, USA.(2005)

I should start by putting my hands up and admitting that this review is heavily influenced by my rather shallow reaction towards appearances - the value, or otherwise, of this book is overshadowed for me by Ms Rosean's soubriquet of "The Supermarket Sorceress" and the author photo of her looking forbidding and brandishing a large sword. Add to that the ghastly cover: think 1970s Christmas cards with soft-focus candles and pine cones, then plonk some badly Photo-Shopped lavender over the top. Sorry, it just doesn't work for me! Hackles raised, once I got inside the cover, I found the book to be a hotchpotch of ideas.

Using the Tarot deck's Major Arcana, Ms Rosean gives a short summary of the card's meaning, its number and corresponding Hebrew letter. She then sug-

gests a short Kabbalistic meditation based upon that Hebrew letter. This was not what I had expected from the cover blurb and it was just getting interesting, when she stopped and moved onto using the card for spell work. This could also be interesting but the Tarot link becomes extremely tenuous in some cases and some of the spells are very trite: if you want to attract a man with a large penis, you'll need a cucumber and the (well) Hanged Man card (eyes rolling here). I felt that the book would have been more successful had it been a discussion of Kabbalistic meditations and the Tarot, or a series of spells using Tarot power - as it is, it feels very shallow.

In the interests of serious reviewing however, I tried a couple of the spells - back in February I used one for prosperity loosely based on the Empress card. No sign of an increased cash-flow as yet, I am sorry to say. A friend also tried a fertility spell but is still getting negative pregnancy tests. To be fair however, I do

think one has to believe in a spell for it to work and the Supermarket Sorceress's approach has turned me off completely. The book is American and it doesn't fit comfortably in the UK market - Ms Rosean has an impressive background of more than 30 years Tarot work and two decades as a Wiccan High Priestess, so I am sure she knows what she is talking about but the book has the feel of a trashy supermarket buy - certainly not a book for the serious Tarot spell worker.

However, it gets a rave review on Amazon, and perhaps if I had not been so picky about my first impressions I would have had better luck with the spells. As Abraham Lincoln put it "people who like this sort of thing will find this the sort of thing they like."

by Milliefive



Tristan & Isolde - Release to DVD 11 September 2006

Director - Kevin Reynolds

Written by - Dean Georganis

By 20th Century Fox

Classification - 12

Tristan & Isolde, from producer Ridley Scott of gladiator fame. This film is about political intrigue, forbidden love and comes with epic battles for the guys!

The story is set in Britain after the fall of the Roman Empire and Warlord Marke (Rufus Sewell) has a vision to unite the tribes of Britain to form a strong alliance against the brutal and cruel King of Ireland, King Donnchadh.

Tristan (James Franco) is King Marke's most trusted knight but plunges the fragile truce with the Irish into disarray when he falls in love with Isolde (Sophia Myles), who is married to King Marke as part of a pact with the Irish and a brutal war is threatened.

This is a great film of trust and treachery that rivals Braveheart and King Arthur and is suitable for all the family as it is a 12 certificate.

I really enjoyed what I thought was going

to be just a love story but it had plenty of action and a good storyline.

I give this film 6 out of 10.

By Modhor

CRAFTING - PAST & PRESENT

Our ancestors didn't have shops where they could go and buy whatever their latest needs were, be it an incense holder or wand. Instead they crafted their tools of magic with their own hands, ensuring a stronger connection to their tools. So in this series we plan to show you how to craft your own tools from the past and present.

MAKING INCENSE CONES BY ANDY NORFOLK

Ingredients

6 tablespoons instant burning charcoal

1 tablespoon each:

powdered gum benzoin
orris root powder
ground cassia bark

1 teaspoon each:

ground cloves
ground cardamom seeds
dried ground lemon peel

1 teaspoon each:

myrrh
frankincense powder

1/2 teaspoon frangipani oil

3 tablespoons of mucilage of gum tragacanth.

Directions

You can buy gum tragacanth as powder from herbalists.

A thick liquid or 'mucilage' made from it is used to glue the ingredients together.

Mix 1/2 oz. or 4g. of tragacanth powder with 15 fl. oz. or 425 ml of water to make a smooth liquid.

Add half a teaspoon of benzoin powder as a preservative.

Put the liquid in a screw top jar for three days and shake vigorously three times a day. If you're in a hurry bung it all the liquidiser and - wiz-bang - you can use it the next day.

Crush the charcoal and add the dry ingredients - they should all be freshly ground if possible. Mix them well and add your mucilage and oils.

Shape the result into small cones and stand on waxed paper to dry in the airing cupboard. They should be dry in about a week - and your airing cupboard will smell great.

If you haven't got exactly the right spices or oils then experiment - or make up your own combination for the occasion.

If you would like to submit your own crafting instructions/photos please email the witchtower@gmail.com

Donate A Book Scheme

Do you have a Pagan book you no longer want (or were given by that well meaning relative!)?

If so the Witchtower would be happy to receive it to review. It doesn't matter if it's an old or new book, or whether its Pagan fiction or non fiction.

Unfortunately we are unable to buy the book from you or pay the postage cost, but we would be happy to mention that you donated the book to the Witchtower for review, and you will get your name mentioned in the magazine.

If you do have any books you wish to donate please email the witchtower@gmail.com to let us know what you wish to send so we can keep an eye out for it. All books should be sent to BM Wiccauk, London, WC1N 3XX, unless you are attending a moot where one of our reviewers are and then you could just hand the book over. Our current book reviewers are Deadly_whispers, Beith-ann, Rhiannon.

An A to Z of Aromatherapy - Part 2

By Sarah Rooke

JASMINE

Jasmine is a base note and blends well with all oils, especially the citrus oils. Therapeutically the oil is used for menstrual disorders and childbirth, uterine problems, depression, debility, respiratory problems like coughs and skin problems. Magically the oil is linked to the Moon and Water and is used for love, peace, spirituality, sex, sleep, psychic dreams.

JUNIPER

Juniper is a middle note and blends well with benzoin, cypress, lavender and sandalwood. Therapeutically it is used for stimulating circulation, colic, cystitis, painful periods, rheumatic pain, insomnia, stress, acne, eczema and oily skin. Magically the oil is linked to the Sun and Fire, protection, purification and healing. It is mentioned in the "Sea Priestess" by Dion Fortune as being used for divination. It was used as incense in the ancient temples of Babylon and Egypt.

LAVENDER

Lavender is a middle note and blends well with most oils, especially the citrus oils, clary sage, patchouli, pine and rosemary. Therapeutically the oil has many uses, commonly called the "first aid kit in a bottle". Good for circulatory problems, digestive problems, excretory problems, headaches, insomnia, earache, infections, muscular aches, anxiety, debility, cellulite, flu, bites, burns and inflammations. Magically the oil is linked to Mercury and Air, health, love, peace, and conscious mind. It was known to the Romans who used to love bathing in it!

LEMON

Lemon is a top note and blends well with lavender and neroli. Therapeutically its uses include anaemia, chilblains, diabetes, conjunctivitis, arthritis, asthma, flu, herpes, insect bites, ulcers. Magically it is linked to the Moon and Water, health, healing, energy and purification. Lemon is generally an uplifting oil,

LEMONGRASS

Lemongrass is a top note and blends well with geranium, jasmine and lavender. Therapeutically its uses involve colitis, indigestion and muscular tone. Magically the oil is linked to Mercury and Air, psychic awareness and purification. Lemongrass is a much used herb in asian cookery. Don't use Lemongrass neat on the skin as it can irritate.

MAJORAM

Marjoram is a middle note that blends well with bergamot, lavender and rosemary. Therapeutically its uses include lowering high blood pressure, constipation, colds, headaches, painful periods, muscular pain, anxiety, insomnia, asthma

and catarrh. Magically the oil is linked to Mercury and Air, peace and sleep. Marjoram was well known to the Romans. It should not be used by pregnant women.

MELISSA

Melissa is a middle note and blends well with geranium, lavender, neroli and ylang ylang. Therapeutically it is used for indigestion, headache, migraine, painful periods, tension, bee and wasp stings. Magically it is linked to Jupiter and Air, peace, money, purification. In Roman times, furniture was rubbed with the herb to ward off evil spirits.

MYRRH

Myrrh is a base note and blends well with camphor and lavender. Therapeutically it is good for digestive problems, excretory problems, ulcers, inflammations of skin. Magically, myrrh is linked to Saturn and Water, spirituality, meditation and healing. This is another substance used as incense in religious rituals for thousands of years. The ancient Egyptians used myrrh cosmetically also in face masks.

NEROLI

Neroli is a base note that blends well with benzoin, clary sage, geranium and lavender. Often used in the perfumery industry. Therapeutically the oil is used for flatulence, anxiety, depression, insomnia, dry skin. Magically, the oil is linked to the Sun and Fire, purification, joy and love. Often known as "man-trap" as it is used by women to attract the opposite sex, as it awakens desire. Like rose and jasmine, the pure essential oil is a trifle pricey, so you may wish to purchase this as an aromatherapy oil.

NIAOULI

Not to be confused with neroli. Niaouli is a top note. Therapeutically, it is used for indigestion, urinary infections, sore throat, bronchitis, insect bites and wounds. Magically it is linked to Mercury and Air, protection and healing. The writer Scott Cunningham recommends this oil to be used against psychic attack.

NUTMEG

Nutmeg is a base note and therapeutically is used for digestive problems and rheumatism. Magically it is linked to Jupiter and Fire, energy, psychic awareness and money. Sprinkle a little of the spice nutmeg in a glass of warm milk to help your sleep and if you have an upset stomach. Do not use in large doses as it brings on mental disorder.

PATCHOULI

Patchouli is a base note and blends well with bergamot, geranium, lavender, myrrh, neroli, pine and rose.

Therapeutically, the oil is used for fluid retention, anxiety and depression, sores and wounds. Magically the oil is linked to Saturn and Earth, love, energy and money. Was much used in the 1960's to disguise the scent of marijuana. Patchouli is known to awaken sexual desire.

PEPPERMINT

Peppermint is a middle note and blends well with benzoin and rosemary. It is used in confectionery as a flavouring. Therapeutically, its uses include indigestion, stomach pain, headache, migraine, colds, painful periods, debility, flu, inflammation. Magically it is linked to Mercury and Air, conscious mind and purification. Peppermint is one of the few oils safe to take in tea.

PETITGRAIN

Petitgrain is a top note and its therapeutic uses include nervous tension and acne. Magically it is linked to the Sun and Fire, conscious mind and protection. The oil is also used in the cosmetic industry as a perfume in skin cream preparations.

PINE

Pine is a middle note and blends well with cedar, rosemary and sage. It is widely used in bath preparations, detergents, cleaners etc. Therapeutically it is used for gall stones, cystitis, sinuses, debility, asthma, flu and bronchitis. Magically it is linked to Mars and Air, healing, purification, protection, energy and money.

ROSE

Rose is a base note and blends well with bergamot, clary sage, geranium, jasmine, patchouli and sandalwood. Therapeutically it is used for poor blood circulation, constipation, nausea, earache, headache, sterility, depression, insomnia, stress and dry skin. Rose is the least toxic of all oils, so it is safe to take in tea and can be used on children. Magically the oil is linked to Venus and Water, love, peace, beauty. If you need uplifting, inhale the scent of rose to make you feel special. Like neroli and jasmine, it is best to buy this oil as an aromatherapy oil due to the price of the pure essential oil (unless you can afford it, that is!)

ROSEMARY

Rosemary is a middle note and blends well with basil, cedar, frankincense, lavender and peppermint. Therapeutically the oil is used for constipation, flatulence, stomach pains, headache, migraine, aches and pains, debility, fluid retention, asthma, flu, dandruff and wounds. Magically the oil is linked to the Sun and Fire, memory, love and longevity. The ancient Greeks used rosemary as incense in their temples and in love spells.

SAGE

Sage is a top note and blends well with bergamot, hyssop, lemon, lavender a rosemary. Therapeutically, the oil is used for diuretic problems, rheumatic conditions, nervous conditions, fluid retention, ulcers and wounds. Magically the oil is linked to Jupiter and Air, memory, conscious mind, wisdom and money. The American Indians burn the herb as an incense in their sweat lodges to produce vision quests. Sage should not be used by pregnant women.

SANDALWOOD

Sandalwood is a base note and blends well with benzoin, cypress, frankincense, neroli and ylang ylang. Therapeutically the oil is used for colic, nausea, gastritis, depression, tension, cough, catarh, sore throat, dry or inflamed skin. Magically the oil is linked to the Moon and Water, spirituality, meditation, love and healing. It has been used as an incense for thousands of years by the Hindus and Chinese. The oil is also known to awaken sexual desire.

STAR ANISE

Star Anise is a middle note. Therapeutically its uses include flatulence, indigestion, migraine, painful peri-

ods and coughs. It has a distinctive scent like liquorice. Magically it is linked to Jupiter and Air. Its uses include psychic awareness and enhancing psychic abilities.

TEA TREE

Tea Tree is a top note and is so called since it is the substance Captain Cook is said to have drunk arriving in Australia. Therapeutically it is used for indigestion, colds, mouthwash, sore throat, bronchitis, wounds, head lice, insect repellent and insect bites. Magically, it is linked to the earth and is used for purification. However, its therapeutic uses far outweigh this of its antiseptic properties.

THYME

Thyme is a middle note and blends well with bergamot, lemon, Melissa and rosemary. Therapeutically its uses include low blood pressure, digestive problems, colds, flu, sore throats, irregular periods, rheumatism, arthritis, insomnia, anxiety, depression, coughs, asthma, bronchitis, sores, hair loss. Magically it is linked to Venus and Water, courage, conscious mind and health. The Romans used thyme to ward off evil spirits. Thyme should not be used by pregnant women.

YLANG YLANG

Ylang Ylang is a base note and blends well with all oils, especially jasmine and sandalwood. Therapeutically it is used for high blood pressure, gastro-enteritis, depression, insomnia, tension and oily skin. Magically it is linked to Venus and Water, peace and love. Inhale the scent if you are anxious, it will calm you down. The oil is also known to awaken sexual desire.

Some suggested further reading
Magical Aromatherapy - Scott Cunningham
Aromatherapy: An A to Z - Patricia Davis
Practical Aromatherapy - Shirley Price
Aromatherapy for Women - Maggie Tisserand
Aromatherapy for Everyone - Maggie Tisserand
Practice of Aromatherapy - Dr Jean Valnet

The Stereo-Type

in flight across the land we're seen,
 but its not clear, to where we've been,
 the silhouette of a tall pointy hat,
 upon thy Besom, there sits her Cat,

through Sacred Forests, and over Streams,
 there is no journey's end, there seems,
 a glimpse of light, in the dark,
 from the magic Wand, there came a spark,

the greens and reds, oranges and blues,
 a flash, some words, -the colours all confused,
 a spell is cast,
 journey ends at last,

bubbling cauldron at the Hearth,
 Invocations to the darkest of Earth,
 a liquid mix of dark green stench,
 a Witches brew, -thy thirst is quenched!

Besom is cleaning on its own,
 the magic spells are again shown,
 tip top glossy is the home,
 a gift of offerings, paid to the Gnome,

rested and sleeping in a dream-world,
 upon the chair, lays the familiar, curled,
 on the Morrow it will start again,
 not always in this world , but on other planes.

by Nightshade

The Evergreen

Smouldering smoke arises in the evergreen
 Say 'This is the Land where dreams are made'
 Through the evergrowth towards the sun
 We search in vain for things unfound
 Where lies the answer, is it in me or you?
 Is it in the real or unreal, seen or unseen?
 But it ever into the mist fades
 To Earth are we bound, we are of Mother Nature
 The Moon and Stars go by and by
 And we don't make a sound
 Do they ever reveal their hidden secrets?
 Say: 'Where are Merlin and Arthur?'
 Do we truly realise the nature of the gifts of the gods?
 Say: 'The Old Ones are with us throughout time'
 From the First Country to the sea and beyond
 To the West, the East, the North and the South
 Their influence on us is countless about
 They say: 'Thrice Greatest Hermes is his name
 As above, so below'
 We look in us and round us for the sign

Sarah Rooke, 1989

If you haven't heard about it, we've been running a BUY AT scheme for several years now. Its a perfect way to buy all you need and help support Pagan Network at the same time, as anything you buy through the shops on the scheme raises funds for Pagan Network. There are a whole variety of high street shops taking part that you can buy from. Amazon is one of our favourites, so much so that below you will find a selection of books from Amazon to wet your appetite!

So take a look over at <http://buy.at/pagannetwork>

BUY AT WITH AMAZON



A Witch's Guide to Faery Folk: Reclaiming Our Working Relationship with Invisible Helpers
by Edain McCoy (£11.99

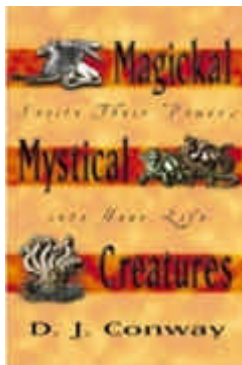
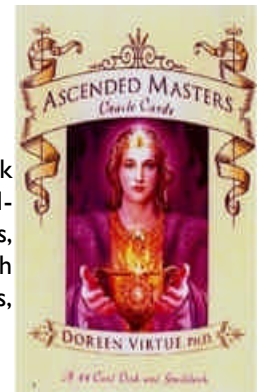
Synopsis

Discusses the existence of faeries and the ways in which our Pagan ancestors may have interacted with them. This book also contains a dictionary of more than 230 faeries, including goblins, gnomes, elementals, angels and even Santa Claus.

Ascended Masters Oracle Cards by Doreen Virtue £7.19

Synopsis

By popular demand, Doreen Virtue has created a beautiful deck of cards based on her best-selling book "Archangels & Ascended Masters". The deck includes gorgeous paintings of 44 male and female cross-cultural deities, such as Ganesha, Merlin, Saint-Germain, Apollo, Pallas Athena, White Buffalo Calf Woman, Jesus, Moses, Yogananda, Green Man, and Kuthumi. The enclosed guidebook gives expanded explanations of each card's meaning, and a brief history of each ascended master. As with each of Doreen's oracle-card decks, the messages for each card are positive, accurate, and life-affirming.



Magical Mystical Creatures: Invite Their Powers in to Your Life by D.J. Conway £11.99

Synopsis

The definitive 'Who's Who' of fabulous creatures. Describes the history, symbolism, appearance, associated traits, and magical abilities of more than 200 mythical creatures: Gremlins, Griffins, Goblins, Satyrs and Fauns, Pixies, Trolls, Salamanders, Fox Sprits and many more * invoke the Centaur for artistic inspiration, let the Phoenix help you resurrect your hope and energy Unicorns, centaurs, gorgons and gargoyles...These mythical beasts do exist, and they are alive and well on the astral plane. This one-of-a-kind guide describes how you can enlist the special energies and talents of over 200 of these fabulous creatures to empower your magickal workings, rituals, and potential for success. The mystical beings in this book are waiting to enhance your life with their legendary wisdom and power.

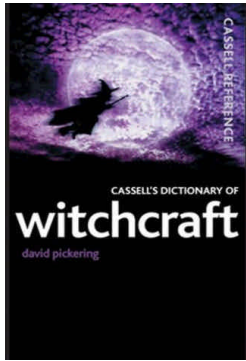
The Gaia Book of Organic Gardening by Cindy Engel £9.01

Synopsis

Everything you need to know about being a true organic gardener. Focusing on compost, pests, weeds and soil, this comprehensive book will teach you how to create a flourishing organic garden of your own. A book designed for beginners as well as advanced gardeners who want to make chemicals a thing of the past. Treat your soil well and it will reward you handsomely. Identify the composting system that suits you best and which bugs are bad for your plants; which good. Natural weed control - the best way to curb weed growth in your garden.



BUY AT WITH AMAZON



Cassell's Dictionary of Witchcraft (Cassell Reference) by David Pickering £9.99

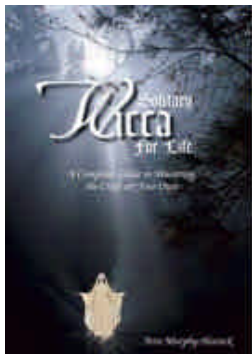
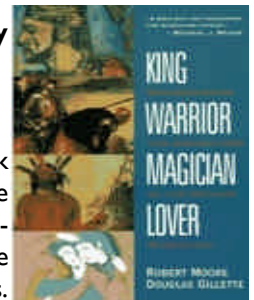
Synopsis

CASSELL'S DICTIONARY OF WITCHCRAFT forms an invaluable guide to a subject that has exerted a powerful influence on the popular imagination for centuries. It looks at the history of witchcraft, traces its development in countries such as Britain, Germany and the US, and explains the rituals and objects associated with it, from black sabbaths to covens, and from hands of glory to pentagrams. In addition, it provides biographies of key figures, such as the seventeenth-century 'Witch-Finder General' Matthew Hopkins, and the 'Great Beast' Aleister Crowley, and gives detailed accounts of notorious witch trials, drawing on contemporary documents and eye-witness views. The result is a fascinating blend of narrative and analysis that will be of interest to anyone intrigued by the occult and its history.

King, Warrior, Magician, Lover : Rediscovering the Archetypes of the Mature Masculine by Robert L. Moore & Douglas Gillette £7.21

Synopsis

Jungian analyst Robert Moore and mythologist Douglas Gillette combine in this book that attempts to break the code on the structure of the mature masculine personality. Examining the four mature archetypes: the King (energy of creative ordering), the Warrior (energy of non-violent aggressive action), the Magician (energy of initiation and transformation) and the Lover (energy to connect men to others and the world). The authors argue that a man's failure or success in life depends on achieving access to the archetypal energies.



Solitary Wicca for Life: A Complete Guide to Mastering the Craft on Your Own by Arin Murphy-Hiscock £6.49

Synopsis

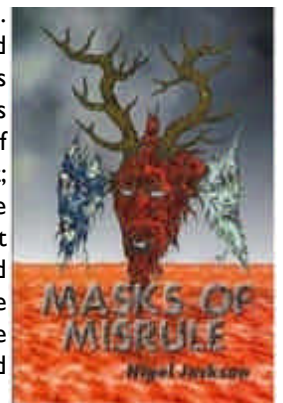
Many people interested in magick and Witchcraft do not join covens - but prefer a solitary approach. As they work to deepen their knowledge and strengthen their powers, they need sound guidance and tools. Here the author provides readers with what they need to take their spiritual practice to the next level. In Solitary Wicca for Life, readers are encouraged to reach beyond the ordinary and create a unique path of worship using techniques that go further than other texts: Advance Circle Casting - advanced techniques and applications, plus protective entities to incorporate into the circle Enriching Ritual - tools and practices that can bring new depth to personal practice Crafting Liturgy - Wiccan rituals defined stage-by-stage

Drawing Down Deities - invoking deities for divinations, guidance, communion etc Solitary Wicca for Life is the essential reference handbook readers need to reach deeper, go further and strengthen their solitary path - one day at a time.

Masks of Misrule: Horned God and His Cult in Europe by Nigel Jackson £9.99

Synopsis

This book presents a study of the Horned God in the Traditional Witchcraft of Britain and Europe, concentrating upon the hunting, agricultural, arboreal and mystical facets of this most compelling and enduring of divine archetypes. Subjects covered include the Primordial God; the 'Master of the Beasts', the White Stag of Annwyn and the Horned God of Celtia; Cernunnos, Gwyn and Fionn, Cycles of the Midnight Hunt and the Furious Host, Wild Edric, Herne and Harlequin; Rough Musick and 'Riding the Stang', The Christmas Fool, Saturnus and the Cult of Misrule; the Masques of Old Scrat; Houtanz: the Sabbat of the Sorcerers and the Way of Night; the Red Bones of Resurrection and the symbology of the Skull and Crossbones in Witchcraft; Wudewasa - The Knowledge of the Green Man; Wild Men, Woodwoses and the Green Mystery of the Phallus, Old Pouck, Hob-Satyrs and the God of the Goatskins, Robin Goodfellow and the Pwca: the Great God Faunus - Pan; The Cult of the Buxen; The Horned Lord of Horsemen and Shepherds; The Horned God as Coal-Black Smith; Tubal Qayin, and much more... In addition to the theoretical knowledge, the reader is given a number of traditional rituals, corresponding to specific aspects of the Old One: 'The Rite of the Horns of Misrule', 'The Ceremony of the Red Bones', 'The Knowledge of the Green One' and 'The Fire of Qayin', making this volume an esoteric grimoire of the inner Religion of the Horned One.

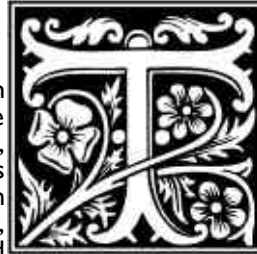




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It was a bright, sunny evening when I, Jools the Mildly Confused, made my way to Millers Yard to meet a group of heathens, pagans and witches. I had heard things of this group, things that could make your hair turn white and your belly turn over, so I approached the yard with mixed feelings.

When I arrived, I was greeted by the group's leader, Sinjy the Sane, and his beautiful wife, Sadie the Fair. Also there was a minstrel, Sigbrit, who had a large collection of instruments. I decided that this seemed a safe enough venture, and so went to obtain refreshment from the young serving wench. While doing so, a woman adorned with facial piercings had joined us and pinched my seat. This was Beth the Brave, a good friend of mine, and not one to trifle with on a dark and dismal evening. As it was neither of those, I told her to get out of my seat forthwith, and she did so.

Sigbrit then removed himself to set up his equipment, and the rest of us chatted and plotted until it was time to move into the venue for the evening's entertainment. About this time we were aware of a high-pitched noise. What could it be? A small dragon, trapped in a cupboard? A fairy's warning, enjoining us to flee? While I crawled around the floor, others checked corners and beams, until we found the cause of the noise. Sigbrit had left his electronic tuner on, and it was emitting a perfect 'C' to accompany our searching. This was remedied, and we sat down forthwith.

Sinjy the Sane and Sadie the Fair had provided us with victuals. Crisps and nuts jostled with mead and wine. I perked up immediately - this was more like it! I had brought food myself, a nettle and cheese flan, which I was hoping to get rid of this very evening. I proffered this to the group leader as my offering, and then dug into the mead.

Sadie started the story telling with a poem about Brigit, and Sinjy read out an Irish Ghost story. The candles sputtered as he did so, lending an uncommon atmosphere to the evening. While we were gripped by the terror, we heard footsteps on the stairs. Was this the ghost, come to wreak his revenge on us all? No, it was Kate, late again. Kate the Chaotic had travelled leagues this evening to attend, and had been held up by a hoard of barbarians somewhere south of Sheffield.

Take a seat around the fire as Jools tells all about the York
Pagan Meet Up - Story Telling Evening

Or kill a Worm to watch it squirm and vainly try to fang him,
Or lock up Loki in the pokey and on the noggin bang him.
Once he did bawl through Thrudvang Hall that on a trip he'd wander
In a disguise from prying eyes, in Midgard way out yonder,
So all his slaves, huscarls and knaves, packed up his goods and gear, O,
And off he strode, on Bifrost road, a perfect Aryan hero.

Beth the Brave then read a story of the dangers of Elfland, and other poems were read. We then saw a car approach, and out of it stepped Amberlady the Awesome, who approached the door and spoke thusly:

"OPEN THE DOOR! I HAVE BEEN SEARCHING FOR THIS BLOODY PLACE FOR THE LAST HALF AN HOUR!!"

Sinjy hastened to the door and we then realised we were locked in. In her haste to leave us, the serving wench had locked the door and taken the key with her. Luckily Sinjy the Sane summoned the owner of the venue and got him to come and release us and the group of ladies doing Yoga in the next room.

When Amberlady had joined us, she recited a poem about the dead, and the shadows drew ever nearer. Then it was time for our minstrel to entertain us. Sigbrit lifted his harp and told us he would be telling us the story of the Selkie. His voice wove around us, his harp shimmering and interweaving with his words. He spoke of love, of hate, of suspicion, and of tragedy. The night grew darker, but the story was bright in our minds. Once he finished, we all sighed. We did not want it to end.

But it was time to go. Sinjy and Sadie had to return to their child, Kate the Chaotic had magicians to subdue, Beth the Brave was to return to whatever nefarious activities she was usually involved in, and I had to go back to my leader, the flame haired Elanor the Egregious, else I would get told off mightily. There was just time for Amberlady to recite one last poem, the missing chapter from an Edda not well known, titled 'The Thong of Thor'. I will copy it here, so those of you who have not had the fortune of meeting this motley crew will understand their devotion and dedication to the promotion of paganism to the masses. Seriously!

The Thong of Thor
In days of yore, the great god Thor would ramp around creation.
He'd drink a pint and slay a giant and save the Nordic nation,

In Midgard land he joined a band of hardy Viking ruff-i-ans,
And off they sailed and rowed and bailed among the auks and puff-i-ans.
Whene'er they'd reach a foreign beach they stopped to raid and plunder;
Each Nordic brute got so much loot their longship near went under.
But as they rolled in coins of gold, they had one joy forsaken,
For on each raid Thor's party made, no women could be taken.
Each drab and queen fled from the scene when Viking sails were sighted,
And Thor felt the need for certain deeds that had gone unrequited.
Thor's brows were black as they went back to Oslo's rocky haven;
Unto his crew he said, "Beshrew me for a Frankish craven
"If I don't wrench some tavern wench, or else may Frigga damn her."
Replied one voice, "You got first choice; you've got the biggest hammer."
Into an inn that crew of sin disembarked upon their landing,
Each tavern maid was sore afraid of pirates of such standing.
But golden coins warmed up their loins and the ale soon ran free;
Thor's motley crew poured down the brew and made an all-night spree.
Thor's glances strayed unto a maid with hair as gold as grain,
A lisp so shy, a downcast eye, and not a trace of brain;
He swept her charms into his arms and to an upstairs bower,
And did not cease nor give her ease for six days and an hour!
When he rose up and drained a cup, she looked like one that's near death:
Her limbs were weak, she could not speak, and only gasped for her breath.
"You ought to know, before I go, I'm Thor," he bade adieu.
"You're Thor!" said she. "Conthider me! I'm thorer, thir, than you!"

Want to have your
15 minutes
of fame?

*Make your mark
on the
world....*



Write for the Witchtower

We are always looking out for new writers/artists/poets. Even if you're not too sure whether you would be a good writer, you can always send in your article, poem, story, artwork, review to witchtower@gmail.com and we'll take a look at it for you. So, come on, take that first big step, who knows you might even surprise yourself, give it ago!

How to Contribute

1. First decide on what you want to write about. If you are not sure whether the subject has been covered before you can email Twilightgirl to check or look at our list of previously published articles on the website.
2. Email us at witchtower@gmail.com to tell us that you intend to write an article and what it will be about. That way we can keep checking in with you on your progress, as we like to look after our writers/artists/poets. Also don't forget to give us an estimated date when your article is expected to be finished. Although please don't worry if you don't finish the article by the estimated date. We all have lives outside of Pagan Network and we are very understanding of this.
3. Let the Muse flow.....Write your article/create your artwork/pen that poem!
4. Email your finished masterpiece to witchtower@gmail.com. We will acknowledge receipt of your work and will also inform you of any changes that need to be done or what issue your masterpiece will be published in. Should we decide that your work is not suitable for publication we will also let you know. But don't let that put you off... practice makes perfect!

Now the Techy bit

LENGTH GUIDELINE

Anywhere between 1/4 side of A4 to 3 sides of A4.

Ideal length is 1 side of A4.

If your article is too long, consider breaking up into two articles.

Artwork should be 300dpi

FORMAT PREFERENCES

(in descending order of preference)

Microsoft Word (any version)

RTF file

Plain text file

Body of email

HTML file

Typed manuscript

Handwritten manuscript

Creative Member of the Month

Winners

Seawitchartist

Seawitchartist calls this piece Hurricane at Sea. This piece of art is a 40 x 20 inch Acrylic on canvas. More of Seawitchartist's work can be found on their website <http://www.seawitchartist.com>



Faerie Tales

In the dark reaches of stone so cold
Lie wonders, riches and a race of old.
Music and laughter come embrace our heath
Tiptoe not daintily, beware our sheath.
For if you will enter our home this night
In rocks, stone and virgins so tight.
Your pleasure will pay your whim so bold
Not all of this story is yet to be told.

Cavernous wonder of curves and pride
Of beauty, grace and an Elfen bride.
Fires so warm on this welcoming night
Turn your back, our face a fright.
If you will take our food on show
From our land you will not go.
Encased in rock and stone surreal
Beneath Hawthorn hedge your head will heal.

So dance with us and consume your fill
Lust with us and prepare our kill.
Tales so sweet of mushrooms and wings
Complacent lies amongst other things.
One bite one sip one deadly swallow
Our expressions now turn hollow.
A place so old a story so new
Your innocence? Behold, we are going to kill you.

By Trap

Trap

Two delightful poems from Trap

Gods Given Pleasure

Great Gods of the unnumbered dawn
Send to me singing you're most naked of faun
In beast in brute and in beauty unmatched
In nymph in dryad in the reluctance unhatched

Great Gods of the unnumbered end
Send to me singing my most perfect of friend
In elegance in charm and in wisdom unscorn
In faerie in satyr in the delightful stillborn

Great Gods of the unnumbered ploys
Send to me singing our most craven of toys
In pleasure in rapture and in consequence unknown
In Brownie in Diva in our spilled seed unsown

So send to me singing you're most ravenous of faun
Oh great Gods of the unnumbered dawn.

By Trap

Ivory RavenMoon

Serenity

The darkness falls around me,
It's comforting and calm.
The moonlight shines upon me,
I meditate, alone.

I feel her presence close to me,
protective and aware.
No evil will be welcome in,
As long as she is there.

The raven guides me onward,
towards knowledge and belief.
The Gracious Oak Tree greets me,
sharing bark and leaf.

I thank the Oak with blessings,
give water to the Earth.
Hoping that my offerings,
will bring new seeds to birth

By Ivory RavenMoon

FEATURED SHOP

Each issue we will be featuring one of the shops taking part in the Full Members Shop Discount Scheme, this issue we are featuring The Gem Tree

The Gem Tree

www.thegemtree.com

I found the The Gem Tree's website very pleasing to the eye with its layout and easy to navigate around. To order anything with The Gem Tree you have to open an account with them, which isn't as scary as it sounds. Basically you just need to register so you can track your orders and access order history. The Gem Tree strive to ship items by next day despatch and they take just about any kind of payment option, so you've no excuse not to indulge yourself in some of the wonderful items they have. The Gem Tree also make a lot of the jewellery they sell themselves and if you feel like treating a friend you can purchase gift certificates from The Gem Tree.

Chrome Altar Pentagram £2.99

This is a beautiful Chrome pentagram that looks wonderful on any altar. You could also hang from a window or ceiling if you tied a ribbon to it. Looks perfect when bonded to a front cover to make a book of shadows. There are 5 small foam dots on the bottom of the pentagram which stops it from marking / scratching a surface. The points are very sharp measures 80 mm high x 80 mm wide



Amethyst Wand Dowser £12.95



A beautiful Amethyst wand Pendulum dowsing crystal. Perfect to use as a mini wand too. The shaft is Amethyst, the tip is Quartz and at the end there is a Rose Quartz Sphere.

Deer Pentagram Pendant Sterling Silver £44.95

Available in Garnet, Labradorite and Malachite



Bloodstone Cluster Pendant £4.50

Completely handcrafted using the finest graded Bloodstone faceted gems.



The wirework is sterling silver plated wire, which is hyper-allergenic. This means it is very suitable for those with sensitive skin.

Book Of Shadows, Wooden with Pentagram Symbol £19.95

A locally made wooden book of shadows, using natural wood from sustainable forests. It has a pentagram burnt into the wood on the front, and a plain reverse.

The use of screw posts means it is easy to take out and add pages your book, making it versatile and appendable. The craftsmanship is very high; the corners are bevelled and smoothed, and the sides are polished off too. This book has been lovingly handcrafted, with long life, durability and usability in mind. The book has a nice mahogany finish, and a protective varnish.



Rainbowleigh asked Russ of The Gem Tree to tell us a bit about himself and the business he runs.

Rain: How long have you been running The Gem Tree and how many staff do you employ?

Russ: We have been going for about 15 years now, and there are two of us at present.

Rain: What inspired you to start this kind of shop?

Russ: I have been using crystals since I was very young.

Rain: How did you decide on the name for your shop?

Russ: It was suggested by a friend

Rain: What do you feel attracts people to your shop or website?

Russ: Friendly confidential advice by a trained therapist and very reasonable prices. We also stock rare and hard to find items.

Rain: What do you consider are your best selling items?

Russ: Tumblestones, rough gems, collectors pieces and our handcrafted gemstones jewellery, and the Sterling Silver pieces also.

Rain: Do you have a mailing list where people can sign up to be informed of new products and special offers?

Russ: People can put their name down at the shop, or register for the newsletter online.

Rain: What made you decide to take part in the Pagan Network Discount Scheme?

Russ: We wanted to be part of the Pagan community and take part in events etc

Rain: Why should people choose to shop with you?

Russ: Because we just simply offer value for money with expert advice

Rain: Do you see your shop expanding and if so in what direction?

Russ: Yes we have just in fact expanded and now stock over 100 different kinds of incense from around the world.

Rain: If you don't mind answering this question, what religious beliefs do you have?

Russ: We have no real religious beliefs but each to their own. We do however perform magickal rituals and do spell work so work along side the energies of the universe.

PAGANCON by Mark Lees

Pagancon began about 10 years ago as a brainchild of Mags and Bill Harmon. Sadly five years ago Mags died but every year since then the conference has been run in her memory by the Preston Pagan Group, Shared Earth. The event is held annually at the Preston Grasshoppers Rugby Union Club, on the outskirts of Preston, close to Lancashire's famous Pendle Witch country and now attracts pagans of every denomination and from every corner of the country. For those outdoors types there's even camping facilities available

From the onset, the organisers of Pagancon endeavoured to bring the best possible speakers from every branch of Paganism - such as Kate West, a regular speaker for a great number of years, Pete Jennings, Nigel Pennick and Jaq D Hawkins to name just a few.

Last years Pagancon was headlined by Cassandra Latham, which was a roaring success and enjoyed I'm sure by all who attended. On the Friday evening the weekend began with a BBQ for the campers, also in attendance were some of the weekend's speakers, giving people a great opportunity to mix and mingle, allowing them first hand a chance to meet the speakers on a social basis. From that great start the weekend went from strength to strength with approximately twenty stalls, plenty to keep the pagan shopaholic amused, to a full days workshop programme all included in the admission charge. All this when added to a first class line up of speakers made the day a roaring success! The highlight for me after a few swift halves of shandy at the bar was the entrance of the traditional border Morris troupe Stone the Crows, complete with blacked out faces. They got everybody up and involved learning the dances, something I for one thoroughly enjoyed..

This year's event held on Sunday the 8th of July promises to be bigger and better than ever. Speakers include Wiccan author Rae Beth of Hedge witch fame, King Arthur Pendragon, Druid and eco warrior and Thorskegga Thorne from Heathens For Progress, a group who are as we speak canvassing parliament for heathenism to become a recognised religion to name a few. The Morris dancers are back in the form of Stone the Crows and there will be more stalls than ever before, so why not come along for a great day. Pagancon will take place at the Preston Grasshoppers Rugby Club, Lightfoot Lane, FULWOOD, Preston PR4 0AP

Shared Earth who run the event also hold Pagans study groups and workshops charging nominal fees to cover expenses and anything extra made goes towards keeping Pagancon up and running. Shared Earth is a non profit making group and all members give up their time freely on a volunteer basis. For more information about Pagancon, Shared Earth and any other events run by the group check out the website at www.shared-earth.org.uk

VACANCIES

We are looking for volunteers in the areas listed below. If you are interested please pm Julia Oakmoon

Server/Web Team

(This position will require further testing of knowledge/skills before appointment can take place)

Duties

Ensures the smooth running of the organisation's web presence and server.
Acts as an advisor to the Committee regarding issues relevant to the running, management and development of the web presence and server.
Installs software to keep the website running.
Maintains in-house programs.
Performs regular server maintenance.
Acts as first point of contact for technical queries and issues regarding organisation's online presence.
Acts as liaison between the organisation and server hosting.

All Volunteers are required to sign the Pagan Network Volunteer Agreement and will be subject to a 3 month probationary period.

Research Officers for the Witchtower

Duties

Provide up to date information for submission to the magazine on Pagan Network Moots and Meetings.
Search out articles/artwork, contacting the authors for permission to publish the article/artwork. Ensure no copyright issues involved.
Track down copyright free graphics.
Prepare and carry out your own work timetable to meet production schedules issued by the Editor.
Seek out interesting information on what is going on and happening in the Pagan Community.
To work as a team, providing support/additional help to other team members when required.
Suggest new ideas for improving the magazine.

News Reporters for the Joint News, Media & PR Team

Duties

Search down interesting News articles and post on the forums.
Prepare the Newsletter and issue to all members on a regular basis, ensuring all information is accurate.

Writers for the News/Media & PR Team

Duties

Draft and issue press statements once approved by the committee.
Produce a number of Pagan Network leaflets about Paganism and other subjects, these may be written by the committee/team leaders/teams.
Write articles about the organisation, such as reviews of events etc.

Regular Article Writers for the Witchtower

Duties

Provide ideas for general topics for articles.
Write articles - at least one per issue.
Search out articles/artwork, contacting the authors for permission to publish the article/artwork. Ensure no copyright issues involved.
Track down copyright free graphics.
Prepare and carry out your own work timetable to meet production schedules issued by the Editor.
To work as a team, providing support/additional help to other team members when required.
Suggest new ideas for improving the magazine.

Graphics Department

Pagan Network has its own graphics department headed up by Twilightgirl in order for members to have one central area to contact.

We are currently looking for several volunteers who already have experience in graphic design to join the graphics dept. The work involves designing and printing convention tickets, business cards, banners, logos, adverts, flyers, leaflets etc.

If you are interested in volunteering for the graphics department please pm Twilightgirl detailing your experience.

Regional Representatives

Duties

To be the public face of PN and understand the responsibility of being the public face of PN.
Have local knowledge of the area they cover and become acquainted with their local community.
Set in motion and run moots/events where needed and meet and greet members who wish to attend.
To liaise with other pagan groups where possible
To attend other pagan events where possible as the PN representative. Can also run a stall or leave flyers with permission.
To assist other RR's in their roles
To liaise with their local shops, with a view to leaving flyer's/cards (if any want to take part in the 10% scheme all details to be passed to Rainbowleigh).
Encouraging members to sign up for full membership by promoting the benefits of membership.
To keep members informed if a problem with the web site (downtime etc) happens.
To keep members details (with their permission to put them in touch with others in their area)
If wanted and needed a RR would also be able to sit on their local interfaith council.
Also with our backing they would be able to approach their local government (council) with a view to holding rites/rituals/ picnics on parkland. If the council permits it.
All details of the above need to be passed to the RR supervisor so that the committee can manage insurance etc (if over 30 people attend)
To try and help the pagan community in general by being the public face of a large pagan organisation.

It's Your World

In this series we will be looking at ways to help the environment, along with making you aware of worthwhile causes to support. If you know of any causes that need supporting, or you would like to contribute an article to this series please email the witchtower@gmail.com



Strawberries, spread the goodness around...

Strawberries contain alpha-hydroxy acid which is excellent at helping get rid of dead skin cells to reveal younger, softer, smooth skin underneath. So whilst your sitting in the garden eating your strawberries and cream, cut one of the strawberries in half and rub it over your face. Leave it a few minutes and rinse off and volia, your skin will feel instantly smoother and softer.

Do you suffer from occasional spots? Then try mashing together 1/2 cup of sliced strawberries and 1 tablespoon sour cream. Apply the mixture to your face and leave for 10 minutes then rinse.

Strawberries also make a good tooth whitener. Simply rub crushed fresh strawberry pulp directly on your teeth to clean and gently remove stains.

Simply Citrus...

Strawberries aren't the only fruits to contain alpha-hydroxy acid, you'll find your friendly citrus fruits do too, and as they contain lots of vitamin C and AHA's they're good for wrinkles too!

If you want to beat those eye wrinkles soak cotton wool pads with orange juice and place them on closed eyes for 30 minutes, then rinse. Although if you want to get real tough on those skin wrinkles try this:

You'll need 2 teaspoons of orange juice
 1/2 teaspoon of lemon juice
 1 beaten egg white
 a few drops of sweet almond oil

Mix all the ingredients together and apply to the face. After 30 minutes rinse your face with warm water to remove all the ingredients.

If you suffer from an out break of spots on your face or body because of the increased hours of sunshine, you can try the following to reduce them:

Mix equal parts of orange juice (because of it's astringency qualities) and honey (because it is a natural healer). Spread over the spotty area and leave for 5 minutes. Rinse with warm water.

And to top it off....

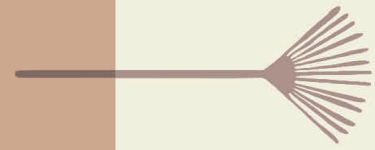
For that perfect summer skin try the following sugar scrub:

A cup of white cane sugar
 A cup of avocado oil
 A small amount of aloe vera gel
 1 or two drops of essential oil (optional)

Mix the ingredients together in a bowl. Scoop some of the scrub onto your hand and massage gently onto your skin for a minute (the scrub will actually tighten onto your skin like a masque). Leave on for 3 to 4 minutes before rinsing.



CULTIVATE THE MAGIC



In this series we will be telling you about the folklore of plants, showing you how to create Pagan themed gardens, along with lots of other helpful hints and tips on gardening in a Pagan way! If you would like to contribute to this series please email the witchtower@gmail.com

IVY

Ivy's celtic name is Gort and is considered feminine by nature, its elemental association is water. Ivy has been used for hundreds of years by druids and witches in their rituals and spells. One of its main uses in magic is to attract fertility and luck. It is said that growing ivy outside a house will protect the house from negativity.

Ivy was given to the bride at her wedding in order to ensure fidelity, and still today you will find many bridal bouquets contain ivy. Because ivy can grow just about anywhere and in any condition it is considered a tough plant and therefore is associated with strength and determination to reach your goals.



Ivy is also associated with the deities such Bacchus, Osiris, Dionysus, and Persephone. Because of Ivy's association with Bacchus it was thought that Ivy leaves could prevent intoxication. Ivy was popular in Rome and a wreath of ivy was woven into a crown and presented to athletes and heroes, as well those who showed intellectual achievement.

Ivy comes in many varieties, the most common being *Hedera Helix*. The leaves of the ivy usually heart shaped and consist of 3 lobes. Medically ivy has been used to treat a wide range of ailments from coughs, asthma, skin rashes, sunburn and bruises.

ANCIENT WISDOMS

In this series we will be looking at Tarot Card meanings as well as showing you various spreads. The card meanings in this series are from my own interpretations that I have learned over the years. Every tarot deck provides you with general meanings related to the tarot cards, but I mainly use my intuition first and foremost in connection with the meaning of cards from various books.



Strength

The Strength card represents our acceptance of life, of our ability to trust in ourselves to make the right choices and to be able to deal with whatever comes our way with courage and determination.

This card allows you to seize control of your destiny, reminding you to listen to your inner voice, your intuition and reasoning. Then move forward with enthusiasm and energy and face any obstacles in your way.

You must also be aware of the temptation around you. Learn to be in the moment, hear and see all that is going on around at any given time.

The Strength card can also represent feeling too emotional and not thinking things through. It could be that you no longer believe in yourself or your abilities, that you have given up. It can lead to intimidating others in order to manipulate them or being intimidated by someone yourself.

If you have health worries then the Strength card usually indicates that a good recovery is on the way.

Images taken from the The Tarot of a Moon Garden

The Hermit

When we think of a hermit we assume it means disappearing to a small cave somewhere away from others, however this isn't necessarily so. The Hermit can be found inside ourselves, you don't have to travel to a distant cave and go without a shower for weeks at a time!

When we close our eyes and centre ourselves or meditate, you will find the Hermit in that quiet place inside you, where you can connect to the higher realms. The Hermit represents wisdom and knowledge, all of which can be found by communing with yourself and connecting with the higher realms.

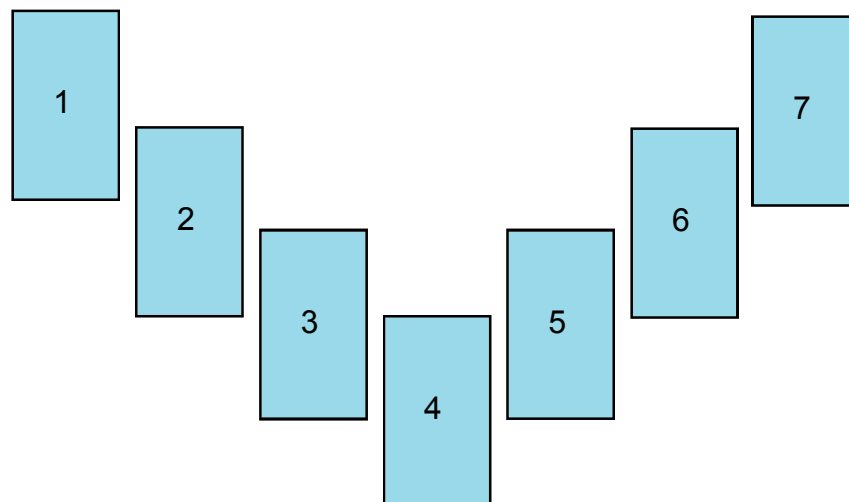
The Hermit is the teacher, the adept. He knows and has experienced many things and he now wants to share these with you. The Hermit usually appears when you have finished learning all you can on a certain subject from others. It is a reminder that you now have to journey inwards to that quiet place and discover the world of knowledge awaiting you there.



The Hermit offers wisdom, self knowledge, peace and solitude. Its time to make and take time for yourself. Step back from the busy outside world in order to gather your thoughts, especially if you have any big decisions to make. Centre yourself and see the world in a clearer light.

The Hermit can also appear if you seem to be "stuck in a rut" or you refuse to accept that life has changed and moved on

Tarot Spread



- Card 1: Past influences now having bearing on the situation
- Card 2: Now - the influences surrounding you at the minute
- Card 3: Future influence having bearing
- Card 4: What to do
- Card 5: External influences having bearing
- Card 6: Hopes and fears
- Card 7: Final outcome of this situation.



Stuffed Mushrooms

You'll need:

- 2 tablespoons butter (keep separate)
- 1/4 teaspoon dried thyme
- 2 tablespoons diced green pepper
- Salt & Pepper
- 1/4 cup chopped mushroom stems
- 2 tablespoons chopped onion
- 1/2 lb. large mushrooms, stems removed
- 3/4 cup bread crumbs
- 2 tablespoons cooked, crumbled bacon
- 12 small slices cheese (optional)



Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. whilst melting 1 tablespoon of the butter over low heat and saute' the mushroom stems, green pepper, and onions until tender.

Mix in the bread crumbs, bacon, thyme, salt & pepper. Spoon the mixture into the mushroom caps and Place the caps on a baking sheet. Melt the other tablespoon of the butter & drizzle it over the caps. Top each mushroom with a cheese slice and bake for 15 minutes.

TRADING CARDS

Each issue we will bring you two Trading Cards containing information on various crystals and gemstones. These Trading Cards can be cut out and glued into your Book Of Shadows should you wish to do so.

SUNSTONE

Hardness: 6 - 6.5

Occurrence: Canada, USA, Norway, Greece and India

Appearance: Sunstone is a rich golden or reddish brown colour, with plays of red yellow and orange light,

Sunstone is associated with the Sun because of its sparkling red/orange/gold hue and has been used by magicians to call upon the influences of the sun. Sunstone is connected to the 3rd Chakra.

Known as a protective stone. Sunstone can also provide you with extra energy when feeling ill or stressed. It promotes increased self healing power and can stimulate sexual energy and enhance your powers of attraction! Because of its stone connections to the sun, it can be used to help dispel fears and phobias and encourages courage.

Sunstone has been known as far back as Viking times and Vikings were often buried with it as they believed it to be a talisman for navigation.



MOONSTONE

Hardness: 6 - 6.5

Occurrence: Moonstone is found in Brazil, European Alps, India, Madagascar, Mexico, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, and USA

Appearance: moonstone comes in blue, grey, white, pink, green and brown.

Moonstone is a beautiful stone with a mysterious shimmer. Known as a stone of mystique and magic, it has been regarded as a dream stone aiding all with pleasant dreams when worn. Moonstone is also considered to aid with fertility and can help with menstrual problems.

Moonstone is connected to our emotional being and subconscious, it is said to strengthen intuition and provide calm and healing. Moonstone is good for those who have distanced themselves emotionally from others, as it allows understanding and caring to come through.

Moonstone can be used during gardening to encourage growth. It is also acts as a protective stone when travelling on water or during the night.



In this series we will be looking at the Elements, here Julia Wren (Wildfyre) tells us all about the Fire element.

A Brief Exploration of Fire

Stepping onto the street, a British summer is blaring out of cheesy car radios, through wound-down windows, across mirrored reflections of elbows and sunglasses. In the park, people are basking, animal-natured, half-naked, watching the clouds and enjoying the sensation of grass against their skin. Like a great eye, that bright blazing ball is spilling forth into the dark bowels of the universe; burning hard in ceaseless explosions.

The sun might be seen as a primary source of fire. As one of the four classical elements, it is a life giving force; a parent of our being. A few words of a Philip Larkin poem come into my head: Unclosing like a hand / You give forever. As a deity, a force of nature, the sun is a spectacular benefactor of humanity and all living forms.

A quiet fire-less vigil held from sunset to sunrise is a powerful means of realising that solar connection. The patience required for the wait seems to be a useful reminder of our passivity and dependence. We cannot rush the sun, nor can we hold it back. Sun and moon forge on at their own pace. We can simply sit, breathing in the dawn air, with freezing fingers and toes as the colours begin to wash in. One by one, the street lights flicker off and the quiet landscape turns from black to blue to green. Something in nature lifts upward and outward. Each tiny leaf and flower perks up and claims their territory; no longer hiding their edges in the darkness.



Fire, in its brightness, exposes what we try to keep hidden, and as such it is an element associated with courage and expression. It might be seen as an inversion of wintry north, demanding the externalization of our introspective selves. In the darkness, one is just darkness, but light gives life to form and feature. We cannot hide. So the challenge of fire is of exhibition, while the leaping flames speak of a passion that overcomes self-consciousness.

In the popular imagination, fire quite commonly holds these kinds of associations: In a favourite book, Jack Kerouac exclaims: "The only people for me are the mad ones..... the ones who never yawn or say a commonplace thing, but burn, burn, burn, like fabulous yellow roman candles exploding like spiders across the stars". I think of my heroes and heroines... fighters, activists, writers... those who seem to hold a perpetual flame at the core of their being. They are reminders that fire speaks of action, energy and the manifestation of ideas thrown into motion.

The passion is also the kind that radiates forth from desire and love-making, like the heat of wild abandon and sexuality that we celebrate at Beltane. But whereas at Beltane we wear masks which allow us to lose our inhibitions, Midsummer challenges us to burn the masks in the flames and to consciously step into the bright lights. Not only does it require strength, but also enormous honesty.

With fire, one must be willing to accept transformation. Fire is often associated with the will to create change. Ironically fire-making without modern tools requires an awful lot of willpower, as well as sheer perseverance. In magic too, willpower is the human force that propels energy into motion.

In ritual, fire may be used as a catalyst for transformation. The negative dredge of our lives is symbolically cast into the flames, and in the release we push intent for a renewed sense of direction and freedom. So fire teaches of fortitude,

enterprise, and power. As with any element, balance is a key virtue. We are easily burnt.

Fire as fuel has catalysed entire technological revolutions, from the first human creating smoke then flame, to the invention of the steam engine. On a more mundane level though, the central hearth of the homestead has come to hold a special place in history and folklore. Food was cooked, irons heated, meat smoked, and herbs dried in the warm tinder glow. The hearth came to embody the main activity point of the household. The heat needed for cooking and warmth has always provided the central hub of social interaction. In modern houses it is still often the kitchen, if large enough, that seems to accumulate the largest congregations. During my darkest university revision period the only souls I ever saw were those weary kitchen wanderers! Food, light and warmth remain some of the biggest necessities of human existence, and fire unites the three. Whether near an electric cooker or a big open fireplace, people tend to sit and share food, drink and stories. This is ritual, if ever it existed. Drawn by fire, we bring humanity with us.

