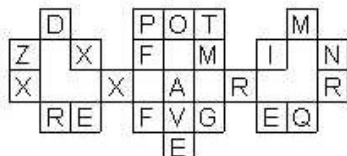


Word Search

This month's topics are Faeries and Norse mythology. If you have any suggestions for future puzzles and word searches please send them to Sparks.



1: mischievous imp who delights in flustering young maidens and leading travelers astray.

2: Faerie Queen of Munster.

3: Water Faeries in Norway. Their feet disappear in a mist. They are guardians of fjords and

waterfalls.

4: Siberian water elves.

5: Green dressed old men creatures who possess a crock of gold.

6: Half human, half fish.

7: The Kelpies were Scottish water horses that sometimes appeared in the form of a man.

8: A domestic hob or hobgoblin. They are found in the North of England and can be found in the Highlands

of Scotland.

9: This is a hobgoblin of Cornwall.

10: This creature is the Irish Puck that is wild and shaggy in appearance and haunts wild places.

11: King of the Faeries.

12: Shakespearean faerie from 'A midsummer Night's dream'.

13: Shakespearean faerie from 'A midsummer Night's dream'.

14: She is a water nymph, and daughter to Father Rhine.

15: This is the collective name given to the warrior gods who live in Asgard.

16: This trickster god is the son of two giants, but usually dwells in Asgard.

17: This is the name given to the battle between the gods and the giants, which will consequently bring about the death of the gods and the end of the world.

18: She is Thor's wife.

19: She is the personi-

fication of spring and youth.

20: This goddess is Odin's wife, and Balder's mother. She is the leader of the Aesir goddesses.

21: He is the god of Summer and is always depicted as a handsome young man in the prime of youth.

22: He is the god of war, and known to be the bravest of the gods

23: This great hall situated in Asgard is where warriors are brought who die an honourable death in Battle.

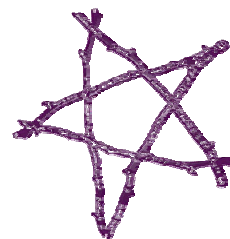
24: The horse that draws the chariot carrying the moon across the sky.

25: Hero of the Volung saga.

26: The name of the one creature in all the worlds that refused to weep over Balder's death.

27: Goddess of death and the underworld, daughter of Loki and Angerboda.

28: A giant, the father of Loki



The Witchtower

WICCAUK MEMBERS MAGAZINE

July-Aug 2003

Issue 5



A Natural Melody

Poetry Corner

Bach Flower Remedies

Interview with Elen Hawke

Dark Night of the Soul

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The cover artwork for this issue of Witchtower is kindly provided by Willow Arlenea. An artist from America whose artwork reflects an intensity, spirituality and love of indigenous cultures combined with brilliant tones and fluidity of movement. Here is a description of the cover art.

'Life is full of transitions, some are painful and some more graceful. This woman is going

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We welcome submissions from any source. Articles or essays, poetry, book reviews, practical advice on aspects of the Craft are all welcome.

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Cover Artwork - 'Transition'

through a difficult transition. She draws upon the deep tenderness and compassion in her own heart for support. Nature is also her ally. The mountains, trees and birds support her with the healing, balancing energy they emanate.'

<http://www.designbywillow.com>

heads in a clear glass bowl filled with natural spring water. This is left in bright sunlight for three hours, then the flower-heads are removed and the energised water is mixed half and half with brandy.

The boiling method involves putting flowering twigs into a pan of spring water and boiling them for half an hour. The pan is then left to cool, the plant matter removed, and again the water is mixed half and half with brandy.

In both cases the resulting mix is the mother tincture, which is further diluted to make the stock bottles sold in the shops.

How are Bach flower remedies taken?

To make a treatment bottle, the standard dilution is 2 drops from each chosen bottle to a 30ml dropper medicine bottle three-quarters filled with spring water or mineral water. A 30ml treatment bottle will be enough for a 3-4 weeks' course

The standard dosage is 4 drops of the diluted remedy on the tongue three or four times daily. Shake the bottle each time before use to activate the remedy. If you are using a single remedy you could take it neat, 2 drops on your tongue at a time. Alternatively you can put 2 drops into a glass of water and sip slowly at intervals

Reactions to Bach flowers

Reactions when first taking Bach flower remedies vary from individual to individual. Some might experience an increased

need for rest and sleep, perhaps accompanied with vivid dreams – a sign that things are moving on an emotional level. Others might feel more positive, more energetic, more stable emotionally, in fact, more content right from the start of the treatment or in the course of just a few weeks.

In rare cases there can initially be a worsening of the emotional or physical symptoms. If this happens, stop taking the remedy until this "healing" reaction has disappeared. Experience has shown that this will take a few hours, or at worst a day or two. Subsequently, start taking the drops again, reducing the dosage slightly at first

How long should treatment last?

In serious acute conditions you will feel better relatively quickly, after perhaps a few hours or one or two days. You can stop taking the drops when you feel emotionally more settled or that you no longer need them. Normally the mixture is taken for three or four weeks, this represents approximately the contents of a 30ml treatment bottle. After this time, if you feel that the drops have been effective but that you still need them, you can repeat the mixture. Or you can compose a different mixture appropriate to your present condition. It can sometimes take a few months before you regain your old equilibrium.

Bach Flower Remedies by Twilight Girl

Bach flower remedies have grown in popularity over the years. Being non-toxic in their action, it is impossible to overdose on them and if an incorrect remedy is taken, it simply has no effect. Bach flower remedies can be used by everyone, including babies and animals.

A brief history lesson

Dr Edward Bach began his medical career in 1906. In 1918 he worked in a hospital where homeopathy was an accepted treatment. Using homeopathic medicines prepared from his vaccines (made up from certain strains of bacteria found in the intestines) after having been inspired by D Samuel Hahmemann's theories (founder of classical homeopathy); Dr Bach began paying more attention to the patient's state of mind rather than their physical symptoms and assigned certain mind states to his medicines. He found that when he treated the personalities and feelings of his patients, their unhappiness and physical distress would be alleviated as the natural healing potential in their bodies was unblocked and allowed to work once more. However he was dissatisfied with his use of vaccines from bacteria and wanted to use something that was of a natural origin. This is where his search for flower remedies began. His first discovery was in 1929 on a visit to Wales; eventually he discovered 38 essences and 27 flowers plus rock water.

What are they for?

Bach flower remedies are used in the treatment of emotional imbalances, negative attitudes and character weakness. Although if you suffer with severe emotional imbalances or physical illnesses they should be used in conjunction with other methods of treatment.

Dr Edward Bach wrote 'Disease of the body itself is nothing but the result of the disharmony between soul and mind. Remove the disharmony, and we regain harmony between soul and mind, and the body is once more perfect in all its parts.'

How do they work?

Bach flower remedies gently restore the balance between mind and body by casting out negative emotions, such as, fear, worry, hatred, jealousy and indecision which interfere with the equilibrium of the being as a whole. The remedies allow peace and happiness to return to the sufferer so that the body is free to heal itself.

How are the remedies made?

The remedies are made by the following two methods and have been made this way since Dr Bach first developed them.

The sun method involves floating flower-

Editorial

Welcome all to issue 5 of the Witchtower, the WiccaUK magazine. Its all been a little hectic around here of late, mainly due to the expansion of the magazine to 20 pages as of this issue.

The Witches Ball which was held in London earlier this month was a complete success and I would like to thank NightWolf and Casp for their hard work put into making the evening completely enjoyable.

We have had a huge response to contributions this month so much so that a lot of the next issue of the magazine has been filled. Thanks to all who have contributed so far but this is not to say that we are not looking for more people who wish to contribute to



the magazine!

This month sees the arrival of some new sections to the magazine such as the 'Life Skills' section by Obsidiana who will respond to members questions and problems each month and also give practical ways to try and help people also. Other sections too in the magazine have increased in size, such as the Poets Corner so that experienced and budding poets alike can have their work showcased in the magazine.

In this issue we can also find articles by Marty Drury, an interview with Elen Hawke, the author of 'Praise to the Moon' as well as Incenses and Oils with Onagh and an article on Bach Flower remedies by Twilight Girl and of course the puzzle at the back, with this months clues being Faeries and Norse Mythology. Enjoy!

BB

Sparks

Moot Information

Here are a number upcoming moots around the country.

We continue to expand the locations and hopefully there's one near you! If not, have you considered setting one up?

There's an article on the site explaining how to do this, but basically, all you need is a date, time, location and for you to turn up on the day. Oh, and to advertise it! Please make sure you keep the forums up to date with the latest developments, and email events@wiccauk.com so we can ensure it's listed on the site and in the various pagan and occult magazines available.

Canterbury Moot

16th August

Bristol Picnic

16th August

Leeds Moot

16th August

Shetland Moot

16th August

London Discussion Group

21st August

Manchester Moot

23rd August

Cambridge Moot

30th August

Manchester Ball

1st November

CoA Witchfest

8th November

Big Green Gathering, Cheddar, July 30th to August 3rd 2003

Most pagans would say that they have more than just a passing concern for the environment, and I would count myself one of them. As such, it was with a view to correcting my appalling record on the matter that I set off to the Big Green Gathering this year. This event has (officially!) been held since 1994, and has been growing at a phenomenal rate. This year - my first - the festival was enormous, with a truly wide scope.

First reactions upon reaching the site were not hopeful, however. Rain on the days prior to the opening of the festival had turned the entire area into a mudbath, and a steady drizzle continued to fall as our bus to the campsite, a fantastic converted red london double decker, fought its way uphill. I suspect that our route had until the previous day been used for moving little more than cows.

Upon alighting, we hastily found a pitch and erected a tent, lying down to catch a moment's rest. Tiredness soon overcame us and we fell asleep. I awoke later during the night, the forceful beating upon our canvas heralding another rainstorm. Things were not going to be easy.

The next morning, things improved. Not the weather, of course - the state of the fields was still deteriorating, and my sandals were not proving themselves up to the task of negotiating metre-deep pools of mud. It was the acquisition of a programme, and with it the realisation of the possibilities that the festival were offering us, that the day looked up.

I had until then imagined that the festival would be concerned with environmentalism and nothing besides. I could not have been more wrong - A "Healing Area" with two large marquees for talks on the subject! A "Spirit Zone" populated by every religion

under the sun (even if the huge Hare Krishna tent was perhaps a little unrepresentative). And best of all, an entire field devoted to "Earth Energies and Divinatory Arts". I had come home.

My first outing was to a talk on "Orgone Generators", and though highly amusing, I found the content of the workshop (apparently the Freemasons are building giant weather machines with alien technology) slightly underwhelming. Good job that the next I visited was more pleasing.

Dushan Djorovich, formerly of Yugoslavia but now a resident of the UK for twelve years, gave a talk on what he termed "The Yugoslavian Energetic Method" of meditation and spiritual development. He is currently in the process of translating four books on the subject into English, and on the basis of the workshop, in which he explained their highly pragmatic system and led a very successful meditation, I will be getting hold of them at the first possible opportunity.

A number of other talks followed throughout the day, and by the time I returned to my tent I was on such a spiritual high that the mud had ceased to bother me. Saturday came, and with it an improvement in the weather, and a workshop on Seidr and Galdar by Runic Jon. This was great for a number of reasons. Firstly, Jon was a highly captivating facilitator, and taught us a lot in a short space of time. Secondly, the looks on the faces of the "New-Agers" when an enormous man carrying a drinking horn (what **are** those things called?) and wearing the clothes to match came into the tent, were priceless. It seems that they also enjoyed the talk - the earthy and matter of fact style with which he tackled such a broad range of subjects was a welcome counterbalance to

if you so desire. Add the less fragile ingredients first, and follow with softer items, or you'll end up with half your blend as a fine powder or even a paste before harder ingredients are beginning to break down. Resins usually powder fairly easily, just with a little effort and determination. Items such as Sandalwood, wormwood, mugwort and witch hazel especially I have found are difficult or impossible to grind to a powder. In this case, just do the best you can, don't keep going forever! Put them into the mortar and pestle before any of your other ingredients, and give them a bit of a grind up. Don't put them in a blender or anything to cheat though, because you'll just block it up! Add essential oils when you are happy with the consistency of the incense blend.

Smouldering the incense - You will need charcoal blocks to smoulder your incense on. These are fairly cheap to buy and available from most new age/witchcraft shops, in real life and online. These can be lit by holding them safely over a candle until the spark and begin to glow orange. They get REALLY HOT so don't hold it in your hands to light it. I have found that it is good to use an old set (or a new one if you don't have any) of eyebrow tweezers. These allow you to hold the block without getting burned. Also, keep your face back when it is being lit, as sparks fly off the surface as it takes the light. Place the charcoal block onto an incense burner (holder)), which can be bought from new age shops or online, or you can put it in a heat proof bowl which has been filled with sand or soil to help absorb the heat. Once lit never pick up the charcoal block because it will burn you, and it may fall apart. To extinguish it before it naturally goes out, pour some cold water gently onto it.

Incense smouldered like this tends to be smoky, so if you don't like too much smoke, use an incense burner with a lid with little holes in, or upend a metal colander over your heat-proof bowl. Just don't touch the metal colander/lid with bare hands while the charcoal is lit, it gets extremely hot.

Blending - as I said previously, try as you might, some blends will simply not blend into a powder. Do not worry about this, incense for charcoal block use does not have to be an absolute powder. I have bought incenses which are powders, and also blends which are basically the ingredients stirred together and put into a bottle. As a general rule I have found that powders burn more quickly and with less smoke, so you will have to keep putting incense onto the charcoal more often. 'Lumpy' incense is more difficult to get all its components onto the charcoal at any one time, and also I find that lumps of resin don't smell that great on their own, and tend to goo up the charcoal block and produce a lot of smoke. Of course, try it for yourself and find what you like.

Experimenting - Once you have made a few blends and tried them out, you will probably want to make your own unique blends. It is lovely to have a ritual where you have made and planned the incense specifically. Putting in the effort to create the blend is a magical act in itself. Start off with an existing blend that you have tried. Have a lit charcoal block ready in a safe holder, and try substituting little bits of ingredient onto the block with the rest of the blend. Add, take away, substitute, try different amounts. Follow your nose. Once again, don't use anything that you aren't sure is safe, you don't want to be taking great lungfuls of smoke from a potentially toxic substance! Have fun with your blending, and realise that creating something for ritual use yourself is a wonderfully witchy experience!

My advice and experience on working with Oils to follow next time....

Blessed blendings,

Onagh (Victoria). xx

Incenses and Oils with Onagh

I have been making incense blends seriously for about 6 months now, and oil blends for about a year and a half. I am not a professional herbalist nor aromatherapist, nor do I claim to be an expert, so I am writing this article to show people that they can do it just because they like to. No qualifications are involved, just a bit of common sense, using pre-prepared recipes and some experimenting. Of course, I must really begin with a cautionary: do not use herbs and oils that you have not personally checked are safe, unless there is a herbalist down the road most people will do this by reading about them. For example, some essential oils can have a sensitising effect on the skin, so aren't suitable for ritual anointing oils, and some herbs give off unpleasant smoke.

Loose Incenses for burning on charcoal:

I recommend starting off with herbs that you can find in any kitchen or garden, and adding to the collection as and when recipes call for other items (you can't possibly buy everything on the off chance you'll use it some day). It is very tempting to go out and buy all the exotic sounding herbs and spices that you can find, but you will find that you'll not use them all. As for buying these herbs and resins for use in incense – health food shops sometime stock herbs for cooking so can be helpful, many witchcraft/pagan shops will have herbal selections, and you can also buy them from the internet. You can also grow some of your own herbs and dry them yourself for use in incenses. Always use dried herbs in incenses, because fresh won't smoulder well on charcoal.

First of all, you will need a good quality mortar

and pestle. Mini or decorative ones are not the best things to use. I have a white marble mortar and pestle that I use for my incense blending. Heavy and rough pestle and mortar materials are the best for effective herb and resin grinding in my experience.

If you are a complete beginner, it is best to invest in/search out incense recipe books. Scott Cunningham's Complete book of Incense Oils and Brews is a great place to start, and it gives you cautionary information also. Most general witchcraft books seem to have a few of the author's favoured incense recipes in them, which may be useful for recipe ideas, so check out your bookshelf. You can start off using ready written recipes, it is easier to create harmonious incenses using a tried and tested method. As you progress and become more confident you can embellish and alter recipes, and come up with your own from scratch.

Incense blends are usually made up of a combination of resins, herbs and essential oils. (Use only pure essential oils, not perfumes, since the man made perfumes smell a bit like plastic as they smoulder!). Many recipes will ask for weights or 'parts' in the blends. I usually use parts, and measure them out using a measuring spoon. I haven't got any fancy scales or anything, and you don't need to have. Most of my measurements are only rough, precision isn't necessary, so long as you stick to the 'parts' as you understand them. Some items are much easier to grind to a powder than others, so if you can buy pre-powdered items, it will save you time and effort



some of the more vacuous spiritualism being promoted elsewhere.

Another of the many highlights of the gathering came on Saturday night. Kelfin Pa Tricks Oberon, an Irishman now living in Brighton, performed the most powerful invocation that I've ever seen, and cleverly disguised it as a poetry reading. He was ably assisted by what could only be described as a Pagan Rastafarian (?), his young son Patrick (a most amazing boy of less than two years' age), his lady wife, and the entire audience, who thoroughly got into the spirit of the thing. Kelfin's reading came under the banner of "Da Return of De Fairies", and there were fairies everywhere. He seemed to work with a sort of etymological gematria - impressive stuff. Later in the evening he made a smaller invocation - the results of both still have me reeling.

Sunday was intensely hot. The sun beat down and dried out the ground, and we were treated to some more great workshops. It was with a heavy heart that I went to the tent that night, in the knowledge that we would be leaving the next day.

What more can I tell you? I haven't yet mentioned the fantastic music of all varieties, the cabaret at the end of the world, the incredible fire shows, the permaculture and craft areas, the culture of co-operation and friendliness in the campsite, and all of the other things that made this festival so special. If you count yourself pagan, go to the Big Green Gathering next year. That is an order.

Ben Collier

Awakening

We see our world through tunnelled light
refusing to see the true plane of sight
Its filled with love and things so green
refuse to tell of all the things we've seen

But in order to elevate from one plane to the next
Its time to see the written word, true text
and open our heart to the other side
believe it exists no fear to hide

that doesn't mean we need to be enflamed
Just acknowledge it is there and can be tamed
For true magick is filled with dark and light
and we realise this when we find true our true Knight

to exist is to be and all that we are
and with every dark moon comes a shining star
acknowledge both sides and then you'll be free
all true planes beyond earth and beyond integrity

New world, bright light can still be found
With the protection of the gateway hound
look deep inside and drag out from within
all your angels and demons where is hope, is sin

Initiation Poem copyright June 03

Obsidiana x

Snow Faeries

White crystals shine upon long black hair
deep green eyes from beneath do stare
beneath those eyes she is no longer there
for her spirit flies free in the cold frosty air.

She hears each snowflake as it hits the ground
a crystal clink as it locks to its neighbours near
soft voices call from all around
from just out of sight, but so very clear.

Small footprints meander across the ground
footprints that normal eyes will not show
for snow faeries do here abound
that her spirit can now know.

With a rush of breath and a cold bite to the face
her spirit returns to its mortal place
her heart beats loud in the now silent air
her eyes lids flutter, she is now there

Merry part and brightest blessings
lithilgore



offensive towards you,

This is completely out of character so your initial reaction might be "oh my god Why is she being like this, I have known her ages and love her dearly!

Denial

Then you think about it more and it festers and you start to feel knots in your stomach

You might say things like" I can't believe she is being like this, perhaps it was me misinterpreting the situation.

Depression

The next thing you start to feel is very depressed, she has been your best friend forever and you blame yourself that she no longer feels it necessary to respect your feelings, or perhaps it's all your fault, this always happens to me (You get the picture)

Unfortunately a lot of us remain in the depression stage for a while and this can make it difficult for us to solve the problem effectively. You may start to distance yourself from your friend and in severe cases of depression you can distance yourself from others too. It is the hardest thing in the world to try and resolve the problem when you are stuck in the depression stages as you cannot see a solution. The other factor is the cycle of depression, the more depressed you become the less chemicals your body will produce so that you remain that way.

Testing

In order for us to start to rectify a problem the first thing we need to do is to start testing the water. The easiest way to do this is to spend a few minutes a day trying to come up with workable solutions. One way is to sit down and write the problem down on a piece of paper, then draw bubbles coming from the problem and add one solution per day e.g I could ask her why she reacted like that. I could consider

if she has had any changes recently that might make her behave in that way. It could even be as simple as reviewing you own recent behaviour to see if it might be something that you said to your friend not meaning to offend her.

A warning! – only let your mind focus on any one problem for five minutes a day, as soon as you feel it being longer "put it to bed!" It may take a few days, weeks or even years to get through the testing stage but acceptance will not follow until we do. There is also the danger that the more time you spend thinking about the problem the more depressed you will become.

This method can be related to any problem and there won't always appear to be an immediate solution. Yes there will be times when one might need to look for outside help but as long as we remain in the depression stage, that outside help is unlikely to be gained.

Acceptance

Once a solution has been found either from thinking through the problem or gaining help we then start to accept that the problem may indeed be resolved or at least plans can be put into place in order to start working towards a solution. Once the acceptance stage is over we then can start moving on with life and the despair of depression starts to lift. In this particular example it could have been that the friend had bad news and acted completely out of character but we spent so much time worrying about it without exploring the solutions we could not come through the depression stage or accept the friends behaviour was out of character.

It is important to remember that sometimes people do need help to be lifted from the depression stage but I leave you with a favourite quote.

Quote " 95% of what we actually worry about never usually happen or happened differently to what we perceived!" (Anon)

Ask Obsidiana

Hi, My name is Obsidiana and over the next few issues of "The Witchtower" we would like to introduce you to a new section which can help with improving your life skills. This section will include information based on any specific problems you are experiencing and need help with, information on enhancing current social and behavioural skills and advice on herbal remedies, crystal properties and healing.

What we cannot do is provide advice which is meant to take the place of your GP and I must stipulate that any recommendations made are not intended to replace that of the health service.

Just to give you some background on my qualifications, I have a certificate in Training Practice and will be studying a Diploma in November. I currently train life skills such as Overcoming Objections, Assertiveness techniques, Problem Solving techniques and a lot of my training involves Stress management and attitudinal training.

I specialise in an area that trains people how to counsel others on debt problems and am employed and sponsored by a large financial institution. I also have a qualification in Business Law and Credit Management.

There will be research at my disposal from others, one of whom is currently doing her final year in psychology and advanced Counselling and will be working for a drop in centre and I also have the advice of somebody who trains socially unacceptable (and disabled) adults on life skills.



To kick this section off, the topic is going to be on "Effective Problem Solving". Happy Reading and if anybody would like to contribute or needs any advice for the next section

Please feel free to contact me via WiccaUK.

BB Obsidiana xxx

Effective Problem Solving

Have you Ever experienced a time in you life when you are faced with one problem after another and often find it difficult to come up with workable solutions to these problems

If so then your not alone. The reason why we can sometimes fester on problems and aren't able to reconcile them is the same for all of us. I am going to demonstrate firstly the reason why we sometimes aren't able to solve problems effectively.

When we are faced with a major change in situation or circumstance or when a problem surfaces that we can't deal with we go through a similar cycle. Look at the steps below and think about how you might have reacted in a similar situation in the past.

Shock

Normally when faced with a particular life problem we react by going into shock, Let me give you an example, a friend that you have known for years suddenly starts being very

Stars

Every evening they climb up,
they're always on their way.
And although you sometimes can't see their face,
they're up there every day.

They're always happy,
they always shine.
They're always laughing,
they always look fine.

Maybe if the earth falls,
maybe if our days end.
these very light and twinkling balls
maybe they will help and send:

A beam of brightness,
in these very dark days.
a ray of lightness,
to light up our ways.

So if you ever look outside at night
and see them lighting up the sky,
Please remember that you might,
also shine down on us when you die...

Dark_Angel



Esbats by Oona

Esbats are the monthly gathering of a modern witch's coven and they are ideally timed to coincide with nights when there is a full moon. They may be held outside or indoors.

Traditionally every coven holds thirteen esbats in a year, in accordance with the lunar calendar. Modern witches believe that only three magical rites may be attempted at a single esbat, as more would exhaust their potency.

Esbats are considered working celebrations and they are times for you to raise energy, cast spells, perform healings, etc. You may also wish to spend the time honouring the God and Goddess.

Working witches are familiar with the standard phases of the moon;

New - personal growth, healing and blessing of new projects or ventures. It is also a good time to cleanse and consecrate new tools.

Waxing - use for attraction magic, inner love spells, protection for couples and healing energy for couples.

Full - banishing unwanted influences in your life, creating protection magic and performing divination.

Waning - use for banishing and rejecting those things that influence us in negative ways. Negative emotions, diseases, ailments and bad habits can all be let go off and special spells for clearing can be performed at this time.

Dark - typically no magic is performed at

this time and it is a time to give yourself a break from magic. Vision quests and meditations are called for at this time to focus on personal matters, questions and answers.

Due to the rotation of the Earth there are thirteen full moons and each carries a traditional name;

January - wolf moon

February - storm moon

March - chaste or seed moon

April - hare moon

May - dyad moon

June - mead moon

July - wort moon

August - barley moon

September - harvest or wine moon

October - blood moon

November - snow moon

December - oak moon

This month's (August) moon is the Barley moon and it is a time to harvest the gifts you have nurtured and give to those who are in need. Collect and store fresh herbs for the coming winter. Bake special breads to honour the Gods and Goddesses of grain and growing things, share them with your family and friends but save some also to offer to the Earth.

A penchant for Potter

"For me there is still a large question mark hanging over anyone older than 15 who reads this when they don't have to write about it." [Stephanie Merritt. Deputy Literary Editor. The Observer. 22/06/2003.] Upon easing back the weight of the hardback cover I expected to be confronted by an ensemble of cute elves and insufferable creatures straight from the imagination of 'Pocket Dragon.' Instead, I was confronted by a world of soul-sucking monsters, rising evil and corrupt institutions of government. All this before I had reached 100 pages of Harry Potter & The Order of the Phoenix.

"Ms Rowling is widely feted for getting children excited by books again. But I love for the other gift: getting adults excited by childhood again." [Review Columnist Victoria Coren. The Observer 22/06/2003.] On the Saturday The Order of the Phoenix was prized from Bloomsbury's grasp, I journeyed into three bookstores in my hometown on Evesham. Cardboard signs dwarfed the customers in WHSmith where spending over £15.00 bought Harry Potter for a reduced price. The owner of Book Bargains of Evesham reported in casual conversation to his staff that he'd earned over a thousand pounds in the short hours from midnight to midday. While I was browsing the Stephen King section in this particular store, a young boy arrived with

his mother. The boy caught a glimpse of yellow and began dancing; a glint flashing in his mother's eye with a similar intensity.

Upon leaving the store, a playful argument ensued as to who was to read the book first. A compromise was reached. They would read it together.

If one hadn't been noting the medias salivating anticipation for the book for over a month now, one might have thought all the commotion in high streets across the country on 21st June was for a movie icon rather than a hardback with a yellow cover. Originally a "Potter Sceptic," I couldn't resist the magic and the marketing. Potter anticipates the rise of Lord Voldemort. His creator is wise to the return of story in fiction. No more hidden social comment. No more reading between the lines. Ms Rowling is not trying to take a stand against governments or start a revolution. The story is king and this English graduate thinks its return is long overdue.

Marty Drury

You can hear an audio version of this article at www.justmyvoice.net



Do you practise as part of a specific tradition of Wicca or Witchcraft, or Eclectic? Do you believe anyone can be Wiccan, by following the Rede and trying to live ethically with faith in the Gods, or do you believe you must be initiated into a tradition? - Casp

I was initiated into both Gardnerian Wicca and Druidry, but my practice is eclectic now. I don't necessarily subscribe to the Rede as such, though it goes without saying that we all need to respect the rights of others. Anyone can be pagan; it isn't necessary to be initiated. I went through initiation myself as part of my quest for experience, but I don't think it gives me a superior edge in any way.

Imagine you were a "stereotypical" witch and you had a magic broomstick you could fly on! where would you like to go to? and what would sit at the end of your broomstick!? hehe!! - Aluks

Why, to Sainsbury's of course my dear ;-)

And what you see on the end of my broomstick is a pair of panniers to put my shopping in, and possible one of those flashing lights so motorists can see me in the dark...

What was your first ever divination tool? and in what way did it help you? - Emerald_Sundance

My first ever divination tool was the I'Ching. It tried to help me, but I was very good at ignoring it in those days - unless it agreed with me over whether or not I was going to manage to attract some bloke or other.

Do you find it difficult to get your point across when writing? - Enharmaiel

Goodness, there's a question! I very much hope not. People keep buying my books, so hopefully I'm managing to put my point clearly enough... Do you think I find it difficult to put my point across? ;-)

Do you think 'fluffy bunnies' are a good or bad thing? - Pila-Pala

Fluffy bunnies bad in that they give the media an erroneous impression of the rest of us, and good in that they are valid to those who want to be fluffies. People come into the Craft on many different levels, and if someone wants to be a fluffy bunny, then let's not get all superior about it :)

What do you think of the ideas of 'The Rede' and 'Law of return' (threefold law, karma, etc.)? Where do you think Pagan or Wiccan ethics and morals come from within the religions (rather than from the individuals upbringing etc.)? Do you think the Rede should be, can be, or has become the be all and end all of Wiccan ethics and morality? - Silvertree

Karma is an eastern concept, adopted by westerners. If you look at it as a form of universal balance, as cause and effect in action, then you will have a good idea of what it's all about. The Rede itself was invented by Gerald Gardner, as was, as far as I know, the Law of Threefold Return. I'm not happy about the concept of things rebounding three times, as this seems to contradict natural law. I personally think we are all responsible for our actions and must balance out any negativity, but only equal to the amount we have put things out of line. If you have a three times counter swing, then you create another form of imbalance! But the Rede is an extension of the code of ethics found in many religions. I think it has become the be all and end all of Wiccan ethics only for those individuals who aren't prepared to think for themselves - these people are probably still responding to the underlying Judeo-Christian ethic of western culture. It's difficult to lay down totally rigid rules for people to live by, as, beyond a few basics and up to a point, morality and ethics are personal issues.

A Natural Melody

"Summer, for me is all about the that special fortnight of missing trains, finding the dry-cleaners unexpectedly shut, and recording all those wonderful television programmes broadcast an hour after the ones I usually watch." [Journalist Victoria Coren in The Observer Review. March 30th 2003.]

Given that culture at large no longer sets its watch by the wheel of the Sabbats, one could be forgiven for thinking that modern man has lost touch with the wealth of colour and texture that reside within the seasons. The summoning of summer reminds us to put the passport in a safe place and the coming of winter causes many a gas company to rub their hands with glee. Yet, the impact of yearly cycles appears lost on the modern world. The human race is founded on a paradoxical theology. It gives birth and seeks to govern reproduction through cloning and genetics. Man has left the nest of nature to set up digs in a council flat.

Not everyone subscribes to the theology that time is money and that when it rains all we need do is complain about the lack of Tennis and not -under any circumstances- celebrate anything as natural as the weather. The first step in the 'resistance against rush' is to 'get in touch with ourselves.' Only by re-discovering our own 'natural melody' can we attune to the rhythms of the earth. All a matter of hitting the right note. One may choose from a variety of different means to 're-discover the real you.' Relaxation Music is close to begetting its own genre thanks to those who like a quiet moment to indulge in gentle melodies and rushing brooks.

One of the most popular producers of Relaxation Music is *Bliss* fronted by Lucinda Drayton and Andrew Blissett. Published through Glenn Harrold's Diviniti Publishing, *Bliss* wrestle music from the privacy of art and use it as a means of positive change. Their CD *Journey* is specially arranged in the format of 'a meditation' while *A Hundred Thousand Angels* boasts songs that relax, captivate and inspire. Though *Bliss* may be distant from the gothic presence of The Medieval Baebes, their music speaks for them. Only a true artist may cast a spell with their songs. For *Bliss*, such things come as standard. *Sunrise* [on *A Hundred Thousand Angels*] joins love for man to love for the seasons, while *Shiv Shakti* cites "She who spins and cuts the way, she who occupies sacred space."

As far as the natural rhythms are concerned, we are metronomes. If we block our ears to the song of the Earth, we hear it anyway. Those of us who forget to put the clocks forward each year follow their own time, echoes of an old and distant rhythm. A blissful echo of a beginning.

Marty Drury

Bliss CDs are available through www.hypnosisaudio.com and JustMyVoice.net. You can hear an audio version of this article at www.justmyvoice.net.

WiccaUK Interview with Elen Hawke

Which book or person has been most influential in shaping your Craft? - Ruby

Strangely enough, the book which had the most effect on me isn't specifically pagan, though it has a chapter which focuses on the god Pan, and the rest of the book is intertwined with Nature. It is Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows*. I read it when I was around six, and it has haunted me ever since.

What has been the biggest motivation/influence to you when writing your three books? Do you have plans for any more books? How did you first get drawn into Witchcraft/Paganism? - Casp

Well, to take your questions one at a time :-)

The greatest influence on me is always the natural world: the seasons; animals and birds; the great cosmic tides; sun moon and weather.

I have a fourth book, a spell book, with Llewellyn right now. I was invited to write a contribution for *Spells, The Anthology* along with twelve other well known pagan authors, and this will be out this Yule, published by Seventh House. I have also initiated and edited a group project, a book of spells written from the perspective of putting magic back into the context of the Craft, giving safe, ethical guidelines. That will be going off to Llewellyn shortly.

My first pull towards the Craft was with the Kenneth Grahame book when I was very young. I began to actively explore and express my pagan bias about sixteen years ago; but I had studied other spiritual and occult disciplines long before that.

Are there any opportunities in life that you missed, but wish you hadn't? Why did you decide to start writing? If you could say one sentence, and know beyond all doubt that the moment after you said it, it would become true, what would you say? Or would you say nothing? - mattw

Elen Hawke is the author of *In The Circle*, *Crafting the Witches Path* which was published by Llewellyn in January 2001 and has sold consistently well ever since around the world. All three books are self help manuals for witches and pagans and interweave instructions and advice with seasonal observations, and descriptions of Elen's own coven at work. The books can be used equally by solitaires, groups and magical partnerships.

I think it's negative to think in terms of missing opportunities. Whichever choices we make, something has to be sacrificed (if only people realised this also applies to magic, many spell workers would be more careful!); but for everything given up, many more opportunities open out of the decisions made. And if you really regret missing out on something, go and do it. I regretted not finishing at art school in the seventies, but I went back to college at

the end of the nineties and did a course in photography and digital illustration - I got far more from it than the course I was doing when I was younger.

I began writing seriously in my early teens.

I can't think of anything which I would wish for currently, as my needs are fairly well met right now...a bit more time to myself would be nice, but I don't want it badly enough to worry. If you think about it, your excellent question is one which is implicated every time we work a spell to bring something we desire, though it would be unusual for the magic to work that fast!

What could you never give up? How would you like to be remembered? - FireAngel

I could never give up reading. I'm a total reader-holic!

To be honest, I'm not fussed about being remembered. Let someone else have a turn once I'm gone :-)

Are you satisfied with the way the media portrayal Wicca? Who is the most influential person in your life? What was it like publishing your first book to what its like with your latest books? - Louise

This is a good question, and one it would be worth making the topic of a whole discussion. Things have got better with regard to the subject, but they are far from perfect. Newspaper interviews or articles seem to be better informed and more sympathetic, but television drama still errs on the side of sensationalism. This latter runs a whole range of silliness from the finger snapping magical tricks shown on programmes like *Charmed* to the usual Devil worshipping, naked orgies which have always been used to describe us by our detractors.

I don't have a most influential person in my life. I think it's important for all of us to explore a number of sources and then make up our own minds about what we want, both within our Craft lives and more generally.

I was a lot more nervous when waiting to hear if my first book had been accepted. I feel more prosaic about the process now. It's just a job in one sense, though a highly enjoyable job which I wouldn't want to swap for anything else. I was also more excited when first hearing that I was going to have a book published...

How do you see present day Paganism and how do you think it has changed and will change? Are you optimistic about the future of Paganism? Is there anything about present Paganism that you dislike or disagree with? - Silvertree

I'd like to answer these three questions together, as they are very much linked. Currently paganism is becoming much more accepted and more mainstream. In one way this is good, because it means that people have more information and can choose whether it's for them, and if so which form suits. However, when relig-

ions or spiritual ways become more accessible, they inevitable begin to fossilise. The original inspiration and creativity begin to give way to rules, regulations and thou shalt nots. People stop thinking for themselves and begin to worry about whether they are doing it right. We need to make sure that paganism stays fresh, alive and evolving, and that means present day pagans thinking for themselves, trying out what works for them personally, refusing to be led but instead making their own careful, informed decisions and taking personal responsibility.

How do you think books and websites like this have influenced the form of Wicca/Paganism today? - Arual

Books and the Internet have a huge influence on the way we experience paganism. For many of us, our early experiences of paganism are formed directly from information gleaned from these sources. They are the first and sometimes the only points of contact for enormous numbers of pagans.

What are your views on abortion, contraception and teenage pregnancy? Do you find the lack of dogma in Paganism makes it harder to form opinions on such complex issues? - Dragonfly

To answer your very controversial first question: I personally feel it's impossible to have rigid views on these subjects because each case is different. However, I do feel it is short-sighted for people want to deny sex education to teenagers. The subject should be thoroughly discussed with people in their teens; they should be given as much information as possible on all aspects of sex and pregnancy. I would have preferred my own daughter to wait before beginning a sexual relationship, but once she did so I supported her, even celebrated with her.

I don't think paganism does lack dogma. And there are as many differing views among pagans who are pagan as among those who are not.