



# Gylden Magick

Find us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/gyldenpaganfellowship/>

## August 2022

PRACTICAL MAGICK & UNIVERSAL ENERGY FOR EVERYDAY LIFE

## Editor's notes

by Gylden Fellowship

Welcome to **GYLDEN MAGICK** – the spiritual magazine from Gylden Fellowship that spans both traditional and newer pagan beliefs and practice.

The **Gylden Community** is one of the most extensive pagan libraries in southern England. Its website, [www.gyldenfellowship.co.uk](http://www.gyldenfellowship.co.uk), is growing too and we welcome new members constantly.

As with the August 2021 issue, **our focus for the summer is on the creative side** – with folktales, poetry, plenty of celestial events to look forward to and artwork; the picture above was painted by one of our admins. All of our contributors come from the Gylden Community, providing a mix of poetry, wisdom and stories.

Past editions of **GYLDEN MAGICK** can be accessed on our website and on Facebook too. And a revamped format will come along in our **September 2022** issue, to include new series and authors.

One of the themes to be explored in our next year of publication will be **paganism and societal norms** or cultural flashpoints. This includes such issues as trans rights for LGBT pagans, sexual harassment and predation at pagan events, disability and paganism for those in poverty.

We'll also look at **community matters**, including environmental activism, witchcraft for local communities and the appropriation of cultural symbols. Before the 15<sup>th</sup> century, witches were revered members of their communities,

known as cunning or wise folk. Is there any way that we can aspire to a similar status today? I think so, starting locally and leaving the national stuff for the likes of the PF.

Anything else? Oh yes, the title – we never forget that our faith is based upon Nature and that our strength comes from earth magick, regardless of the diversity of pagan pathways.

Many of our annual festivals are based upon the light, e.g. the solstices and the equinoxes, as significant to us today as to our ancestors.

For more info, why not join **Gylden River LRC** or **Gylden Fellowship** groups on Facebook today?

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"I guess we'll never know why they beach themselves."

# The Lion's Gate Portal

By Gylden Fellowship

*The Lionsgate Portal is a gateway into both the heavens and higher realms of consciousness. It is activated every year around 8 August when the Sun, Sirius and the Earth are in a certain alignment. During this time, higher frequency energies from the star, Sirius, encompass Earth, in order to help advance the human race and raise the consciousness of the planet.*

**LION'S GATE PORTAL**  
OPENING JULY 26TH - AUGUST 12TH

Sit in the sun and meditate each morning to absorb light codes.

Occurs when the Earth aligns with the star system Sirius

Peaks on August 8th

Journal prompt for each morning:  
"How am I different than I was yesterday?"

Be open to flashes of brilliance, intuition, and insight.

@SPIRITDAUGHTER

# Gylden Magick indexes

Here we are then – **GYLDEN MAGICK** started in **September 2018**, as a magazine/ digest for the Gylden area – with a difference – more information-type articles and less of the news/ gossip (and no ads) that take up so much space in other publications. But, we (that's the admin team) want the magazine to evolve with new series and features, which is what you'll see from **September 2022**. However, the tables below provide a handy quick-reference to the monthly crystals and some of the other features – all the past issues of **GYLDEN MAGICK** can be found either on our website or Facebook group. The crystal texts marked **with \* are those contributed by Charlie Foreverdark**.

Gylden Magick	Monthly crystals	Monthly herbs	Monthly altar tools
September 2018	Aventurine	Yarrow	
October 2018	Black tourmaline	Mugwort	
November 2018	Sunstone	Nettles	
December 2018	Blue lace agate	Slippery elm	
January 2019	Celestite	Comfrey	Incense
February 2019	Red jasper	Roman chamomile	Athame
March 2019	Blue jade	Lavender	Chalice
April 2019	Malachite	Plantain herb	Cauldron
May 2019	Citrine	Cowslip	Pentacle
June 2019	Labradorite	Lemon balm	Statuettes and icons
July 2019	Amazonite	Mullein	Crystal balls
September 2019	Rainbow bismuth	Dill	Colours
October 2019	Green calcite	Hibiscus	Produce
November 2019	Topaz	Rosemary	Broom
December 2019	Selenite	Bayberry	Stang

Gylden Magick	Monthly spells	Meditations	Monthly recipes
September 2018	Peace & harmony		Mushroom soup
October 2018	Candle protection		Samhain muffins
November 2018	Improve a friendship		Tomato & chickpea soup
December 2018	A winter wish		Vegan Yule gravy
January 2019	Good fortune	Trees	Mushroom hot-pot
February 2019	Look for love	Fountain	Choco-chip biscuits
March 2019	Friendship on the rocks	Root chakra	Ostara cakes
April 2019	Charging a pendulum	Forest of the soul	Lavender drinks
May 2019	Daisy magick	Starseeds	Vegan Beltaine meal
June 2019	Lose that anger	A summer's walk	Litha beans & peppers
July 2019	Protective circles	On the beach	Vegan ice lollies
September 2019	Mabon magick		Orange rocks
October 2019	Samhain spells		Autumn mushrooms
November 2019	November magick		Winter stew
December 2019	Magick for Yule		Yule ginger biscuits

Gylden Magick	Monthly crystals	Monthly herbs	Sacred art
January 2020	Chrysoprase	Vervain	
February 2020	Fluorite	Violets	
March 2020	Jet	Japanese knotweed	
April 2020	Amethyst	Borage	
May 2020	Lapis lazuli	Alkanet	
June 2020	Onyx	Mint	
July 2020	Moonstone	Allium cepa	
September 2020	Larimar	Lemon verbena	
October 2020	Carnelian	Wormwood	
November 2020	Tiger's eye	Sage	
December 2020	Snowflake obsidian	Hyssop	
January 2021	Aquamarine	Juniper	
February 2021	Haematite	Chicory	Iran's Pink Mosque
March 2021	Beryl	Lady's mantle	Inuit art
April 2021	Garnet	Rose	The Book of Durrow
May 2021	Turquoise	Lovage	Ise Grand Shrine
June 2021	Amber	Aloe vera	Sumerian/Mesopotamian
July 2021*	Sapphire + Vivianite	Cleavers	First Nation totem poles
September 2021*	Watermelon tourmaline		Marrakech geometry
October 2021*	Alexandrite		Aboriginal
November 2021*	Mica		Celtic knotwork art
December 2021*	Rhodocrosite		Diwali
January 2022*	Obsidian		Wassail and Mari Lwyd
February 2022*	Septarian		Eastern Orthodox
March 2022*	Chrysoberyl		Purim
April 2022*	Pyrite		Zoroastrian
May 2022 *	Kunzite + Sapphires		Meso-American
June/ July 2022*	Sodalite		Nubian Kush



Chalcopyrite crystal

Gylden  
Magick  
August 2022

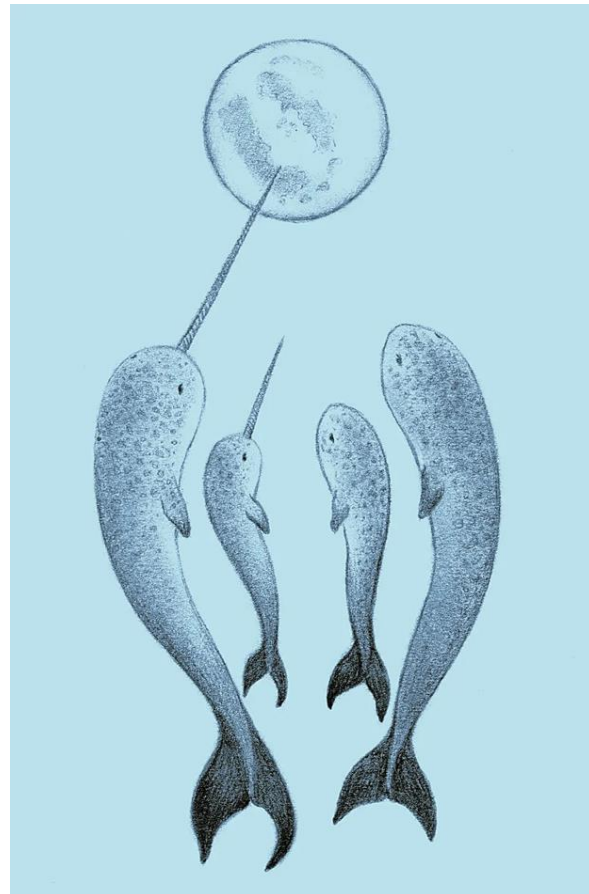
## Artwork: Bernadette Flynn

Contact: [https://www.inprnt.com/profile/dreamers\\_moon/](https://www.inprnt.com/profile/dreamers_moon/)

Or, if you are looking for a unique range of cute gift ideas, check out my Redbubble store...

<https://www.redbubble.com/people/Dreamers-Moon/shop?asc=u>





# Celestial notes

*By Joanna Bristow-Watkins, Harmony Healing*

As mentioned before, we are very pleased to feature **Joanna Bristow-Watkins** as one of our regular contributors for **GYLDEN MAGICK** in 2022 and, here, we're including a few details about her expertise – many thanks to Rebecca Granshaw for suggesting Joanna. Joanna runs **Harmony Healing**, which may be accessed at [www.harmonyhealing.co.uk](http://www.harmonyhealing.co.uk). It should be noted that some of the training events are online at present – all details on Joanna's website.

## Forest Bathing+ Sessions with Joanna & Katie

We have Harmony in Nature forest bathing sessions at Cannon Hill Common, London SW20 (Sunday 7 August), Harry Edwards Healing Sanctuary, Shere (Wednesday 17 August) and Kosmon Sanctuary at Tadworth, near Epsom (Thursday 18 August).

**Virtual Events:** All you need to take part via Zoom is a computer with a webcam and microphone. It's very easy to download and use. If you do not have Zoom, visit <https://zoom.us/> and sign up for free.

## Monthly Virtual Healing Circle & Unity Consciousness Meditations

I'll be running my next Full Moon Guided Healing & Unity Consciousness Meditation via Zoom on Thursday 11 August, at 7.30-9.30pm (UK time = GMT). Participants all receive a deeply healing experience. Cost to participate is £20 by online BACS payment (small admin fee added for PayPal) or half price to RSE or Moon Course graduates. See Harmony Shop to book. If you can't join our virtual healing share, but want to have distant healing sent to you, reply to this email with your name and you will be added to the 'absentee guest list'.

During these monthly sessions, we connect with other like-minded people and together we work through a mindful chakra balancing process using colours and etheric crystals, with the aim that all participants will experience a degree of unity consciousness. This activity serves as a good taster of my work in general and the virtual format of our Zoom-based programme. And, most importantly, it's a step towards making a difference to the global predicament.

## Other Harmony Healing Services

Harmony Healing activities are aimed at bringing harmony and wellbeing into your life. Currently, events are virtual, except for Forest Bathing+, hence distant readings and healings are proving popular and we have low cost **meditations** available as well as **distant 1-2-1 healings**. Remember that **Harmony Healing gift vouchers** are available for use against any of our services.



Joanna is a Reyad Sekh Em® Egyptian Alchemy Healer and Teaching Mentor. We also have **meditations** available and a number of virtual courses including **Reyad Sekh Em (RSE) Egyptian Alchemy Healing Level 1**. Joanna also offers **distant intuitive readings (past life and/or aura readings)** and **distant 1-2-1 healings** posts regularly on **Instagram** and **Linked-In**.



*August in Britain is school summer holidays. Time for summer camping and outdoor festivals and, our Summer Bank Holiday, this year on Monday 29 August, with typically lots of rain. As someone with a late August birthday I can testify to rain being very common indeed! The month of August was renamed by Augustus Caesar, after himself. Under Roman rule, it was previously called Sextillia, meaning the 6th month in Latin. When the Gregorian calendar was established by Pope Gregory XIII in 1582, January became the opening month of the calendar year. To the Anglo-Saxons, August was called *Pēodmōnaþ*, meaning 'weed (or grass) month'.*

*During August, we have Khemitian (Ancient Egyptian) New Year on 1st - which is also Pagan Lunasa/Lammas, Lion's Gate (8th) and the Perseid Meteors (9th-17th August, peaking 11th/12th). We can also look forward to three other annual Egyptian Festivals plus a selection of Chinese, Buddhist and Hindu Festivals as well as a Roman annual commemoration. Katie and I will still be at the Sun & Moon Festival (Merrist Wood, Guildford) until 2 August, where we will be offering a selection of workshops and Forest Bathing Taster Sessions. The Full Moon Guided Healing Meditation is taking place on Thursday 11th, the night before the Sturgeon Supermoon which reaches its peak @ 02:36 (Thursday night/Friday morning).*

**Monday 1 August is the Ancient Egyptian New Year**, traditionally marking the start of the Nile flood, started by the tears of Aset (Isis) over the death of Asar (Osiris). The exact correlation of the Egyptian New Year to the modern calendar is disputed, but I favour the linking with the heliacal rising of Sirius (dawn visibility of Sirius) as this star, known to the Egyptians as Sopdet (pronounced Soppday) was closely associated with Aset.

In the Northern Hemisphere, this is also the **Pagan Celebration of Lunasa** (also known as Lammas), the start of the harvest, season of pregnancy, ripening, transformation and peace. This marks the height of the northern summer, when the Earth is most alive.

**Sunday 7 August**, 11-2pm, Forest Bathing+ with Joanna & Katie at our London location at Cannon Hill Common, £35 (+ Paypal fee = £36.75). Immerse yourself in the healing elements of nature and connect deeply with all your senses. We will take you on a 2½ hour journey through the beautiful landscaped park, nestled in this little-known oasis of calm within Greater London. Through a selection of simple sensory activities, you will learn how to enhance your perceptions and slow down to focus on what could easily be missed. We end with a treelaxation – this is a deeply relaxing and rejuvenating experience which, despite the title of forest bathing, does not involve any swimming!

*Some of the scientifically proven benefits of spending time in woodland include reduced stress levels, stronger immune system response, and a stabilised cortisol cycle. This session which will take place in all weathers except 30+mph winds or electrical storms. Book via [harmonyinnature.uk](http://harmonyinnature.uk), email [katieandjo@harmonyinnature.uk](mailto:katieandjo@harmonyinnature.uk) to go on our forest bathing mailing list.*

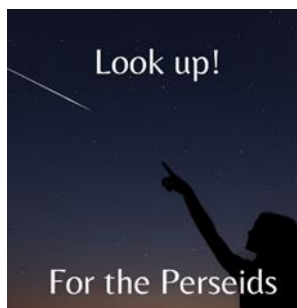
**Monday 8 August is The Lion's Gate.** August 8th (8:8 in numerology) has always been experienced as the Lion's Gate doorway opening up a time portal to ancient Egyptian encodings situated between the Sphinx and the Great Pyramid of Giza. It is said to be an energy doorway, which activates through the Solar Lion into the etheric and the Hall of Records (Akasha) and is said to be associated with the marriage of matter and anti-matter, where polarities meet and merge. Encrypted at sacred sites all over the world, but headquartered at Giza Egypt, these long-established data programmes, communicate with our own inner crystalline codes held in our DNA. By tuning in and connecting with these codes, we may be able to access a portal ancient truths and wisdoms resulting in an accelerated spiritual awakening.



**Tuesday 9 August – Wednesday 17 August may be able to see some Perseid meteors.** The Perseids is one of the best meteor showers to observe, producing up to 60 meteors per hour at their peak. The shower's peak usually occurs on 13 August (predawn). This year, with Full Moon 11/12 August, light pollution is likely to make visibility poor over the peak times. However, you may be able to see some meteors any time between 17 July and 24 August. The radiant point for this shower will be in the constellation Perseus. Look to the northeast after midnight. For more, see diagram below and [earthsky.org](http://earthsky.org) website, from where the image has been taken. The radiant point for this shower will be in the constellation Perseus.

**Friday 12 August @ 02:36 (Thursday night/Friday morning) is the Sturgeon Supermoon.**

*The monthly Full Moon meditation is the night before, 7.30-9.30pm (UK time) on Thursday 11 August at 7.30-9.30pm UK time. Book in at the [Harmony Shop](#). If you would like a video guided meditation, but can't make this time, you can purchase our 'any month' pre-recorded Full Moon meditation at this section of the [Harmony Shop](#). Between this date and the next New Moon is considered as a good time energetically for detoxing the body. Angela McGerr's self-guided instructions for a [Full Moon Angelic Meditation](#) with Gabriel from her *A Harmony of Angels Book*.*

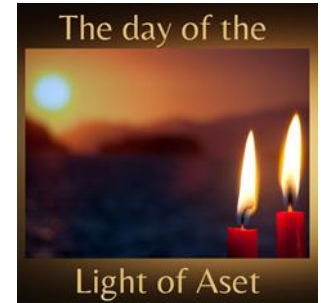


**Friday 12 August is Raksha Bandhan**, the Hindu festival honouring the bond between brothers and sisters, celebrated on the day of the Full Moon in August. Brothers take a vow to protect their sisters, whilst sisters pray for a long life for their brothers, sealed by tying a thread around their right wrist.

**Friday 12 August is the Chinese Hungry Ghost Festival.** This is the Buddhist Festival of All Souls or the Festival of Hungry Ghosts, when offerings are made until before the next New Moon (7 September) to spirits who have not yet found rest. The Hungry Ghost Festival, also known as the Zhongyuan Festival, takes place on the 15 day of the Ghost Month (which starts at a New Moon), so it naturally coincides with a Full Moon.

**Friday 12 August is also the Day of the Light of Aset (Isis).** On this day, Aset (Isis) is celebrated with all forms of light including sun worship, during the day and candles at night. It is very close to the date of the Roman Festival of Diana (varies 11-13 August), which was a development from the Egyptian Festival.

**Saturday 13 August, in Roman tradition, is the Festival of Diana**, being the date upon which King Servius Tullius dedicated her shrine on the Aventine Hill in Rome in the mid-sixth century BCE. Diana was the hunting goddess, associated with wild animals and woodlands. She later became a moon goddess, supplanting Luna; and the moon was an emblem of chastity. Oak groves were especially sacred to her. She was praised in poetry for her strength, athletic grace, purity, distinct beauty and hunting skill. Despite her virginal status, Diana was also a Goddess of Fertility.



**Saturday 13-Monday 15 August is Obon** (also known as Bon); a Buddhist festival to honour dead loved ones. This custom has evolved into a family reunion holiday, during which people return to ancestral family locations and visit and tidy their ancestors' graves. On this day, the spirits of ancestors are believed to revisit the household altars. Celebrated through the lighting of bonfires, sacred meals, dances and paper lanterns.

**Wednesday 17 August, 11am-2pm Forest Bathing+ at Harry Edward's Healing Sanctuary**, Burrows Lea (near Shere, Surrey), £35. Join us for a reviving yet relaxing Forest Bathing+ session in semi-ancient private woodlands. I will lead you slowly and purposefully through a series of mindfulness-based sensory exercises and a treelaxation. Deeply relaxing and surprisingly profound, you will be delighted by your reconnection with, and enhanced appreciation for, nature. Despite the name, there's no swimming involved, this relates to bathing in the ambience of the tree canopy. This is a 3-hour Forest Bathing+ session which will take place in all weathers except 30+mph winds and electrical storms due to safety concerns. Book at [Harmony Shop](#). Email [katieandjo@harmonyinnature.uk](mailto:katieandjo@harmonyinnature.uk) to go on our forest bathing mailing list.

**Thursday 18 August, 11am-2pm Forest Bathing+ at the Kosmon Sanctuary**, Tadworth (near Epsom, Surrey), £35. Join us for a reviving yet relaxing Forest Bathing+ session in private ancient woodlands at our new venue in the heart of the Surrey Hills. You will be guided slowly and purposefully through a series of mindfulness-based sensory exercises, ending with a treelaxation.

**Thursday 18 August is the Egyptian Feast of Wagdy**. Taking place 17 days after the Egyptian celebrations of New Year's Day, there was the more sombre feast of Wagdy, when families paid respect to their ancestors. They came to the tombs of the deceased, with offerings, performing rituals, specifically "fumigations" - producing fumes - smoke. The ceremonies were often followed by a funerary meal.

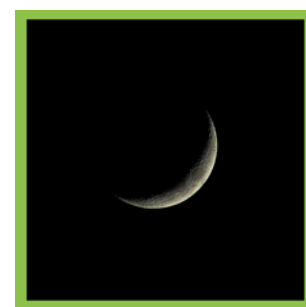
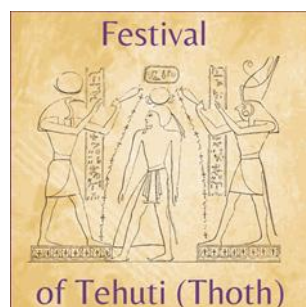


**Friday 19 August is the Festival of Tehuti (Thoth)** marking the occasion on which Tehuti (Thoth) ordered the healing of the eye of Heru (Horus). An MP3 Meditation to visit the Akashic Records with Tehuti is available from the [MP3 Downloads & CDs](#) section of the [Harmony Shop](#). This is a meditation to visit your personal Akashic record (which the Egyptians believed were housed in the Halls of Amenti) to see if hidden blockages to your spiritual growth and wellbeing may be revealed at this time. The Akashic records are said to contain and describe all knowledge of human experience as well as the history of the cosmos; so they could be described as the DNA of the Universe. This meditation was devised for 19 August or 19 September (both being Festivals of Tehuti) would add emphasis, but can be used anytime.

**Sunday 21 August is the Roman Festival of Consualia**, to honour Consus, the god of counsel, and the one who protects the harvest, which was in storage at the time of the festival. Mars, as a protector of the harvest, was also honoured on this day, as were the Lares, the household Gods that individual families held sacred. During the celebration, horses, mules, and asses were exempted from all labour, and were led through the streets adorned with garlands and flowers. Chariot races were held this day in the Circus Maximus, which included an odd race in which chariots were pulled by mules.

**Saturday 27 August @ 09:16 is New Moon.** The [New Moon Abundance Ritual](#) should be carried out within 24 hours after the New Moon. It needs to be after the New Moon because the moon should be waxing (getting bigger again) to carry the manifestation energy. There are video instructions on my [Facebook Page](#) or [YouTube Page](#). New Moon is a good time to work on your Vision Board for the rest of 2022.

**Monday 29 August is the Summer Bank Holiday in the UK.** In the United Kingdom, most workers have a day off work or school and the banks are closed. The [Bank Holidays Act 1871](#) introduced the August Bank Holiday to give bank clerks and shop people a day of relaxation not connected to holy days such as Christmas. This has morphed into a three-day weekend before the school summer holidays finish. If you have children, weather permitting (avoid woodland locations in heavy winds), it's a great day to take them out on a nature trail at a local park, beauty spot, National Trust or woodland location.



### Acknowledgments

*Celestial Forecast is compiled by Joanna Bristow-Watkins of Harmony Healing, the original is published at Joanna's [Monthly Celestial Forecasts](#). It is created using many sources but notably the [Moonwise Calendar](#) and Lia Leendertz's 2022 Almanac. Whilst considerable effort is made to ensure accuracy, this is not an exact science and sources are sometimes contradictory!*

*These monthly Celestial Forecasts (CF) are generally uploaded to the Harmony Healing website a fortnight ahead and can be accessed via the drop-down box on the right. They are sent out to the main mailing list and CF subscribers a few days before the month starts.*

# Poetry: summer 2022

By Bernadette Flynn

## All the Bells

All the bells come out when it rains;  
pink and white, purple and blue,  
they ring in the feast  
and all the other flowers  
take up their perfumed finery.  
Glistening cobweb mantles  
and shining raindrop jewels,  
adorn the masses  
as they sway to the soft tempo  
of the beating drops;  
sighing in ecstasy  
as life rains down all about them,  
bathing the dry, cracked, ground  
with the heady balm  
of new-fallen hope.

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## Death Owns the House Next Door

Death owns the house next door.  
My mind spends many evenings  
silent in his company, sipping water.  
The breeze blows and clouds gather;  
I paint and they drift past me.  
Walking beneath the locust boughs,  
I watch the wheat as time marches on.  
How long the mountains have rested in their green beds.  
If I were a mountain, I'd care naught for the passing of a day;  
instead, counting my moments  
in the rising and falling of nations.

# The Mumby Boggart

By the Storyteller

*Here is an archetypal tale that can be found in many different parts of Britain. A second collection of stories, *Tales of Wonder and Magick*, can be downloaded for free from our website, [www.gyldenfellowship.co.uk](http://www.gyldenfellowship.co.uk).*

Mumby is a small village near Alford in Lincolnshire, but this tale is fairly common throughout medieval agricultural communities.

A farmer bought a new field, without knowing that it was inhabited by a squat, hairy boggart - a kind of troll. The boggart refused to allow the farmer to plant anything in the field, claiming it was his and the farmer had no right to it. The farmer, in turn, pointed out that he'd paid good money for the land and, by right, he ought to be able to use it. The pair argued for a whole day before finally agreeing that the farmer should plant the field, on condition that they could share the crop.

The farmer, being a crafty fellow, began to think of a way to keep the whole crop for himself. So he asked the boggart, "Which part of the crop will you take for your share? Do you want the part that grows below the ground or the part above it?"

The boggart thought for a while, before answering that he would take the part growing above the ground. Therefore, the farmer planted the field full of potatoes. When harvest time came, the farmer stood over a huge pile of potatoes while the boggart had to make do with the useless part of the crop. Angrily, the boggart announced that next time, his share would be the part of the crop that grew below the ground.

The crafty farmer agreed and, this time, planted the field with wheat. When the harvest time came, the farmer had a fine crop, while the boggart was left again with stubble and the useless parts of the plants. The boggart, furious at having been cheated twice, demanded that the farmer would sow wheat again, but this time, they would each start at opposite ends of the field and each would only take what they could reap before sunset.

The farmer agreed, but the night before the harvest, the farmer sneaked out and planted several iron rods in the boggart's side of the field. When the time came, the boggart quickly blunted his scythe, leaving him unable to continue with the harvest, while the farmer easily made his way through the crop. Furious, the boggart stormed off, never to be seen again.

# Meditation: a summer walk in a wood

**By Gylden Fellowship**

Wherever you are, take a few seconds to get as comfortable as possible and start with some long deep breaths. Close your eyes and focus on the breathing until you feel ready to start your walk.

- It's a lovely sunny day and you've reached the very edge of a forest with fields behind you.
- There's a path that leads into the wood, not muddy, but earthen and a few stones.
- Take a moment to notice the dappled sunlight coming through the woodland canopy and see the bright green of leaves on trees and bushes.
- Listen to the birdsong in the trees and the gentle rustle of a breeze on leaves.
- After a few minutes, the fields are behind you and the path continues past silver birches, beeches, oaks and hornbeams.
- You notice the darker copses of holly and some colours too – blue cornflowers, yellow ragwort, purple willowherb and foxgloves.
- Your path has led you to a pond with clear green-blue water and you notice the way that the sunlight sparkles on the ripples.
- There are some reeds off to your left - you can see a few ducks and some iridescent dragonflies. You feel the sun on your face and you can hear the buzzing of insects in the reeds.
- The path stops with some large flat rocks that overhang the pond in the sunshine – you sit down and consider the peaceful scene around you: trees in behind, reeds and pond in front and more trees beyond the water...the birds still sing and you can faintly hear frogs croaking in the reeds.
- As you sit in peace on the sun-lit rocks, your friend comes to join you – this is a person that you know well and love as a friend. You and your friend talk and laugh as spiritual companions within timeless moments.
- When you feel ready, re-trace your steps to the path - both you and your friend leave the wood, perhaps for a cup of tea.



# Lughnasadh notes

By Gylden Fellowship

Please note that a longer version of this text can be found on our website under [Sabbat info](#).

Lughnasadh/ Lammass/ Lúnasa is a Celtic fire festival, named for the Commemoration of Lugh in Irish Gaelic. As the Celtic day started with sunset, the celebration of Lughnasadh starts on the Sunday eve before Monday 1 August 2022.

Lugh was a member of the Irish pantheon, the Tuatha De Danann. His father was Cian (son of Danu) and his foster-mother was Tailtiu. Lugh was linked to skills, crafts, arts and war - his name means "many skilled" or "the shining one" and he was thought to be a sun god, recognised generally by the Celts, rather than located in a specific region. The Gaulish Lugos is connected to the Irish Lugh, who is sometimes linked with the Welsh hero, Lleu Llaw Gyffes.

Much of the early history of Ireland is recorded in the [Book of Invasions](#), namely the times when Ireland was conquered by foreign enemies. This record says that Lugh came to be associated with grain in Celtic legends after he held a harvest fair in honour of his foster mother. So, Lugh is symbolised by corn, grains, bread and other harvest fruits. In Irish Gaelic, the word for August is lúnasa and this festival was called Lughnasadh.

Later, Christians renamed the festival as Lammass, derived from the Old English (Anglo-Saxon) word of *hlaef-mass*. This refers to the loaf mass, when the first loaf of bread from the new harvest is consecrated – in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicles, Lammass was described as the Feast of the First Fruits. Julius Caesar listed the popular deities of the Gauls and referred to them by what he saw as a corresponding Roman name. Thus, references made to Lugh (or Lugos) were attributed to the Roman god, Mercury. The central city for the worship of Mercury was Lugundum, which later became Lyon in France. Mercury's festival on 1 August was chosen as the day of the Feast of Augustus, by Caesar's successor, Octavian Augustus Caesar, and it became the most important holiday in Gaul. However, 1 August tied in with the first grain harvest in most rural societies in Europe.

In real terms, Lughnasadh shows the beginning of the descent of the sun into winter darkness, but it's also about celebrating the first harvest of the year. Much of the harvest is collected and stored and winter is not far away. So, both the Celts and the Saxons cut the grain for bread, but also stored some away as seeds for the next crop in the following spring.

This is Lughnasadh – a time to give thanks for the first harvest and to reflect upon our blessings. Are there any ways in which we can improve our lives and can we learn from our surroundings? In the days ahead, take a walk and look for evidence of the ripening harvest – in fields of grain, in orchards and in the hedges.





# The Battle with the Snakes

By the Storyteller

*Here is a First Nation story from the Iroquois tribe. A second collection of stories, Tales of Wonder and Magick, can be downloaded free from our website, [www.gyldenfellowship.co.uk](http://www.gyldenfellowship.co.uk).*

Djisdaah was a man who was not kind to animals. One day when he was hunting, he found a rattlesnake and decided to torture it. He held its head to the ground and pierced it with a piece of bark. As it was caught there, he tormented it. "We shall fight," he said and then burned the snake until it was dead. He thought this was a great jest and so, whenever he found a snake, he would do the same thing.

One day, another man from his village was walking through the forest when he heard a strange sound. It was louder than the wind, but hissing through the tops of tall pine trees. He crept closer to see. In a great clearing, were many snakes. They were gathered for a war council and, as he listened in fright, he heard them say: "We shall now fight with them. Djisdaah has challenged us and we go to war. In 4 days we go to their village and fight."

The man crept away and then ran as fast as he could to his village to tell what he had heard and seen. The chief sent other men to see if the report was true. They returned in great fright, "Ahhhhh," they said, "It is so. The snakes are all gathering to have a war." The chief of the village could see that he had no choice. "We must fight," he said and ordered the people of the village to make preparations for the battle. They cut lots of wood, stacked in rows around the village to keep the snakes out. When the fourth day came, the chief ordered that the first row of wood be set on fire. Just as he did so they heard a noise, like a great wind in the trees. It was the snakes, hissing as they came to the village to do battle.

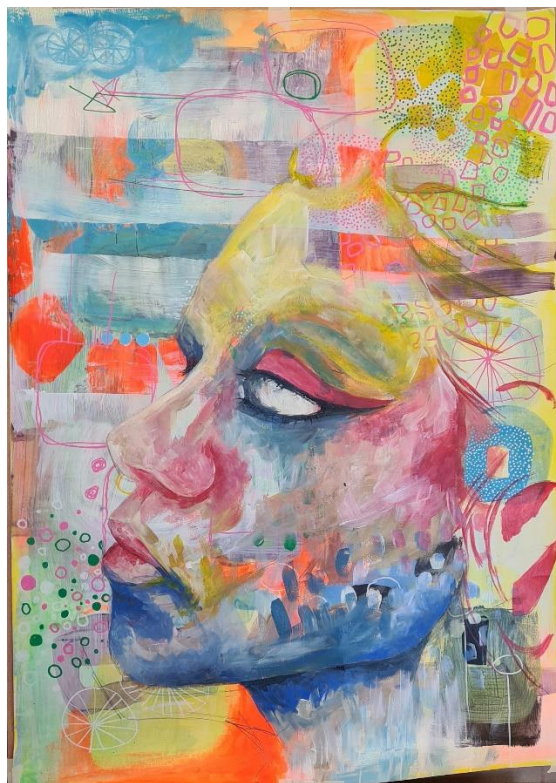
Usually a snake will not go near a fire, but these snakes were determined to have their revenge. They went straight into the flames. Many died, but the living snakes crawled over the bodies of the dead ones and continued to move forward until they reached the second row of wood. Once again, the chief ordered that the second row of wood be set on fire, but the snakes crawled straight into the flames, hissing their war songs, and the living crawled over the bodies of the dead. Even though the people fought bravely, it was no use. The snakes were more numerous than fallen leaves and could not be stopped. They forced their way past the last row of wood and the people of the village fought for their lives.

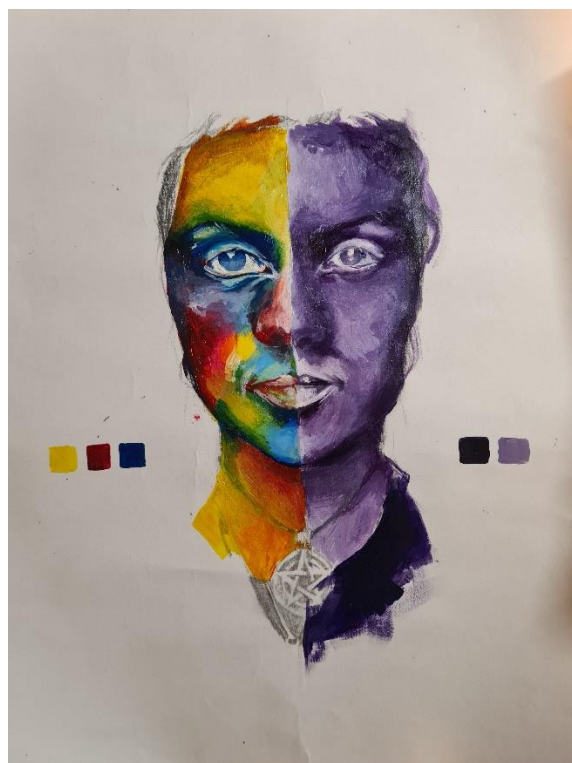
The first man to be killed was Djisdaah, the one who had challenged the snakes to battle. It was now clear that they could never win this battle. The chief shouted to the snakes who had reached the edge of the village: "Hear me, my brothers. We surrender to you. We have done you a great wrong. Have mercy on us." The snakes stopped where they were and there was a great silence. The exhausted warriors looked at the great army of snakes and the snakes stared back at them. Then the earth trembled and cracked in front of the village. A great snake, taller than the biggest pine tree, whose head was larger than a great long house, came out of the hole in the earth.

"Hear me," he said. "I am the chief of all the snakes. We shall go and leave you in peace if you will agree to two things." The chief looked at the great snake and nodded his head: "We will agree, Great Chief," he said. "It is well," said the Chief of the Snakes. "These are the two things. First, you must always treat my people with respect. Second, as long as the world stands, you will never name another man, Djisdaah." And so it was agreed and so it is, even today.

## Artwork: Brianna Cilia, artist

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