



Gylden Magick

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Jan. 2020

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, is growing too – our Yule sabbat blog reached over 2500 people and we welcome new members constantly.

On Facebook, the **Gylden River LRC** (Learning Resources Centre) is a social learning hub with optional study units in key areas of magick.

Gylden Fellowship continues as a pagan support mechanism, i.e. visiting groups, Interfaith work, fayres, calendars, helping our moot friends with rituals or meetings, etc.

Our **Wolf Moon** issue continues with the 20-page format with ever more guidance on spiritual issues and magick. This edition has a definite emphasis on seasonal magick in the run-up to Imbolg - the altar colours for this period are white and light blue. But no ads – after all, we're like a pagan public library and all the information is free.

Dates for your diaries – not least the **Wassail by the Pentacle Drummers** in Pevensey on 18 January and, also, the **Wassail by Spriggan Mist** in Staines on 19 January. If you're in Staines, don't forget to check out the **Ankerwycke Yew** at Wraysbury, one of the oldest trees in Britain.

What else is there? Well, we have an intro to our new series of Wiccan roots for 2020 (starting in February), another new series – on animal spirit

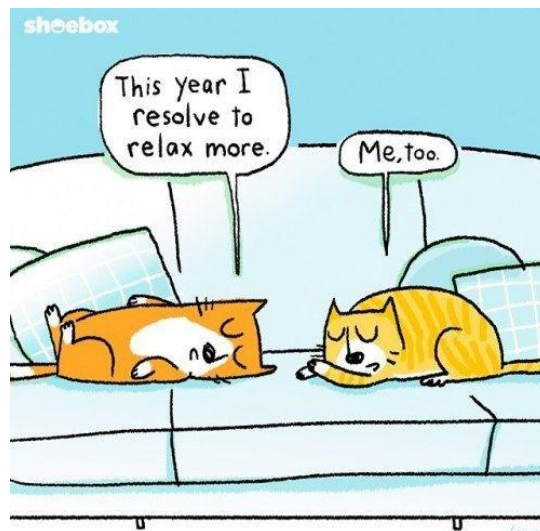
guides, hemp, photos from the Spriggan Yule Feast, candle magick as we approach Imbolg, a preview of the Enchanted Market, triskels, a piece from XR Godalming, first steps for new or young pagans on Waes Hael, herbal healing, ribbon divination and runes. Also, we have a Yule ritual report from Basingstoke Pagan Circle.

Anything else? Oh yes, the title – we never forget that our faith is based upon Nature and that our strength comes from earth magick. Many of our sabbats are based upon the light, eg solstices and equinoxes, as vital to us now as to our ancestors.

For more info, why not join **Gylden River LRC** or **Gylden Fellowship** groups on Facebook today and see our calendar, updates or briefings for January?

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Animal spirit guides: meeting

OK then, it's a new year and here is the start of a new series. Some pagans work with regular spirit guides and these topics will look at different guides in more detail, but I thought I'd start with the **Place of Meeting**.

Not every magickal practitioner wants to cross into the Otherworld – we're not talking about the spirits of people who've passed over, but the first level is just contacting a spirit who will act as your guide, teacher and friend during this lifetime.

I remember writing in an earlier article about totem animals that *"a totem animal is one that is with you for life, both in the physical and spiritual world...though people may identify with different animal guides throughout their lifetimes, it is this one totem animal that acts as the main guardian spirit"*.

Here is something to note – spirits have no real shape. When you first cross over into the Otherworld, a spirit may come to you and it will take a shape that you understand – a shape that reassures you and with which you feel connected. We'll explore these connections later in this series.

The **Place of Meeting** is the initial location when you cross over for the first time. My closest friends know that my first such encounter in this lifetime was with a spirit that took the form of an eagle. We met in the sky and fly together over forests, rivers, mountains, fields and lakes. Each time that I cross over, so we meet again in the sky.

Once, when I asked if this was a real location, I was guided to understand that the landscape below represented the course of many lifetimes and that one experience can spread across many lives. The **Place of Meeting** is different for each traveller – it could be the sea, a meadow, the forest or a mountain. What is important is that you feel comfortable in that space with a being who wants to help you.



Crystals: chrysoprase

A kind friend gave me a couple of rough chrysoprase crystals last year and here's some of the best uses for them. Chrysoprase is a type of chalcedony and it's linked closely with calming energy and the element of water.

A key point to note here is that chrysoprase is all about opposing egoism – it's a stone that stands for compassion, impartiality, forgiveness and reflective wisdom. The crystal can be worn or carried and the crystal essence sorts out stomach problems.

And what of its **healing or magickal** properties?

- It rejects any negative energies by increasing joy and positive thinking.
- The green colour of chrysoprase helps with inner truth and is good for meditation.
- It is particularly good when used with the heart chakra – conducting universal love, bringing your chakras into alignment, rejecting heartbreak and fighting loneliness.
- Chrysoprase helps to increase the energy in water, eg placing the stone near your heart when taking a bath.
- It helps with relaxation and peaceful sleep.
- Chrysoprase is good for the liver and for detox effects.
- Similarly, chrysoprase is known for helping with skin dis-eases, eye problems, gout and digestive complaints.
- It helps to balance your emotions, prevent nightmares and release childhood traumas.



Herb of the month: vervain

Verbena is a correspondence plant for January. Vervain (*verbena officinalis*) is also known as the enchanter's plant, herb of grace and Juno's tears. It is not the same as lemon verbena.

Any part of the plant can be used above the soil, but the roots should be avoided. Vervain has been used for many centuries for different ailments – it was used in Ancient Greece, also by the Aztecs and by First Nation tribes too.

Most commonly, vervain is taken as an infusion or as a tincture, but it should be avoided by those who are lactating or pregnant.

It's a common herb for altars and I keep a supply of vervain in my herb cupboard, to make into teabags. Here are some of the **ailments** that can be treated with vervain.

- Jaundice.
- Gout.
- Kidney stones – vervain acts a diuretic and digestive tonic.
- Headaches.
- Painful menstruation, although I'd suggest raspberry leaf and hibiscus – it's gentler.
- Depression.
- Anxiety.
- Insomnia.



Recipe: Finnan Haddie

Well, here's a correspondence food for January. There was a choice of cheese or fish and I decided on a straightforward recipe for fish – Finnan Haddie, which can be served with green vegetables and potatoes.

As the name suggests, this one is a traditional Scottish meal. My guess is that this recipe makes **about 3-4 servings**.

Ingredients

1. 4 medium smoked haddock fillets
2. 1pt milk (or alternative for lactose avoidance)
3. A bay leaf and 5 peppercorns
4. 2oz butter
5. 2tbsp flour
6. 5 fl oz double cream
7. Pinch of salt.

Method

1. Put the haddock fillets into a large saucepan.
2. Cover with the milk and add the peppercorns and bay leaf...bring milk to the boil.
3. Reduce the heat and simmer gently until the fish is cooked.
4. Lift the fish out with a slotted spoon, drain and put in a shallow dish – cover and keep warm.
5. Melt the butter in another pan, stir in the flour and salt - cook for 2 minutes.
6. Strain the fish milk into another pan, add to the butter mixture and bring to the boil.
7. Stir until the mixture thickens, remove from the heat and add the cream.
8. Reheat gently, but do not boil.
9. Pour the mixture onto the warmed fish.

Ribbon divination

By Sue George

Ribbons are not only colourful and tactile but have been used as a positive tool in the art of divination for centuries.

Records show that as far back as the 17th century, ribbons were not only used for ceremonies such as handfasting and around the maypole, but ribbon sellers would also travel the country offering psychic readings to their customers using the ribbons they had bought from them. Sadly, as the use of ribbons for hair and clothing decoration fell out of fashion, so did the ancient art of using ribbons as a divination tool.

As there's no hard and fast rules to the methods of divination, today the way the ribbons are used are as individual as the psychics themselves. Some readers allocate particular meanings to each ribbon and will give the reading, depending on the colours you choose. Others will only have ribbons that correspond in colour to certain chakras or energy centres and base their readings on chakra healing.



Personally, using ribbons as a tool for divination has been a bit of a lifesaver for me. Although I was able to use other methods of divination, such as tarot, I just couldn't get along with it and felt that sessions, although accurate were still lacking some depth and meaning.

As I was struggling along, about 20 years ago now, a dressmaker friend brought in a bag of ribbons left over from a previous project, not knowing what to do with them. Drawn to their colour and texture, I asked another friend to pick five and, immediately, great information started flowing.

I've since realised that using divination tools, such as tarot, meant that I was having to engage the logical side of my brain in order to digest their meaning. As I work as a channel, it's imperative that I keep my 'thinking' mind out of the way. This enables the information I gather from other sources to flow through me and out of my mouth, unfiltered by my (sometimes) judgemental human brain. Suddenly, once I adopted this method, everything became clear and I could even give readings with my eyes shut if I wanted too!

A few people have asked how this method can possibly work and my theory is that all things are energy - including us. When a sitter focuses his or her energy on choosing a few ribbons, this energy gives me the key to the information needed to assist the sitter to live their best life. I don't use ribbons when doing a Skype reading these days, but at a busy event ribbons are a Godsend, enabling the connection to come through loud and clear.

Going back again to the 17th century, one of their proverbs was, "The proof of the pudding is in the eating", so the next time you walk past a dressmakers and stop to admire all the ribbons - maybe, choose a few and see how it works for you.

For more details, please contact Sue George at:

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Spriggan Mist Yule Ball: 14 December 2019

Photos by Andrew Merritt Photography Ltd



Hemp

By Vali Trinity

OK then, here we're looking briefly at one of the most ubiquitous plants on our beautiful Mother Earth: hemp.

Hemp may, indeed, save both the planet and us, due to its diversity of uses – it used to grow everywhere.

1. Hemp saves us from the results of plastic, all commodities can be made from hemp, as it is biodegradable.
2. That means less landfill and no poisoning or clogging of our seas.
3. Hemp is both strong and fibrous - the Royal Navy still use it for rope.
4. Hemp grows tall with a root system that is structured to prevent soil erosion.
5. Again, due to its biodegradable nature, hemp can be used for clothing and for housing materials.
6. The Lotus car company uses hemp for car bodies, as it is stronger than fibreglass.
7. Oil from hemp plants can be used as pollution-free motor fuel.
8. Hemp is very nutritious – it contains high quantities of the fatty acid, Omega-3,-6 and -9.
9. Further, milk from hemp seeds is a good alternative to dairy milk.

Note: hemp contains cannabinoid oil and the hemp leaves make a refreshing herbal infusion.

In summary, hemp removes the need to fell healthy trees. We need to grow more hemp: **LET'S DO THIS.**



THE MANY USES OF HEMP

(From hemp produce up to 30,000 types of products)



Ancient peoples: Celtic triskels

By Gylden Fellowship

In the December 2019 issue of *GYLDEN MAGICK*, we continued our series about various aspects of ancient peoples with a summary of the Danube Valley script. This time, we're a little closer to home with one of the well-known symbols of Celtic art – the triskel.

What is a triskel?

Well, perhaps an image would help. The triskelion symbol or triskel is three conjoined spirals around a central point. The origin of its name (triskelēs) is Greek and means *three legs*. Nature and the movement of life is one well-known meaning of the symbol, describing the past, present, and future, but it is not the only meaning, as we shall see. The symbol also shows strength in Celtic culture and determination in adversity.



So, it's a three-branched design with interlocking spirals, which gives the impression of movement. The triskel was often used as a basis for more complex spirals in Celtic art.

In post-Celtic (Christian) Ireland, the symbol came to represent the Holy Trinity, i.e. God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. But, there is little doubt that the spirals found in the ancient relics of Ireland were put there, because they represented things or ideas that were sacred to the indigenous people. And, as such, this shape

would have been pre-Celtic – perhaps 2000 years before the Celtic culture took root in Ireland.

Some of the earliest forms of the Irish spiral or triskel shape have been dated to 2500 BCE at the main entrance to Newgrange chamber tomb in Meath and, similarly, to pottery that has been found in archaeological digs in Marne (France) and Mintraching (Bavaria). The triskels vary, but are recognisable as double or triple spirals.

It should be noted that historical research into other ancient cultures reveals that the triskel design was also common in Greek or Mycenaean art, Korea, Japan, Sicily and Scandinavia.

What is the symbolism of a triskel?

There are many interpretations of the symbolic meaning of triskels and the list below shows just a few of the more popular suggestions.

1. The triskel reflects the commonality of natural spirals, such as could be seen anywhere. Examples might include the spirals of sea shells, snails, plants, river eddies, etc.
2. The Celts divided their world view into threes - the three material domains of earth/ sea/ sky is a common reconstructionist belief.
3. Another threefold concept was the Celtic belief in the spiritual, celestial and

present world; many Celtic deities are represented as having three faces.

4. Celtic society was split into three – druid priests, warrior kings and artisans/farmers.
5. Triskels and spirals could be water-based symbols with their curves and impression of fluid motion.

Another threefold interpretation is to see the triskel as showing the seasonal cycle of time, namely life-death-rebirth, winding out and then in again. The triskel is linked to the goddesses, Manannán and Brigid.

The directional aspect of the triskel is important too. The first impression is that all three branches move outward from the centre so as to show forward energy or progress. Clockwise spiral movement tends to be linked with solar energies and harmony with the Earth, while widdershins spirals are associated with the manipulation of nature.

Thus, the rotating, curved shape of a triskel's branches would be seen as symbolic of active movement, ie almost of life. Some historians and archaeologists have gone further by correlating a triskel with a symbol for the sun, because the Breton word means three rays and each day, people could see the sunrise, midday and sunset – three phases.

Triskels in Celtic artwork

Bear in mind that most of the spiritual beliefs and myths in Celtic culture were passed down through the generations via rites, storytelling, music and dance, but rarely in writing. Therefore, it's difficult to know exactly what were the meanings of the triskels and spirals. Much of what we know now came later from the post-Celtic illustration and writings of the

Romans and Christians – and from the Arts and Crafts movement too.

Celtic artwork enjoyed a revival in the late Victorian/ Edwardian era – and just after. Some were reconstructionist beliefs, based on early jewellery, medals, pottery and coins unearthed from Celtic settlements. In these historical artefacts, common themes incorporating triskels could be seen, as shown below.

- ✚ Water designs, to show fluid movement, eg the Aberlemno Cross.
- ✚ Rotational designs were popular on torcs, helmets, medals and coins, eg the Killamery Cross and the Clevedon gold torc (200 BCE).
- ✚ Triskels were sometimes included in wider designs that showed plants or flowers, eg bronze bowls from 400 BCE from the Ardennes, third-century BCE horns from Brentford and door handles from 800 CE in Meath.
- ✚ Triskels also turned up in historical jewellery like brooches, buckles or necklaces, eg from Meath (700 CE), Silchester (100 CE) and the Donore Disc (700 CE). The Tara Brooch, found in Ireland in 1850, was made around 700 CE in Meath – Queen Victoria had a copy of this brooch, which has multiple triskels in its design.

Other triskel-related artwork included fusion with Celtic designs, such as triquetra, interlaces and labyrinths – and animals too. Animal-related triskels have been retrieved from many sources, but the most popular designs appear to be those involving birds, dragons and horses. A few examples might be the Obermenzing sword scabbard (100 BCE – bird triskel), the Donore Disc (700 CE – dragon triskel) and a door handle from Donore (also 700 CE – horse triskel).

Waes Hael

By Nick the Witch

Actually, the term, **Waes Hael**, means *be well* and was an old English phrase, commonly used at the start of each year in Saxon settlements. The lord or chief of the settlement would shout **Waes Hael** and the rest of the community would reply **Drinc Hael**, which translates as *drink and be well*.

So, it is a traditional ceremony that kick-starts the first stirrings of life in the land, to help it emerge from winter and to ensure that the next season's crop of fruit, especially apples and pears, will be good. From the 14th century, wassailing was a New Year custom. Wassail is a drink of ale, spices and honey, which was served from pewter bowls and passed around with the greeting, **Wassail**. Of course, different parts of the country had local variations, including sugar or apples, beaten eggs, cream or bread, to name a few.

There were 3 main ways of celebrating — a common bowl passed around a room, taking a bowl of wassail around local houses or blessing the apple harvest. It was the custom that if wassailers called at your door and offered some of the wassail bowl, you were supposed to return the gift by offering them some food - to ensure good luck during the new year.

Wassailing of apple trees still exists today and involves drinking to the health of the fruit trees so that they might be plentiful in the following year: it was most common to wassail apple trees, but it was also known for people to wassail pear and plum trees. The actual ceremony went something like this.

1. Each fruit tree was sprinkled with wassail to ensure a good crop.
2. The community would gather around the trees with shotguns or pots and pans and made a tremendous noise to wake up the tree spirit and to scare off demons.
3. The biggest tree had perry/cider poured over its roots.
4. Pieces of toast soaked in perry/cider were placed in the forks of branches.
5. A wassail song was sung or chanted as a blessing or charm to bring a good fruit/apple harvest the following year.

This custom was especially important during a time when part of a labourer's wages was paid in apple cider. Landowners needed a good apple crop to attract good workers and wassailing was a way of keeping the tree safe from evil spirits until the next apple harvest.

Wassail recipe (serves 12) [Source: *Celtic Folklore Cooking*, Joanne Asala, Llewellyn, 1998.]

12 small tangy apples
6 pints ale
2 cups brown sugar
2 tsp ginger
2 tsp cinnamon
2 tsp nutmeg
4 whole cloves
Zest of 2 lemons
2 pints red wine

- Peel and core the apples, and dry roast them (no sugar) in a slow oven until they almost burst. (Low and slow and keep an eye on them.)
- Combine 1/3 of the ale with sugar, spices, and lemon zest.
- Simmer over low heat for 20 minutes.
- Add remaining ale and wine and heat, but do not boil.
- Serve hot over the apples.

The Enchanted Market

Charity Fund Raiser
2020



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10 am - 5 pm

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£2 150 Stalls

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www.theenchantedmarket.com or Facebook



Tales for darker evenings: Jenny Greenteeth

By the Storyteller

Many people know the story of Beowulf and the various monsters that he faced, including Grendel and the dragon or fire Drake. But, to most, it was the appearance of the hag or Grendel's mother that stays in their memories and the following story is a regional variation of Grendel's mother.

I guess it all started with the annual apple howling. I'm old now, but I remember the events of that terrible year as if it was yesterday. I used to live in the village, but not since then and only yesterday, I heard that several children have gone missing from there over the years.

Just to explain the custom to you folks, apple howling by night was an ancient tradition in our village, part of the wassail. One local farm had many apple trees and the previous year had produced a bumper crop. But to ensure good apples, you have to drive out the orchard demons from the trees or they will ruin the crop for the next year.

So, the whole village set up for the howling and we all followed in a torchlight procession down Pegs Lane to the orchard. The village elders surrounded the oldest tree and everyone shared in the wassail cakes and cider. Then the elders hit the tree with sticks to rouse any demon and other villagers fired their shotguns into the upper branches in case a demon tried to hide up there. We sang the wassail, ate more cakes and the ritual was over for another year.

And then I saw, at least I thought I saw, a movement in the tree – up high, just a shadow really and then it was gone. We all went home, but I saw Old Jen trailing along slowly. Well, that was usual. To me, she seemed about 90 years old anyway and the long walk to the howling in the dark and cold hurts the bones when you're old. I went back to help her, but she snarled at me, pushing my arm away – so I left her alone.

The apple howling was in early January, but when I tell you that the village had its worst run of luck for many years, that was a fact. Not only was the apple crop bad, but rain ruined much of the harvest. One of the inn-keeper's daughters, playing by the mill-pond, fell in and drowned. A cart ran out of control on the village green and hurt some children. There were lots of unexplained fires and that's a problem with hay ricks or thatched cottages.

When did people suspect the truth? Can't really put a time on it, but it seemed to me that we were all avoiding Old Jen. Her temper was never good, but she was always angry and she seemed to be around each time another accident took place. Finally, a group of elders and the local priest went around and we all heard what happened next. Old Jen had gone, left her house and all her goods, but her clothes and walking stick were found by the river that evening.

And I saw the result – just me, out of all the village, but I'll never forget it, because we were mistaken – all of us – the apple howling had not driven out the demon. The demon had just moved into the most vulnerable person there – Old Jen – and then carried on its mischief. I'd crept down to the river that night to see where Old Jen had died and I saw something. It was most like an old woman with green skin, long wet hair and very long sharp teeth. I saw the teeth glow green in the moonlight and it had hold of an animal which it dragged into the water. Nothing surfaced. And that's my story.

Candle magick

By Rose Egan

*Editor's note: Rose has kindly contributed a long article for our use – some of the text is relevant to Imbolg and has been held over for the February issue of **GYLDEN MAGICK** – please see our special feature there on Imbolg Magick.*

Candle magick can be one of the simplest forms of spell casting. If you have a candle and something to light it with, you can cast a spell. It is the same as the birthday candle wish, except instead of just hoping, you decide on a goal, declare your intent, visualise the outcome and focus your will, to manifest that result.

However, candle magick can also be one of the more complicated forms of spell craft, worked with other factors to take into account, eg:

- Several candles for the phase of the moon.
- The position of the planets.
- The astrological sign of the person you are doing the working.
- Is the candle made in the correct colour?
- Has it been carved with ancient runes or dressed in auspicious oils rolled in herbs grown and consecrated to your purpose?
- Is the spell to be worked over several nights?

You get the picture...magick is the intention and all the preparation serve to focus your intent into your spell. It's important to remember that a candle is just a tool. It's not inherently magickal, but a way to create magick using the element of fire to set one's intention into motion. [Candles for spells can be any size](#) – for example.

1. Birthday candles, you've all seen them, used them, made a wish upon them and they are perfectly adequate for spell work. They burn down quickly - about 15 minutes.
2. Tealights - we've used them at Samhain and they look lovely around the fire. They have a metal case which holds the wax and keeps them from melting out, but they get very hot and need to be put in a holder or on a safe surface. They take longer to burn out, depending on the quality -anything from 2-6 hours.
3. Long, very thin beeswax tapers are called spell candles, but need good holders as they are so thin.
4. Small tapers, large candles and so on - the size of the candle depends on your spell.

Raymond Buckland suggests the following [4 types of candles for most spells or rituals](#) (*Buckland, R, Practical Candleburning Rituals and Advanced Candle Magick*).

1. Altar candles, white or neutral, placed at the 2 far corners and always lit first.
2. Offertory candles, coloured according to the specific intent eg fertility, strength, new home etc.
3. Astral candles represent a particular person or type of person.
4. Day candles, coloured depending on the day of the spell and placed at the front of the altar.

Candles for spells should be new and not have been used for anything else, so that any residual energy from a previous spell while the candles were lit does not contaminate your current spell or working.

Candles come in all colours and, if colour plays a part in your magick, then the books say to make sure your candle is the same colour throughout. An exception would be where you had made the candle yourself and chosen more than one colour for a specific reason. This is so that different colour energies don't bleed through and spoil your spell or send it off in an unexpected direction. If you don't have a candle of the right colour, then white or plain beeswax candles are OK with a piece of coloured ribbon or cotton can be tied round the candle to represent the colour that your extensive research or knowledge says is the right one.

Dressing a candle is the act of rubbing oil into the candle to give it the power of your intention - this is usually done from the centre out to the top and from the middle out to the bottom. Again, there are loads of correspondences about the fragrance to use. And your own extensive knowledge or research will tell you which one suits your spell.

A taper is preferable to a match or a lighter to light candles to avoid burned fingers. I once read that you should never blow a candle out but always use a snuffer, because it offends the element of fire - I thought at the time this must be nonsense because we blow birthday candles out. I find that Ray Buckland agrees with me and says that if you are doing a ritual in the open air then wind will sometimes blow a candle out - so there is no insult if there is no intent to insult.

Scott Cunningham suggests that candles should be put out by pinching between thumb and forefinger, to lock in the energy, which is especially useful if you are doing a spell that requires the candles to be lit on successive days or times. The candle snuffer is another way of putting a candle out. Candles used in a spell or ritual should be put out in the reverse order to the way they were lit.

Once you've made a candle, it will need inscribing. That means **inscribing a candle** with letters and magickal symbols. This is a way of making a candle special for a task, i.e. if you are doing a spell for someone and their name is Fred, you would have a candle to represent Fred in your spell. Writing his name on the candle will help make the candle a representation of him, but just scratching Fred is not going to increase the power of that candle very much. However, if you use a magickal alphabet, one that you are not too familiar with, then you have to concentrate on forming the characters or symbols correctly - this puts energy and power into the candle and the concentration on Fred himself helps increase the power of your intention. A name should be engraved from the wick end to the base - the candle then burns down the name in the direction you would read it. You can add other identifying information eg birth date, astrological sign, etc. If you are preparing a candle for attraction or happiness or luck, you can inscribe those words on the relevant candle. Just remember to stick with one form of writing for all candles in any one ritual/spell. You can use any sharp object to engrave a candle, I find an unused nail is very effective, although a magical awl or athame is equally as good.

One of the most basic forms of candle magick uses a piece of **coloured paper that matches the intent of your candle**. Decide what your goal is and write it on the piece of paper while visualising yourself achieving that goal, think about the different ways it might happen, write out an incantation light the candle, hold the paper by a corner and use the candle to set fire to it, drop it into a heat proof container to burn out. Wait for candle to burn down and dispose of any remains in your preferred fashion. (running stream, burying or letting go to the four winds).

A few notes on safety (added because I nearly set fire to my house when something fell onto my candle the other week). I know everyone believes they work safely, but it never hurts just to be reminded that a candle flame is fire, candle wax is hot and runny, pets can also cause problems - be sensible, don't let a cat walk across your work space when you have lit candles.

Leaving a candle to burn itself out is often how a spell is left to work - we all know that you should never leave a candle burning unattended and we either think, *oh well this doesn't apply while I just go and make a cup of tea*, or we get so worried that we don't answer the door when we are waiting for a delivery. Seriously, if you work with lit candles, be sensible, put the candle on a non-flammable surface, ensure it is secure and don't use great big candles if you have to wait for them to burn out. Make sure your work area is not so close to curtains that a sudden gust could make them fly and catch light when you go to answer your door and let a draught into the house/room. **Basically, be sensible and be safe.**

Runology

By Sam O'Neil

Runology is the study of the runic alphabets. I am a great believer that if you practise a subject, you should know the history of it. The earliest runic inscriptions date from around 150 CE. Each culture and country have their own views on runes and have taken their own different runic paths. For instance, the most common runes are of Celtic design, but there are many that have changed format into angelic or chakra-based runes.

Runes have been used for many different things, for instance not just foreseeing the future, but in witchcraft, runology has been used in spells or on altars. Runes have been used for luck and healing. I have always been drawn to things that are Celtic or Nordic and, now, I know why as my spirit guide is a Viking chief.

Learning the runes was a natural step for me to develop myself. I am self-taught and still learning, but I have read from books and online. This is what I recommend for everyone to do...to have your own view. When reading runes, I don't just look at the meaning of the rune, but I look at the symbol itself and its position.

- How is it placed?
- Is it slanted?
- What other pictures or symbols can I see from it being the wrong way up?

Some runes can have reverse meanings, some don't, some readers only use those they are drawn to in a reading. Getting to know your runes, I would advise learning one at a time. This can be done by studying it. Some believe sleeping with sets of runes and carrying them around will help you bond and imprint on it. At first, start with 3 runes: **1-Past 2-Present 3-Future**. As I am a medium, I let spirit guide me with more information and the sample list below gives some very basic meanings.

- ALGIZ: Z Spirit guides - protection, connections, fortunate, new opportunities, connecting to spirit, higher spiritual awareness. Reversed: awareness of negativity.
- ANSUZ - A: references the ancestral god, Odin. wisdom, ashes, intuition, messages from within, a chance encounter, careful thought so you will know what to do from this point in time, advice from others. Reversed: watch out for trickery, negativity, or failed communication.
- BERKANA - B, Birch: birth, partnership, family, home, be prepared, organisation. Reversed: hold, be cautious. take the time to think.
- BLANK RUNE: sometimes called **Odin's Rune**. This rune can amplify those around it. You have Odin's blessings, anything is possible and can happen, choose a direction and go for it. If you believe in yourself, you can manifest anything.

There is so much more to the runes and their rich history and have found my studies very interesting. There is a rune workshop coming in 2020, both face-to-face and online. I also do a free weekly rune reading on my Facebook group.

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Environment: XR report

By Matthew Phelps

It's hard to believe that **Extinction Rebellion Godalming** is just over eight months old. Indeed, the whole XR movement itself only launched in October 2018; its creative and engaging form of non-violent direct action is now represented by almost 500 local groups worldwide, all engaging in acts of civil disobedience to push the issue of climate and ecological breakdown to the top of government agendas.

The Godalming group began in March 2019 with a well-attended talk, **Heading for Extinction and what to do about it**, at the Meadow Unitarian Hall. Many of those in attendance returned a fortnight later for the inaugural group meeting and, over the following weeks, were trained up and ready for the first big rebellion action in London in April. Eight of the group were arrested, all for blocking Waterloo Bridge, which remained shut to traffic for seven days.

After the Easter rebellion, we experienced a huge surge in interest and support. A series of talks and outreach events saw the group rapidly increase in membership. In fact, the group grew to such an extent that many members were able to break away and form local groups closer to home, including Guildford, Farnham and Petersfield. Further actions followed over the summer, including these events.

- ✚ A critical mass bike ride
- ✚ A plastic collection at Sainsbury's
- ✚ A series of protests with other Surrey groups at County Hall in Kingston, which led to Surrey County Council's declaration of Climate Emergency in July.
- ✚ Involvement with the second International Rebellion in October, in which many of our group participated and eleven from our group were arrested.

Extinction Rebellion Godalming is a diverse group with over 250 members now, spanning several decades in age range and bringing all manner of skills to the table. From farmers and gardeners to teachers, engineers and councillors, it's fair to say that none of us much fit the stereotypical "uncooperative crusties" label given to us by Boris Johnson!

So, what's next? Well, as I write (December 2019), we've been involved in a campaign of actions leading up to the general election – the outcome of which we'll of course know by the time you read this. The next five years are crucial if we are to rapidly reduce our greenhouse gas emissions and curb biodiversity loss. So, we in Extinction Rebellion are understandably concerned that, whichever party forms the next government going into 2020, they must prioritise the climate and ecological emergency above all else. Beyond that there are already plans afoot for another large action in the springtime and, on a local level, **Extinction Rebellion Godalming** will continue to focus its efforts on putting pressure on Surrey County Council to halt oil drilling in the county and to divest its pension fund from the fossil fuel industry.

If you'd like to find out more or come to a meeting, drop us an email at xrgodalming@gmail.com or find us on Facebook or Twitter.



Spi-rituality

By Paul Coombes and members of Basingstoke Pagan Circle



On 22 December, **Basingstoke Pagan Circle** held its Yule ritual in the War Memorial Park in Basingstoke. It is a generic saying that some winter rituals are destined to be very bracing and this one was no exception. Luckily, it stayed dry and clear, but very cold. Yule, as the mid-winter solstice, is the second festival of winter.

The open ceremony was written by **Paul Oakwolf Coombes**, leader of this group and Archdruid for Basingstoke. As the name suggests, this rite was designed for all types of pagan – there's a druidic structure, but the format is quite OK for heathens and witches too. In the time-honoured tradition of the solstice, there was a symbolic battle between the Oak and Holly Kings, won by the Oak King – more pictures below.

Here is an extract from the ceremony.

"The sun starts north again and the light comes back. In the world, in our lives, the light comes back. This is worth celebrating.

With the longest night, the dark is defeated with the return of the sun, the return of light, hope and promise. The goddess gives birth to the sun god.

The sun begins to wax and the days grow longer. All that is hidden will begin to emerge."

The group then performed the shared offerings and blessings of fresh bread and mead – good stuff, actually, as it was fresh bread and there were 4 bottles of mead to choose from! And then, as normal, the **Druid Oath** was spoken by all.

*"We swear, by peace and love, to stand,
Heart to heart and hand in hand,
Mark, O spirit, and hear us now,
Confirming this, our sacred vow.
Awen".*



Wiccan roots: introduction

By Gylden Fellowship

Welcome to our new series on seminal figures in the development of Wiccan practice. We've written this intro, but future pieces will come from guest contributors, starting from the February 2020 issue of **GYLDEN MAGICK**. Amongst the planned profiles are Gerald Gardner, Doreen Valiente, Scott Cunningham, Robert Cochrane and many more. It's intended to be like a set of snapshots of various Wiccan pathways.

However, it should be noted that there are about 15 different **types of mainstream Wicca** and many people choose to be eclectic. Eclectic is like a pick-and-mix witchcraft and this is not wrong. Some things may call out to you like tarot readings or healing. You don't have to learn loads of different stuff just to gain experience and knowledge.

Wicca was invented by someone called Gerald Gardner in the 1940s and has since split into any number of different factions, including Dianic, Alexandrian, Georgian, Seax, etc. Hedgewitchery is another tradition that covers solitary witches. Wicca takes in such principles from Gardner as a Rede (do what you like, but harm none) and the threefold rule (that anything bad that you do will return three times worse).

Important to realise that Wicca is not the same as witchcraft. Lots of people have followed a witchcraft path since the dawn of time without the labels that modern paganism seems to demand. Personally, I follow a Celtic pathway that is based on historical and archaeological stuff, which combines traditional healing witchcraft with Druidry. Two millennia ago or more, there were lots of witch groups in Gaul, Ireland and Britannia (and across Europe) – historians have found the curse tablets from such groups. Imagine yourself living in a small settlement in pre-Roman Britain – perhaps there is a druid who governs the settlement or deals with the religious bit, but there'll also be someone who heals the sick, looks after midwifery, cares for the dying and gives wise advice. There are no job charts or performance appraisal – sometimes the witch role and the druidic role came together as the same person...welcome to my world.

Further to all that, if you follow a witchcraft path, but try to follow the way of the wise women or cunning men of the past, feel free to ignore Wicca and all its made-up rules...you're not wrong and have a long tradition behind you.

Wicca is an Anglo-Saxon word that is supposed to refer to witches, but actually it brings in a reference to the wise. The actual Saxon word for witch is "haegtesse" and we discover that placenames such as Hascombe means "valley of the witches". It's important to move past all of these accumulated 20th century beliefs and we'll try to set out the facts in our new series – and then it's *caveat emptor* for our readers to choose what they prefer.



For past issues of Gylden Magick magazine, please contact us:

Our Twitter and email addresses: @GyldenFellowship

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