

AXIS MUNDI

WINTER/SPRING- ISSUE 42- August 2011

ISSN 1839-4396





AXIS MUNDI

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The beginning of a circle is also its end. Not I, but the world says it: all is one. And yet everything comes in season. - Heraklitos of Ephesos



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In addition to our regular Full Moon Circles we also run workshops and classes which are highly interactive and experiential, focusing on participation and engagement of participants. If you want to keep abreast of SOL's circles, gatherings, workshops and activities please click on the banner below to check out our Events Calendar.



SPHERES OF LIGHT & AXIS MUNDI ARE BASED IN AUSTRALIA. ALL EVENTS HOSTED BY SOL ARE HELD IN THE SYDNEY-ILLAWARRA AREA OF NSW.

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Bending with the wind



I am totally over winter now and can't wait for the warmer weather. Spring is one of my favourite seasons of the year and my thoughts are turning to clearing out all my accumulated garbage on a mental, emotional and physical basis. I have been a bit slack with my fitness regime of late so that is one area that I will be injecting some rejuvenated energy in over the next few months.

Getting past procrastination is always the hardest part, and knowing what to cut away from one's life is always a difficult decision. It is getting on to six months since I left my day job and it has taken me that time to adjust to a new way of living. But now it is time for me to make space for growth and to allow space to breathe and be, to experience new joy and energy levels.

At SOL's recent Imbolc ritual I had a profound meditation with the Goddess Brigid; she inspired me to get on with my vision and not to be side-tracked. Everyone made Moon Cards during the ritual which encapsulated all our hopes and desires for the coming months.

Bringing about change in our life can be a difficult process even if we know deep within us that it will eventually liberate us, utilising the essence of spring will connect us to the spirit of renewal, growth, expansion, and all that is creative. It is a time for the warrior within to emerge and it is a good time of year to cultivate this energy by strengthening our daily disciplines, overcoming blockages and creating new goals and creative projects, transforming dietary habits, and cleansing our bodies, and our homes. It is a time of hope, possibility, and inspiration. It is a time to stretch oneself as the new sapling that allows itself to bend in the wind.

"Change is the essence of life. Be willing to surrender what you are for what you could become."

Blessings

Janine

Circle Work – Creating Sacred Space



Carl Jung was the first to acknowledge the power of the circle as an archetype of wholeness and integration. He believed that the centre of a circle is an ancient and universally understood symbol of the Divine Source, the One.

A circle is a shape that is found repeatedly throughout the natural world, and it is a symbol of perfection. We recreate this perfect shape when we join together to form a circle. Being in a circle allows us experience each other as equals. The creation of a circle is an ancient concept, from tribal circles to the mythical round table of King Arthur, archaeological evidence indicates that the circle has been the shape adopted by gatherings throughout history.

Because a circle has no beginning and no end, the agreement to connect in a circle allows energy to circulate from one person to the next, rather than being dissipated into the environment. When we cast a circle we are redefining the space between reality and non-reality. In principle, we are creating a space that is designated as a spiritual experience, and it becomes the axis mundi, the point of connection between the assign directions to this space and the inner and other worlds. The circle actually becomes a bridge between the worlds; it allows us to take advantage of the principle of nonlinear time, while remaining in the linear time to which we are accustomed.



The Circle's defining factor is not only reflected in the setup of the ritual, but also reflected in the change of our emotional and intellectual states of being when we enter the ritual space. Interestingly, casting the circle may delineate the physical realities of the space, but it is our attitude that actually creates the sacred space. Casting a circle prepares us to be spiritually, emotionally, mentally and physically in the moment and that also makes the moment sacred. When a ritual is performed within the circle, we all have an obligation to flow with the energy and when that energy is flowing and connecting then we become a part of the communications network of the cosmos.

The essential factor to creating sacred space begins and ends with the intention of listening to the voice at the centre of our being; this is the voice of our own deepest wisdom. Circle work deepens our connectivity and strengthens our relationship with each other as well as to spirit. The creation of the circle eliminates the mundane and enables us to tune in to vast resources of healing, wisdom and guidance.

The Circle is the centre of our cosmos, it acts in harmony with the rhythms of the universe, it allows us to focus on what we do and to whom we connect with, including all of nature. Photo by Jennie Jones, for her Sydney Pagan Photo Project



**SOL Circle
August 12 2011
Imbolc Ritual**

At our recent full moon circle SOL celebrated Imbolc, the 'Return of the Light'. This was an experiential ritual combining the energies of Imbolc and the Aquarius full moon.

The energy of the full moon in Aquarius enabled us to create new ways of thinking and being. The intent of the ritual was to find our inspiration, using the wisdom of the Goddess Brigid to illuminate a rebirth of energy in our life.

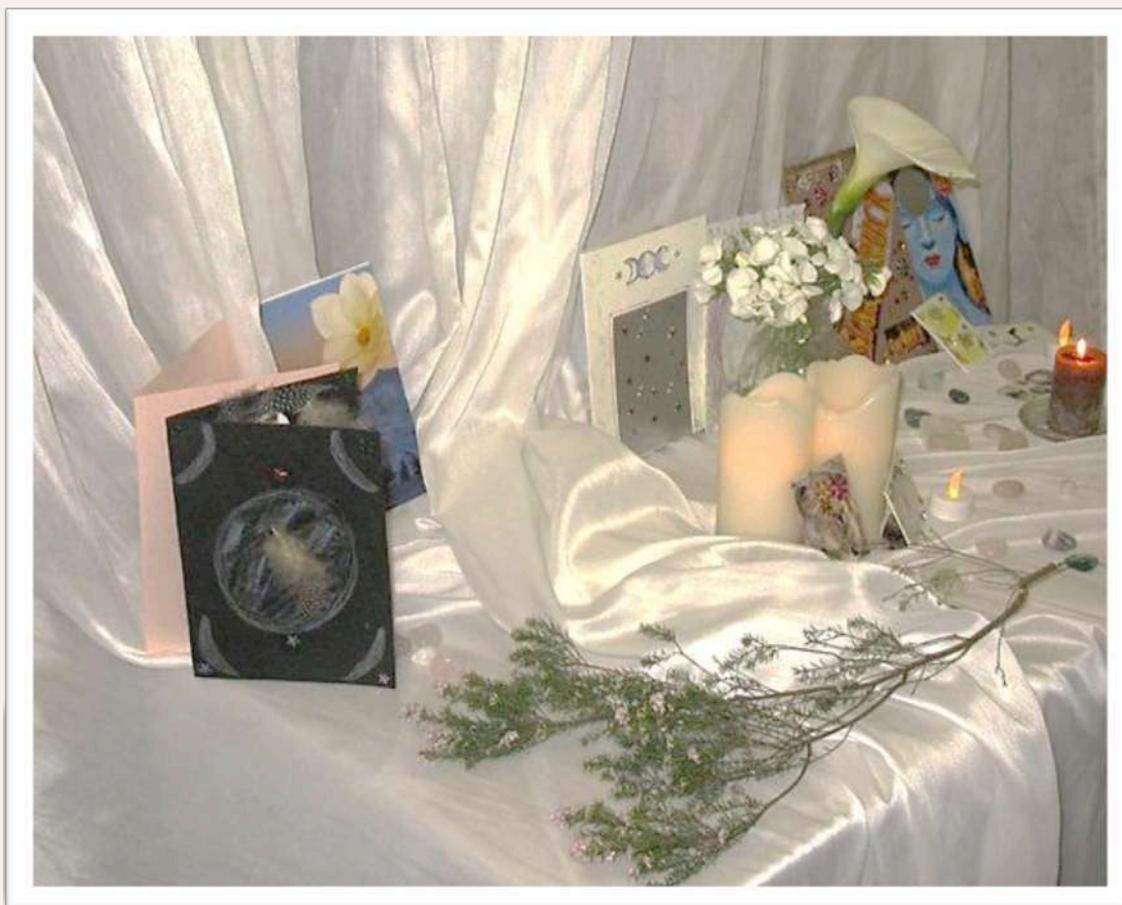
Each person opening a quarter was asked to call in their element from their own personal perspective. Each person within the circle then stated in a single word what the element meant to them. The same process was repeated for the calling in of the Goddess Brigid and the Father God.

During meditation we journeyed to a cave where we connected to Brigid. The Goddess inspired us to create something new, to birth new hope and energy to sustain us through the next twelve months. After the meditation we all sat around a table and created a Moon Card, which encapsulated our hopes and dreams.

We all shared our experiences and then we thanked our hosts and the elements for their presence and guidance, the circle was closed, the residual energy was then grounded back into the earth and forwarded to individuals for healing.

More information regarding this circle and past circles can be found in our Book Of Shadows. Our next Full Moon Circle will be held near Engadine on Friday, September 9. Please contact us for further details if you would like to attend.

Making a Moon Card



When you want to bring in something new in your life, why not organise all your hopes and dreams into a card that you can place on your altar. This card will encapsulate all of your intent and energy and can be an integral part of a ritual or a spell that will be a constant reminder of your intended goals.



Before you begin your card go through magazines and photos and collect images that resonate with your goal. Creating your Moon Card is creating magic so start your card making session by creating sacred space. Clean the area, physically, and energetically. Light a candle if so desired and call in your guides/deity to assist you in this process.

You can make your cards any way that you like. Perhaps you can coordinate the colours so they fit in with the vibration of your desire, e.g. pink for love, red for passion, blue for peace etc.

You can use different types of paper to create your card. Cardboard comes in many different colours and textures. You can also decorate your card with feathers and bling to give it that extra opulence. Make sure you have all the tools and ingredients to make your card before you start this process.

When you have completed your card, you can then create a ritual that will enact the energy of your desire. If possible you can link it in with the phase of the moon which will bring its own special energy for that lunar cycle. Understanding what these energies bring will help you to connect with and use those energies to their best advantage which is essential for your magical outcome. Don't forget that the phases of the moon from New Moon, until the Full Moon is called "waxing" – which is associated with increase and the time from the Full Moon until the New Moon is called "waning" – which is associated with removal or decrease.

The Full Moon is considered, the most powerful day of the month to perform magic, with the New Moon being the second in line.

So start going through your old magazines and photos to make that special card and if you are happy with the end result send us a photo of your Moon Card with some details about it and we will feature it in Axis Mundi.



Imbolc Impressions

By Rayvensclaw



Just the other night Spheres of Light had a ritual to celebrate Imbolc, and I found myself thinking again (yes I know a very dangerous thing) about what Imbolc means to us especially with society's addiction to social networks such as

Facebook, Twitter, and other types of media that seem to dictate our feelings, our dress, our friends and lifestyles.

Talking to people recently it seemed that we were all feeling very tired lately due to too many commitments. I wonder though how much of what we feel can be from the energy of the season or have we too much on our plate at any given time? Anyway I transgress.

Perhaps we should stop for a moment and reflect on what the different seasons mean to us. Are they merely another step closer to retirement or death or are they more important than that? It's up to you to decide what is important in your life.

Imbolc celebrates the imminent arrival of spring, homes are decorated with fresh flowers, buds are beginning to form on the trees and the light of nature begins to shine longer and brighter.

Brigid is known as the Goddess of Imbolc; she has 3 spheres of influence:

- Inspiration
- Healing
- Smith craft

Folk Lore

Folk Lore relating to St. Brigid's Day (or Imbolc) involved the young girls of the village



who would create a corn dolly which represented Brigid, adorning it with ribbons and baubles. On St. Brigid's Eve, the young women would gather together in one house awaiting the arrival of the young men of the community.

Before going to bed, each household would completely douse its hearth and rake the ashes smooth. In the morning, they would look for some kind of mark on the ashes, a sign that Brigid has passed that way in the night or morning. On the following day, the Bride's Bed is brought from house to house, where she is welcomed with great honour.

People would often tap Brigid's effigy with an ash wand, perhaps an old remnant of more potent fertility rites that were once practiced.

Brigid represents the Life Force that will bring people from the darkness of winter into spring, which is why her presence is very important at this time of year.

References: Shadows of Oz. by Yvonne Rathbone

Shapeshifting



Shapeshifting is a common theme in mythology and folklore as well as in science fiction and fantasy. Shapeshifting is the act of causing transformation of one body into another. In the world of mythology and fantasy, werewolves and vampires are both creatures who can shift their shape. However, Shapeshifting has its roots in shamanism where the shaman or priest/ess takes on the spirit of the animal or being at will.

Shape shifting is shamanic journey where the consciousness is projected into objects and beings. The ability to merge with Nature by bringing one's energy into synchronicity

with that of the environment or an object or being is the essence of shape shifting. In the process of learning shape shifting there are many graduations of success. One can merge to the point of being able to feel what it is like to be inside an animal or human body, or one can attune to its persona to learn about their state of health, their instincts and knowledge. Many years ago when I was learning Shapeshifting, the class had to pair up and we had to project our consciousness into our partner. My partner was pregnant at the time and when my consciousness had entered her body I had the overwhelming sensation of heartburn. This condition was

confirmed by my partner. It is believed that the more masterful the adept the greater the ability they have to align their energy with another life form.

Shamanic initiations which are common in the indigenous world, often involving fasting, sleep deprivation, ritual burial, and are all forms of the vision quest where the initiate spends extended periods of time in nature, through trance/meditative states and ceremony. The purpose of these practices is to develop the ability to perceive, communicate and shapeshift with spirits of nature and the Divine.

These practices usually include the person working with their animal totem, the animal they feel a particular affinity with. They do this through some form of dream walk, a trance like state that opens them up to the spirits of the animals who they wish to communicate with or to get protection from.

During shamanic sessions or rituals, the person may call on their animal spirit to inhabit them and they may even shapeshift at some level into the animal guiding them. In this state, the person can tap into the many powerful attributes of their totem animal. They may even be able to imitate the animal's sounds and howl or growl.

Shapeshifting Exercise



The mind is the gateway through which we can experience all dimensions. This is achieved by training and controlling the mind to become the mechanism to open the various portals. By shaping our minds to open in a certain way a shift or realization occurs where we are able to perceive and connect with these dimensions. The value of this is understood when we realize that all mind and body states from emotions to expanded

spiritual consciousness are dimensional realities.

Shapeshifting is a dimensional reality which can be achieved with continued practice. Begin by creating sacred space and calling in protection. Choose a quiet place and time to connect with a plant or animal. Centre you awareness to the core of your being and feel your connection to the Earth. Slowly, let

awareness expand from your centre to include your surroundings.

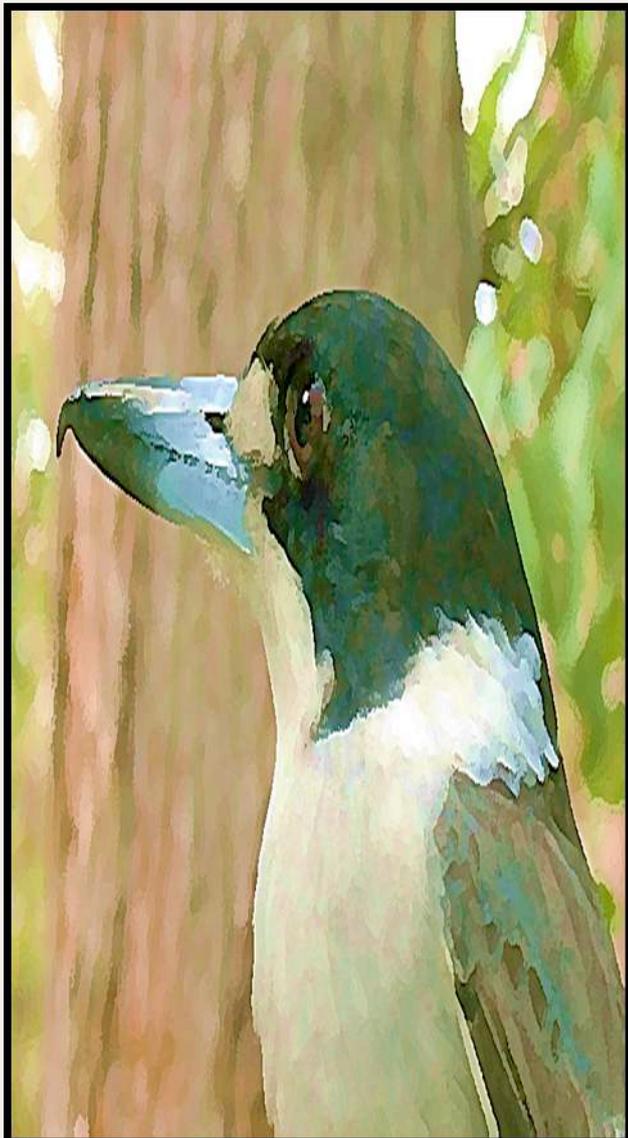
Now, focus on the plant or animal you would like to shapeshift. Share with it your appreciation for its beauty and presence in your world.

With intent, let your awareness gradually sink into that shape. Allow your awareness to get a total feeling of the plant or animal. What do you notice? What is the feeling of this creature? Are you experiencing an emotion or perhaps a flow of energy? Can you feel differences in body structures, notice the skin,

muscle, bone; bark, leaves, wood? Can you communicate with your plant or animal through images, feelings or words? Communication can be very subtle, so be ready to receive what comes in any form.

With practice your experience can become deeper and richer. In time, you can learn to merge yourself with another life form and access its knowledge and wisdom. When finishing your Shapeshifting session remember to close down your sacred space and to ground any residual energy.

Birds – Power Animals



All animals have their own unique gifts and medicine which they can share with humans.

We can access their knowledge and wisdom for our own spiritual growth, guidance and inner journeys.

Animals can be associated with the four basic elements of nature: air, fire, water and earth.

Birds are associated with the element of Air which corresponds with the direction of east. They are masters of the sky are often referred to as messengers.

The majority of birds are survivalists in their basic nature, quite literally choosing flight over fight in most of the circumstances. Their strong survival instinct can help you in a time when you feel the need to withdraw quickly from a situation.

Through the process of Shapeshifting, a bird totem spirit guide will be able to teach you awareness of your surroundings, reflexes in precarious conditions, and show their skilled adaptability so you can become an agile navigator in your own life.

If you want to achieve balance in your life allow your bird totem to help you soar in order to utilize more of the lightness and freedom of air.

The Three Selves



Our consciousness parallels the spirit worlds - as above so below. Shamans believe in multiple realities, and we have multiple bodies for these realities. To keep things simplistic we will look at the multiple bodies in relationship to the three worlds; the three selves the middle, higher and lower selves.

Middle Self

The middle self relates to the physical world. However, your physical self is far more than just a body. It combines your identity, personality, your ego. It is all your past memories and all your potential future choices. It also includes your energy template, the etheric body.

Lower Self

The lower self is the intuitive, gut level wisdom we all hold. Some people relate it to your subconscious self, your flashes of insights or gut feelings come from your instinctual lower self. The lower self is linked to your intuition, psychic abilities and magick. It is viewed as animalistic as it relies on instinct rather than logic. It is also connected to your solar plexus where all of your gut feelings and psychic impressions come from.

Higher Self

The higher self is your divine, immortal self. It is not a protective spirit in the way most people conceive of a guardian angel, but your

own divine essence. The higher self is beyond time and space and can see the patterns of this life and all of your lives, past and future as a whole.

During the long evolutionary cycle, when souls descend into the lower worlds of 'matter' and then rise up again, the Higher Self remains on the highest spiritual level, constantly accumulating and recording all the evolutionary experiences gained by those evolving soul extensions on lower levels. This accumulated knowledge is then accessible back to them via the Higher Self as an inner voice of conscience, always there to assist them in taking the correct course appropriate for their further development.

We can, therefore, with intent and suitable training, obtain access to all this accumulated spiritual knowledge via our Higher Self, simply by turning our thoughts inwards in quiet contemplation and seeking a connection with our 'I Am Presence'.

This store of evolutionary knowledge and abilities accumulated by the Higher Self also provides each of the lower incarnated souls with a background of traits, talents and abilities acquired during previous lives. This continuity of development and attainment explains why some people are born on Earth with unusually exceptional natural talents, such as in the field of healing or science, or perhaps as a scientific genius or musical child prodigy.

As you advance further into the higher vibrations you will develop open communication with your own higher selves. At first this will appear as an increased connection to source. Everyone will develop more open communication culminating with a full connection to your own Higher Selves. In time you will be able to tap into the thoughts of each other through each other's higher selves. After a period of humorous adjustment, you will find this to be a great strength. When each one can see clearly the real motivations behind actions, there will be true understanding and compassion. This will leave no room for deception. The energy you are now walking into will bring possibilities you cannot yet imagine. You are at the

junction of bringing the reality of "Home" down to your side of the veil.

Guides

To further guide and watch over us during our incarnations here on Earth, each of us has various Guides working from the Spiritual Worlds. At birth, our Guardian Angels keep a particularly close watch over us when we first incarnate into the physical body, especially up to the age of seven. Young children, whose etheric sight is usually still functioning, are indeed often able to see their Guardian Angels as they stand over them, protecting and guiding them.

A Guide may also be gaining some useful additional evolutionary learning experiences by watching our life and learning from our lessons. However, whilst our Guardian Angels and our Guides are ready to advise and assist us at all times, there are two fundamental qualifications to this help. Firstly; they will not normally interfere unless we ask directly for their help; they must always respect our free choice and thus not deprive us of the important lessons we have to learn ourselves. Secondly; we should not assume that 'whatever we ask will be given', for we must remember that Higher Beings have a higher, wider vision, and they will not help us to do something which is not for our 'highest good'. It could be so easy for us to feel, when our fervent prayers for help do not appear to be answered, that we have been 'let down'. But we should understand that the links between us and our Guides were formed and exist on the higher Soul level. At this level they know, and indeed we too recognize when we are visiting the higher planes in our sleep time, what is best for our 'highest good'.

The more you consciously identify with all three selves, and shift your identity beyond just the middle self, the more you become awakened or enlightened in this life time. Realising your divine union and your divine individuality seems like a paradox. Living the paradox is the role of any witch, shaman or mystic.

Earth by Maria Coelho

Of earth I return
but that's not the
end

order of life
birth to death

an oak tree
from a humble seed

plants animals
feed on thee

protection I need
rejuvenation I seek

strength regained
amazing land

fertility abound
abundance all
around

prosperity assure
abundance galore

stable ground
foundations laid

for home and family
food prevails

silence for all
hear the wild call

in time of sorrow
bury in soil

for all to gain
it's worth the toil

to you great mother
I assist by planting
a tree

Goddess Arianrhod



Arianrhod Silver Wheel by Wintersmagic

Goddess Arianrhod's name means "Silver Wheel" or "Silver Circle". She is known as a Goddess of the Moon, of initiation and justice and of the changing Seasons. She is the Keeper of the Silver Wheel and Lady of the Tides and Time.

Some believe Arianrhod to be the Goddess of the Wheel of the Year, the Moon and Stars and of reincarnation. She is the Celestial Weaver; controlling the destiny of the lives of men and women and she exemplifies feminine power and beauty. She is the triple Goddess, the Maiden Blodeuwedd and the Crone, Cerridwen or the Morrigan.

Meditation - Arianrhod's Glass House

You walk through the cool white mist feeling its energy protecting and caressing you as

you move through it. Once the mist has cleared you find yourself on a cliff high above

the ocean. The wind blows in all directions around you. You feel the gentle spray of water from the ocean as it crashes against the sides of the cliff. It is the time of twilight and the moon is new and it appears as a silver slither in the sky. The stars begin to glimmer in the purple haze. The sun has set but its rays of burnished pink are just beginning to fade. You stand staring out into the vast ocean its waters look dark, deep and mysterious. The white foam stands out so clear upon the crest of the waves like a battalion of charging stallions. You breathe deeply taking in the variety of aromas. The saltiness of the ocean, the ozone, the smell of heath around you; you are totally absorbed by the senses of nature all around you. As you walk near the edge of the cliff you notice a large white owl circling above you. Its cries

sound like music, sounds of a long lost lullaby that seems so familiar. You turn to watch as the bird circles around, you watch as it circles high up in the sky. You move to follow this magnificent bird only to see before you a grand house made of glass. You hadn't noticed this house before when you were standing on the edge of the cliff. It is as if it has just appeared. You follow the pathway towards the house. A subtle light appears from inside. A warm gentle beckoning light. As you move through this path you notice large elaborate spider webs neatly created on the small trees that line the pathway. The webs are like beautifully crafted sculptures glistening from water drops trapped within the tendrils of the web. Oh how they glow with the lights of the twilight. They are like beacons lighting the way.

You stand now at the doorway of this unusual house. Noticing the light coming from the centre you move to open the glass door, but it opens by itself in expectation of your visit. You feel a shift in the energy as you past the threshold. You hear soft music, like the sound of a thousand bees humming harmoniously. As you walk through this house you are completely captivated by its beauty. The furnishings are of purest crystal and opulent silks. Once again you see the owl perched on the top a crimson chair staring out to sea. As you approach this chair you find that owl is no longer there and then you notice a woman sitting quietly in the chair, waiting. The woman is striking, she has long dark hair, and is wearing the sheerest silver gown, a gown that has the luminance of star light.

She speaks to you with a gentle musical voice, not looking at you but staring straight ahead looking out into the landscape. I am the Goddess Arianrhod, the Goddess of the Silver Wheel, the Keeper of past, present and future. Arianrhod then stands and turns to face you directly. Her face is pale, translucent, her eyes are dark and

mysterious. You look deeply into her eyes, eyes that seem to grow larger and larger until they look like large dark deep pools. She speaks, "Stand now in the flood tide of your power, now see where all paths lead. Where you have come from, where you stand now and where next you travel. You stand there looking deeply into her eyes. Now listen to the whispered breeze that carries you a song. Hark to the still, small voice that calls and tells you, where you belong."

It seems like you have been in this place now for a long time and suddenly you are aroused by the sound of the owl as flies out of the room. You turn to follow the owl and you find that a thin spiders web has been wound around your body. It feels soft and caressing. You hear some words softly spoken in the wind "Come, leave you now, My silver web the weaving of your fate. My strands no stronger than you can bear, spun to guide, not decimate."

You turn now and leave this beautiful house filled with crystal furniture and silk. The web encased around you fades into nothing. You move out past the threshold of this magnificent house, noticing the energy shift. You move down the path that is guided by the silvery web. You notice the stars now shining so brightly in the darkened sky and you turn once again to look at the glass house only to find it has disappeared. You walk down the track that leads you away from this magical place. Hearing the sound of the waves crashing against the cliff as you leave, and soon you see that white mists that leads you home and you move through it feeling its coolness on your face. You sit back into your body feeling your chest rise and fall with each breath. Wiggle your fingers and toes and stretch your arms and legs.

<http://www.angelfire.com/wizard/celticdeities/>
<http://forestofthefaie.ning.com/group/moonofarianrhodcornmoon>

Shaman's Tools ~ Wand



There is a difference of opinion as to what element the wand represents some say it represents air and the east, some say fire and the north. Of course it is up to the individual to decide, but usually the determining factor would be dependent on the material it has been made from. In normal circumstances the wand is used to direct energy or for summoning.

The wand is the tool of the mind, a tool of communication and invitation and also used to charge objects and draw down the moon. It is seen as an instrument of invocation associated with the element of air.

The properties of the wand will vary according to the particular properties of the tree and the type of magick you practice. A good study of the magickal properties of the materials that make up the wand will guide in the making or purchase of this tool.

Crystals & Embellishments

To decorate or not to decorate that is the question! Many people would prefer to keep their wand in its natural wooden state but some like to personalise their wand with crystals and symbols to imbue it with additional vibrations. To attach a crystal to your wand you can secure it to the end with resin glue or carve out an appropriate sized hole in the side and glue it or wrap leather strips around it. Copper or silver wire can also be wrapped around it.

You can also paint or burn sigils and inscriptions on it if you want.

Finding the right piece of wood

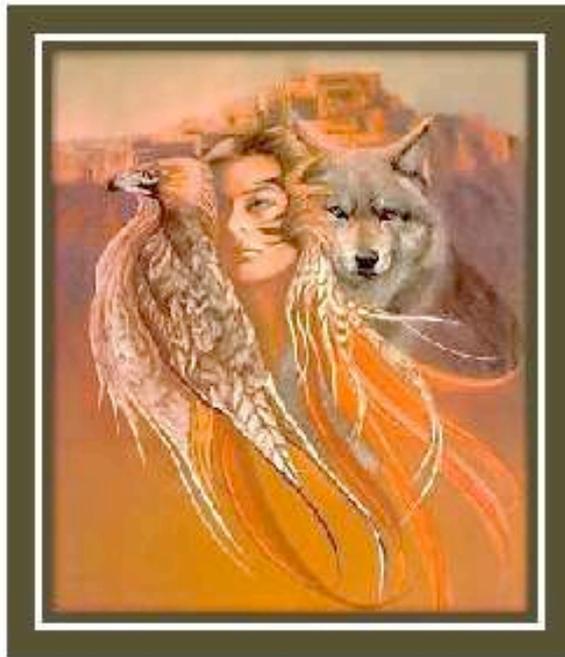
Do not destroy a tree for your wand, take the piece of wood to be carved into a wand from a tree that has already felled or is going through a winter period of dormancy and is not productive. If the branch is to be cut, get to know the tree first. This may sound silly but if the spirit of the tree and you do not get on then the wand you make will not work with you. Ask the tree's permission first and leave an offering in gratitude of the tree's gift to you. The branch is then dried; the bark removed and cut the length from your elbow to the tip of your middle finger. Cleanse and charge the branch in the elements (sprinkle with salt water for earth and water; pass through the smoke of incense for fire and air). Offer the branch to the four directions and to the God and Goddess. Hold the branch close to your body and connect with its energy. Feel your life force merging with the sacred wood. The branch is now ready to be decorated if so desired.

As with all ritual tools, remember that your wand is sacred and should be treated with reverence and respect. Wrap it carefully in a special cloth or in a special box. Allow only those whose energy you want affecting your magick to pick up your wand. After all, you don't want someone else utilising its energy or imbuing it with negativity!



CONNECTING WITH YOUR SPIRIT GUIDE WORKSHOP

Sunday 28th August 2011



This is a two hour workshop where we will discuss the various kinds of spirit guides that one can have, how to find them, communicate with them, and develop a working relationship with them.

We will work shamanically with a guided inner journey, using rhythmic rattling and drumming to support the process of concentration and tracking.

**Where: Embrace, Shop 1015 Westfield,
Miranda NSW 2228**

When: Sunday 28th August 2011

Time: 5:30pm - 7:30pm

Cost: \$60 includes notes and supper

Bookings: 02 9531 0009

Tree Agate

By Maria



We have just celebrated Imbolc, a time of change and renewal. It is the time when new shoots start to peek through the soil, awoken from their deep sleep and new life begins to emerge. It heralds a time to commit to ourselves to make our world a better place to live plus honouring the spark of divine creativity within us and raise healing energy.

'Imbolc is strongly associated with the goddess Brigid and is seen as her festival. In Wicca she is midwife to the spring, the divine woman who breathes her fiery breath upon the earth to awaken it. Her role extends to enabling new projects- many of us plant seed and bulbs at this time to represent areas in our lives that we wish to nurture and grow.' The Wicca Bible, Ann-Marie Gallagher.

Tree agate does just that. The green and white of this stone reminds me of young shoots breaking through the snow. The first sign that spring is on its way and now is the time to nurture that new growth. It's symbolic of our own growth that needs to be nurtured and cared for, thus allowing our dreams, goals, desires and aspirations to grow to its full potential.

Tree Agate, sometimes referred to as 'Tree Stone', is a bright to milky white opaque stone with inclusions of green dendrites, tree or fern like markings. Dendritic is the Greek word for tree-like.

The tree-like inclusions reach out in all directions. This reminds us that all is connected to mother earth, to each other, past and present. It's all there.

This connection keeps us balanced and grounded, rooted into the earth. Through this association Tree Agate makes a good stone for tree magick. Trees represent slow but sure growth from the smallest beginnings as a seed to eventually a tree. This tree then supports via fertility, strength, endurance, shelter and permanence. A transformation has occurred, from humble beginnings to a majestic presence.

Tree Agate is a slow releasing energy stone that continues to build while keeping optimistic about the outcome. The saying 'Rome wasn't built in a day' comes to mind. Due to its slow energy release this stone needs to be worn for longer periods of time.

Tree Agate is a stone of abundance and fullness in life and the plant kingdom. It enhances plus maintains your health and that of your plants. Place one in house plants or veggie patch to sustain the wellbeing of your vegetation.

Due to its vein like features this stone supports the body by maintaining a healthy supply and flow of blood and air. It assists in sending healing to parts of the body that branch out, for example the nerves and skeleton. For pain relief place a piece of tree agate in the troubling area to soothe it.

If energies around you are moving too fast, that the mental body cannot handle, a piece of tree agate at the crown chakra will help to slow it down giving you peace of mind and

stabilizing your energy so that you remain centred in times of unbalance. Due to its green colour the heart chakra will benefit from its soothing effects on emotional pain.

Colours play a role in our lives its uses are many. Sometimes just wearing a particular colour will uplift our mood, which is just one example. In magick colour becomes a powerful tool to use. The magick of colour also stems to our chakra system.



With Tree Agate the two main colours are soft white and green. The soft white is the colour of nurturing, of maternal milk and of the moon; it radiates gently its power to its full potential. The green is the colour of giving and receiving from the heart; of beauty and growth in all aspects of life.

Tree Agate use in magick:

- protective for air and car travel
- preserving family links
- increase influence through networking
- gradual expansion of business

Cassandra Eason, quoted affirmation for Tree Agate is 'I make connection with others who share my path'.

Please note that Tree Agate in a few sites and books assign the name Dendritic Agate, it does contain dendritic inclusions but Dendritic Agate is defined as:

"Dendritic Agate is a type of agate that displays sharply defined, two-dimensional tree-like branching patterns within the stone...dendrites floating... picturesque... beautifully patterned..." Extract from: Collecting Rocks, Gems and Minerals, Patti Polk.

See picture, small oval shape, Dendritic Agate. There are differences between Tree Agate and Dendritic Agate. Tree Agate is a solid opaque stone and Dendritic Agate is a translucent stone.

The Wicca Bible, Ann-Marie Gallagher
Gemstones of the World, Walter Schumann
Collecting Rocks, Gems and Minerals, Patti Polk
Crystal Workbook, Sheril Berkovitch
A Year and a Day in Magick, Cassandra Eason
Complete Book of Natural Magick, Cassandra Eason
http://www.healingcrystals.com/Agate__Tree__Tree_Agate__Articles_21.html
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trees_in_mythology



HERBES ~ Coltsfoot

By Amethyst



Well are you sick of the coughs, colds & sniffles?

Well I am that's for sure! This herbe is good for coughs and it should go a long way to make you love this time of year. But be warned, if you take this herbe internally, don't use it for too long, a week should be long enough, as prolonged use can cause liver damage i.e. 4 cups a day for 3 months (if you're that sick, give up and just go to bed).

COLTSFOOT

Latin Name: *Tussilago farfara*

Gaelic Name: Sponnc

Planet: Venus

Celtic Tree Astrology:

Zodiac: Taurus

Element: Water

Gender: Feminine

Deity: Chiron, Venus

Magickal: Herbe of Love, Herbe of Divination

Folk Names: British tobacco, Bullsfoot, Butterbur, Coughwort, Flower Velure, Foal's-foot, Horse-foot, Horsehoof, Pas d'ane (French)

Parts Used: Leaves & Flowers

LORE

Coltsfoot is one of the first flowers to emerge in the springtime, often appearing as early as February in the Northern Hemisphere. This and its bright sunny yellow flowers make it suitable for springtime rituals welcoming the return of the sun, such as Imbolc, Ostara and Beltain- depending on when they bloom that particular year! The long stems can also be woven into wreaths.



Coltsfoot or 'sponnc' (Gaelic) is also a herbe associated with Brigid.

USAGE

Colts Foot is said to have the properties to cause visions or the drawing in of prophetic dreams. It is also burned in divinatory and healing incense when seeking communion with spirits or other 'energies'.

Coltsfoot can be burned with other ingredients to aid sickness, both physical and mental and to help with emotional and physical stagnation.



As Coltsfoot is a herbe of Venus, use it magically to engender love and to bring peace. It can also be used in tranquillity and money spells.

As a magical herbe Coltsfoot is considered to increase psychic awareness, but it is rarely used alone. Some people mix Coltsfoot with other so-called "psychic herbs," such as Acacia, Althaea, Angelica, Anise Seed, Bearberry, Mugwort, Purslane, or Star Anise, and burn the mix on charcoal when seeking communion with spirits or drawing in prophetic dreams.

Do not confuse common coltsfoot with Western coltsfoot *Petastites frigidus*.

MEDICINAL USAGE

Medical Parts: Leaves, flowers.

Description: Coltsfoot is a perennial plant found in the U.S., Europe and the East Indies in west areas such as stream banks, in

pastures, and on ridges and embankments, preferring loamy and limestone soils.

Properties and Usage: Astringent, demulcent, emollient, expectorant. Coltsfoot is one of the time-tried remedies for respiratory problems. Use it for coughs, colds, hoarseness, bronchitis, bronchial asthma, pleurisy, and throat catarrh. For chronic bronchitis, shortness of breath, and dry cough, try smoking the leaves. Coltsfoot can also be used for diarrhoea. The crushed leaves or a decoction can be applied externally for insect bites, inflammations, general swellings, burns, erysipelas, leg ulcers and phlebitis.

Preparation and Dosage: Collect the flowers as soon as they open, the leaves when they reach full size.

Infusion: Use 1 to 3 tsp. leaves or flowers with 1 cup water; steep for 30 minutes and strain. Sweeten with honey and take warm.

Juice: Take 1 to 2 tbsp, three times a day.

Tincture: Take 1 to 2 tsp. at a time.

References:

<http://www.sheeeire.com/Herbs,Trees&Fungi/Herbs/Coltsfoot/Factsheet1.htm>

<http://www.witchipedia.com/coltsfoot>

<http://www.occultliving.com/c/coltsfoot-dp2>

<http://celticawitch.wordpress.com/the-wheel-of-the-year/imbolc/>

a compendium of Herbal Magick by Paul Beyerl

Cunningham's Encyclopedia of Magical Herbs

Pictures:

<http://www.viableherbalsolutions.com/singles/Herbs/s749.htm>

<http://www.herbal-supplement-resource.com/coltsfoot.html>

<http://paganpages.org/content/tag/coltsfoot/>

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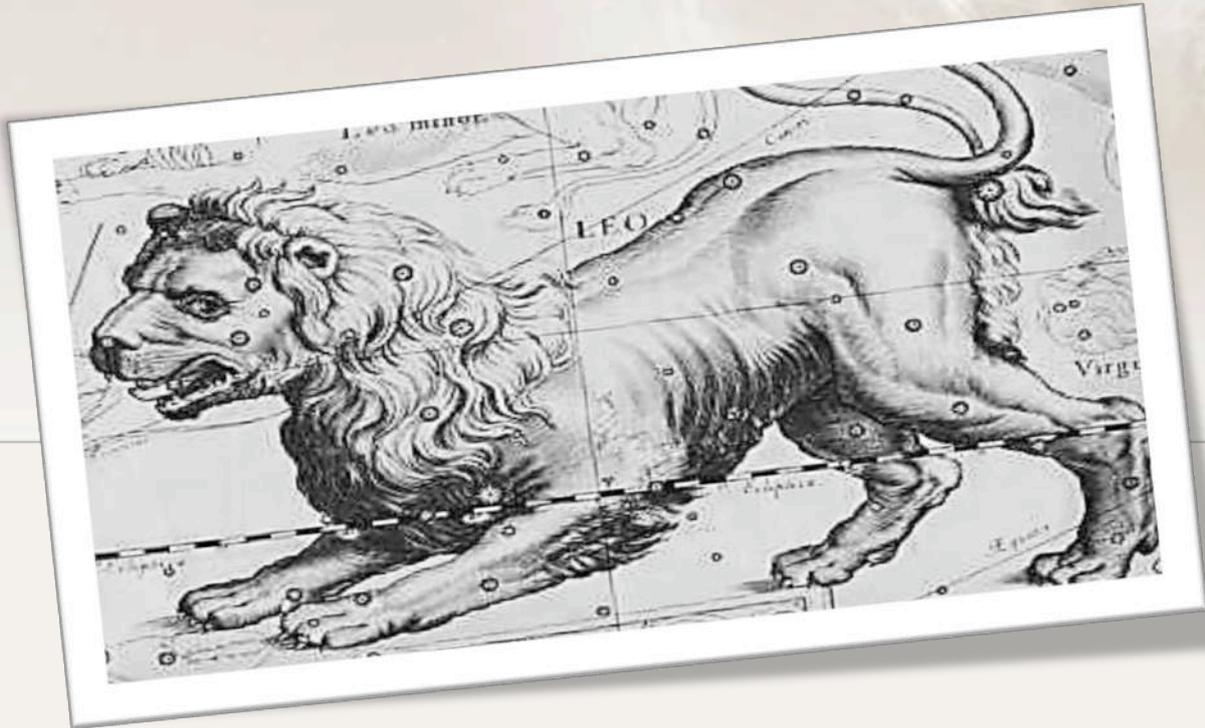
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Leo – Regulus

By Julija Simas



Mercury conjuncts the fixed star Regulus on 27th July and opposes Neptune. By the end of this year Regulus the brightest star in the constellation of Leo will at the end of November 2011 shift into the sign of Virgo.* After 2160 years in the sign of Leo, it is not surprising that the star has been known as the King maker, the star of heroes, bestowing honours and fame to those linked to the prestige of Regulus, it also comes with a warning that money doesn't necessarily bring happiness.

Regulus is one of the four Royal stars that sit close to the ecliptic and have been the markers of the four corners of the zodiac for millennia. They used to grace the fixed signs of the zodiac, Antares – Scorpio, Regulus-Leo, Fomalhaut- Aquarius, and Aldebaran Taurus, but have since moved out of alignment with the original constellations they

were associated with. Fomalhaut is now in mutable Pisces at 4 degrees conjunct Chiron, Aldebaran is in Gemini is at 9 degrees, Regulus sits at 29:59 Leo about to shift in November 2011, and Antares is now at 9 Sagittarius. Antares and Aldebaran exactly opposite in the sky, shifted in about 1300 CE, and Fomalhaut shifted to Pisces in 1725 CE.

The shift of these royal stars from fixed to mutable signs is based on the tropical zodiac, which moves 1 degree backwards in the zodiac every 72 years, this is known as Precession of the Equinoxes as we start the tropical zodiac at zero Aries, when the Sun aligns with the Equinox point on March 20-21st every year.

With Regulus about to move into Virgo, it seems so appropriate and timely as we consider a world ruled by powerful elites, and societies ruled by money and power. Now we

have Regulus move into the sign of service, resourcefulness, technology, skill and duty, as we consider waste, global resources, efficiency, and how to get things working better, timely to say the least. Those who learn to be of service, to adapt an attitude of service to the sacred, the planet earth and her precious resources and the healing of the planet will be the new heroes of the next age. This is accentuated as Regulus opposes Neptune at zero Pisces and will do so for another few years mostly into 2012. Neptune opposite, seems to accentuate the changing of the old guard, from ego centred rulers to those more attuned to collective and global needs.

With Mercury at this point, ask yourself what your service will be as the changing of the Guard takes place. What will be your sacred service, your role in the healing and health of the planet? Everyone is called to take responsibility and play their role as we change our minds about what's most important in this world.

* according to Solar Fire software calculations. Although divisions of the constellations cannot be exact, when using the tropical zodiac of all signs being 30 degrees each, this is the timing for this shift of Regulus to Virgo.



**The Cosmic Intelligence Agency
(C*I*A)**

is a global network of individuals and astrologers who aim to further understand and advance:
CONSCIOUSNESS, INTENTION, ASTROLOGY.



SPACE CLEARING CONSULTATION

Sometimes your house or office can feel uncomfortable, and there is no real reason to explain your uneasy feeling. Other times, it's easy: someone has been there that was negative, ill or died. There may be instances when you moved into a space and just felt like someone else was there, or the space just didn't feel right.

Janine Donnellan from Spheres Of Light & SOuL Searchers can conduct a private space clearing in your home or business. Janine will clear negative or stagnant energetic 'imprints' built up over the years from the accumulation of day to day living and from previous occupants, replacing them with Love, Abundance, Prosperity, Good Health & Happiness.

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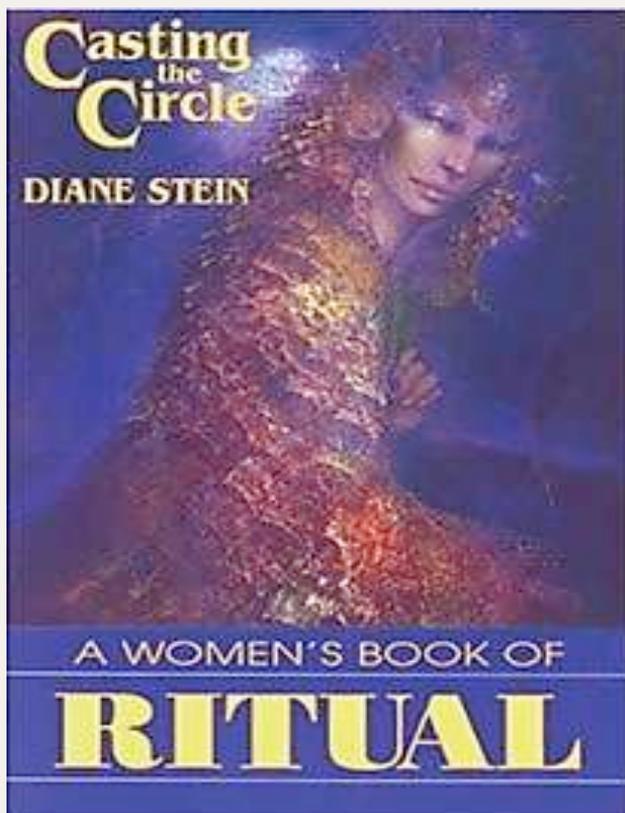
Adriana's Book Corner



Merry meet!



CASTING THE CIRCLE A WOMEN'S BOOK OF RITUAL Dianne Stein



Paperback: 260 pages
Publisher: Crossing Press (September 1, 1990)
ISBN-10: 0895944111
ISBN-13: 978-0895944115

Today I would like to talk about one my all-time favourite books, one I read regularly for inspiration when planning a ritual, especially when I'm by myself.

This is a feminist book so our male counterparts may not find it as interesting and helpful as us ladies. The first three chapters contain a lot of wonderful background information, starting with what Ritual is and its

purpose in Women's lives, how women relate to the Goddess, the many names of the Goddess and a bit of herstory across the centuries. The following 5 chapters are all about cycles, with chapter 4 being all about how the moon relates to women's lives and spirituality; it includes rituals for every stage of the moon, as well as a Menstrual poem and invocation (because of the strong relation between Moon's Cycle and Women's Menstrual Cycle). Chapters 5 and 6 are to do with the Wheel of the Year, my favourite part being the "Gifts of the Priestess Wheel", which relates each Sabbat to a Goddess, an Element and a Process towards the Inner journey; for example, Spring Equinox, which is the next Sabbat for us, is related to Kore and Air, and it's about Birth Mysteries, Blessing Way, Midwifery, Mother/Daughter, Children, Past Lives and Re-Birthing. After the Wheel of Year the next two chapters are about Rites of Passage, from Birth to Bonding and from Pregnancy to Passing Over; the rituals in these chapters validate Women's experience and existence as images of the Goddess, embodiments of the Goddess; they celebrate women's cycles, from baby to Maiden to Mother to Crone and include Wiccaning ritual, Ritual of Creation for Pregnancy, and Passing Over, among many others. And finally the last two chapters are about other rituals, which consist of a House Blessing, Meeting Spirit Guides, Group Bonding, and Letting Go (or Cutting the Cords that Bind), and Candle Magic which contains the meaning of colours, symbols, essences, days to do magic for specific purposes, moon signs, herbs, structure for candle magic ritual, and examples for various specific rituals like Healing and Banishing.

There are many rituals within this book, I love how the author gives a background and rationale for each, a list of items needed, an outline which includes different ideas about what to do in each ritual, what to bring for the feast afterwards, and chants, songs and poems for the ritual. The big majority of the rituals are planned for closed Covens of women, however they can easily be adapted to individual rituals or for open groups that consist of males and females (such as our lovely Spheres of Light!).

Another interesting point that the author makes is that each ritual must meet three criteria: that it involve all the women (or all participants), that it contains elements of

healing, change or transformation, and that it be a validation of each woman (or participant) as Goddess. (p 58)

The chapters are:

1. Women, Ritual and the Goddess
2. Altars and Beginnings
3. Ritual Structure
4. The Moon and Women's Lives
5. The Wheel of the Year I
6. The Wheel of the Year II
7. Rites of Passage I
8. Rites of Passage II
9. Other Rituals
10. Candle Magic

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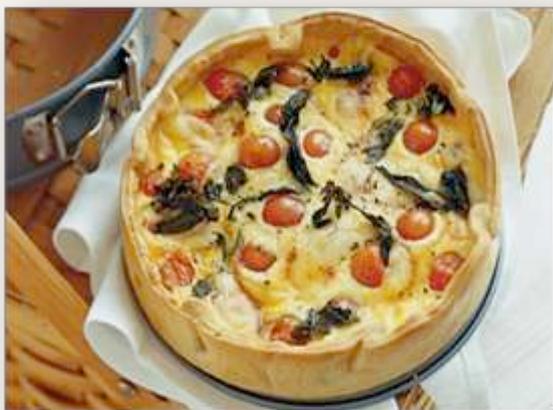
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Kitchen Witchery



Swiss cheese and tomato tart



There's nothing like a picnic on a fine spring day and this easy tart will make a delicious addition to any hamper!

Ingredients (serves 6)

1 large sheet frozen ready-rolled shortcrust pastry (see tip), partially thawed
200g mini roma tomatoes

4 slices Swiss cheese, cut into 1cm strips
8 sprigs basil
1/2 cup thickened cream
1/4 cup milk
1 egg

Method

Preheat oven and a flat baking tray to 200°C. Use pastry to line base and side of a 5cm deep, 20cm (base) springform pan. Trim excess pastry. Line pastry case with baking paper. Half-fill with raw rice. Place on hot tray and bake blind for 10 minutes or until light golden. Remove paper and rice. Bake pastry for a further 5 minutes or until golden and firm to touch.

Remove tart case from oven. Reduce temperature to 180°C. Arrange tomatoes, cheese and basil over warm pastry case. Whisk cream, milk and egg in a jug. Season with salt and pepper. Gently pour egg mixture over tomatoes. Bake tart for 50 minutes or until egg custard is just set. Remove from oven and allow to cool. Refrigerate until chilled. Serve.

Tip:

Shortcrust pastry sheets are available in 2 sizes, large (pie/quiche) or regular. If using regular-sized, you will need to join 2 sheets together. Transport tip: Leave cooked tart in cake pan and cover with foil. Store in an airtight container lined with a tea towel (this prevents tart sliding). Transfer from pan to a plate at picnic. Cut and serve.

<http://www.taste.com.au/recipes/13268/swiss+cheese+and+tomato+tart>

WITCHY CRAFTS
Cleansing Incense

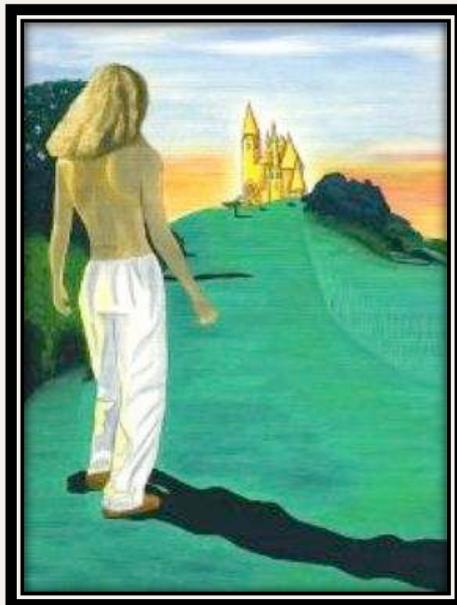


With spring just around the corner, our thoughts turn to spring cleaning. Out with the old and in with the new. Time to change the energy of your house and life.

- Cleansing Incense
 1 part White Sage
 1 part Lavender
 1 part sweet grass

To get the dust shaken off our energy bodies after a cold long winter, the best essential oils to spray in an around your energy field are frankincense, cedar wood, myrrh, jasmine, sandalwood, vetiver, mugwort, and sage. This is to ensure a light and invigorated auric body.

AUGUST TAROT
READING
The Fool



How many times have you felt like a fool? The fool is someone is carefree and has a sense of innocent and awareness. The fool has the innate ability to just trust in life and is ready to take that Leap into the unknown at any given moment.

The fool is our whimsical "inner child" that lives down deep inside of us all. The child that seeks out new possibilities. The fool faces life and the journey unafraid, trusting, the perfect example of total and utter faith that all will be well, that every experience has a deep essential meaning.

If you have been living with restlessness and frustration, now is the time to plan your new adventure. Put those winter blues behind you as it is time to jump off the cliff...

Tarot card is from Glastonbury Tarot by Lisa Tenzin-Dolma

<http://paganwiccan.about.com/od/magicaloils/qt/ImbolcOil.htm>
<http://paranormalutopia.com/2011/05/make-your-own-imbolc-incense511/http://www.suzannebovenizer.com/aromatherapy-essential-oils/spring-cleaning-the-home-and-self/>

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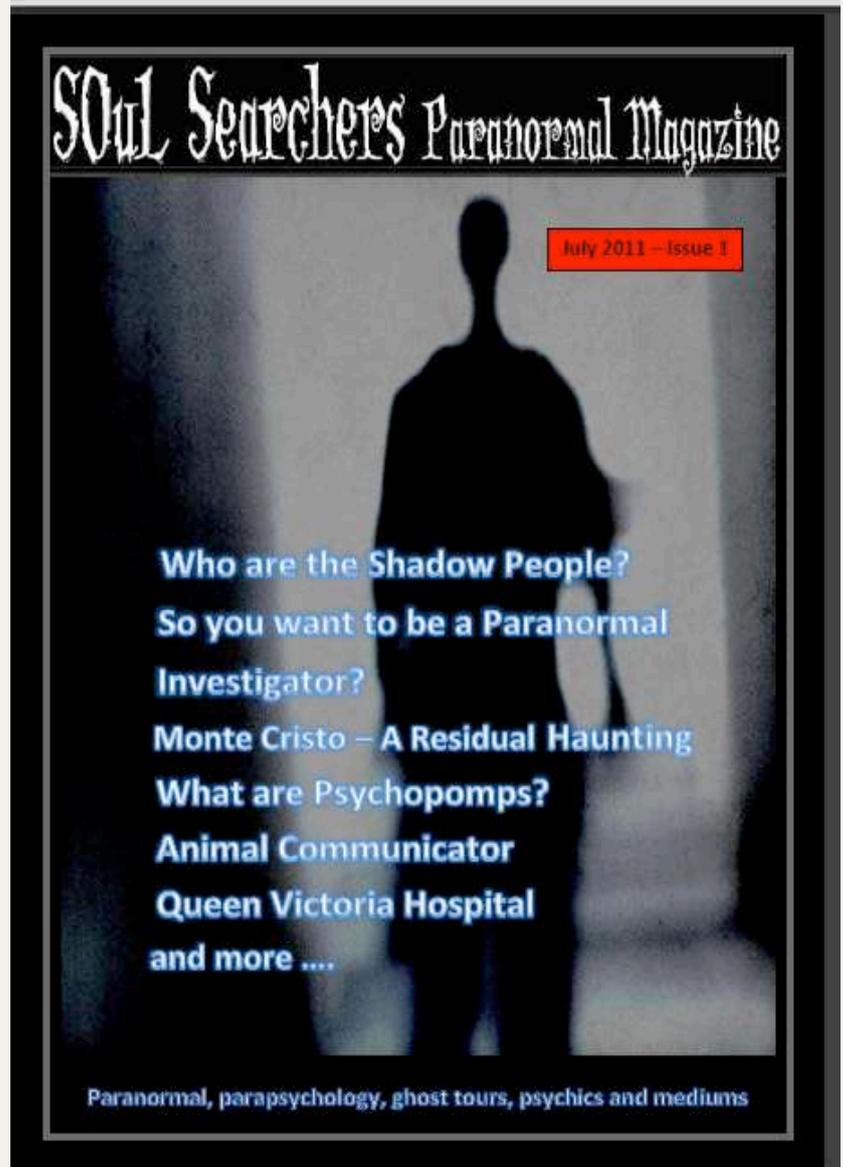
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Welcome to SOuL Searchers Magazine.

This free bi-monthly online magazine was developed from SOuL Searchers Investigations as a way of communicating our experiences and to further our explorations into the realms of the supernatural and the unexplained.

Our magazine is produced every two months and provides topical information to keep you up to date on news and the latest developments happening in the Australian paranormal community. In addition to our announcements on upcoming activities and events, SOuL Searchers Paranormal Magazine will contain articles, photos and information on the paranormal, parapsychology, ghost tours, mysterious locations, psychics and mediums etc.



Click on the magazine cover to see the first issue

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WHAT'S HAPPENING AT SOL?

**SOL Full Moon Circle
September 9, 2011**



Spheres Of Light holds regular Full Moon Circles near Engadine (Southern Sydney, Australia) on the Friday before each Full Moon. These Full Moon gatherings are Open Circles, meaning that all Pagans are welcome to come along any time and experience a Full Moon circle with us. [Details here...](#)

**SOL Meditation in the Royal National Park
Sunday September 18, 2011**



[Click here for more information.](#)

Come join us for meditation in the beautiful surrounds of The Royal National Park. Our meditations will be conducted every third Sunday of the month. Please email inquiries@spheresoflight.com.au for times and meet up details.

(Please Note: you must be over 18 years of age to attend any SOL gatherings, events, classes & workshops.)

OTHER PAGAN AND COMMUNITY EVENTS

Please email us the details of any pagan or community events, classes, workshops or regular meetings that you'd like to see promoted here in this free listing.

**PAN Full Moon Public Circle
Thursday September 12, 2011 at Seven Hills, Sydney ([map](#)) 8:30pm**



PAN Inc. full moon ritual. PAN runs a public full moon ritual each month at Rotaract Hill, Seven Hills. Anyone is welcome to attend - the purpose of the ritual is to provide members of the pagan community an opportunity to celebrate the full moon together & network with friends, it is also a public ritual where those new to paganism can attend to learn more and meet like-minded others, and the rituals also help inform the general public about what pagans do and dispel misguided myths about paganism and witchcraft.

The circle is held on the top of Rotaract Hill on Terminus Road Seven Hills NSW, just next to the train station. Getting there is easy. If you take the train, the hill is less than five minutes' walk (and easily visible from the station). If you drive, there is plenty of parking available both at the base of the hill and across Terminus Road. Full Moon info and contact details here.



When: Saturday 1st October 2011, 7:00 pm.

Where: The Gaelic Hotel Sydney, 64 Devonshire Street Surrey Hills 2011.

Cost: Members tickets are \$70 and non-members \$80, a booking fee applies from our ticketing agents. Members wishing to purchase tickets will need to enter in a password, which can be obtained by emailing Kelly at witchesball@paganawareness.net

If you would like to purchase tickets, please visit the Moshtix Website.

Workshops at Miranda (Embrace) & Wollongong (Lotus)

All of the workshops are highly interactive and experiential, focusing on the participation and engagement of participants.





SOuL Searchers is Spheres of Light's paranormal investigations subgroup. They use a common sense scientific approach to all investigations but also have an open mind to all theories & methodologies.



Crone and Sage is a website that is dedicated to our pagan elders who want to share their knowledge and wisdom, magic and life experiences in the form of articles, poetry, recipes, artwork and music.



The Spheres Of Light Holistic Centre has within its members practitioners who can provide Spiritual Healing in a variety of natural healing modalities.



If you want to know about current topics click here. This is a place where you can discuss ideas and catch up on general news. So if you want to participate please become a member



as we would love to hear from you.

The National Pagan Directory is a Spheres Of Light initiative to help Australian Pagans connect with each other in their local area. It is a FREE listing & provides links to information about covens, groups, workshops, retreats & other special Pagan events, plus Aussie Pagan businesses & services. If you would like your coven, group, regular meet-up to be listed in the NPD please send us your details. To list your one-off or special events please use our Australian Pagan Events forums. We also invite Celebrants in the Pagan community to promote their services in the NPD. For further information & contact details click on the banner above.



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We stand in our power. The spark within us is one with the eternal flame that guides and sustains us on our journey.



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