



# Gylden Magick

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## Jan. 2025

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.

First things first though – we've decided to continue with the longer version of our magazine in our 7<sup>th</sup> year of publication, from September. So, our **Wolf Moon** issue comes in at 30 pages, with lots of different topics. There are some longer pieces, to give authors more space.

Most of our contributors come from the Gylden area, providing a mix of

magick, wisdom and stories. Past editions of **GYLDEN MAGICK** can be accessed on our website and on Facebook too.

Dates for your diaries – not least the **Wassailing** on 17 January (Old Twelfth Night), **Up-Helly-Aa** on 28 January in Shetland and the **Feast of Hathor** on 23 January.

So, this issue of **GYLDEN MAGICK** includes angel numbers, science pieces from Mark on eternal flames and chronic inflammations. There are texts from two new authors on forest worship and, also, cardinal directions, a vampire story, celestial forecasts, seasonal magick and nature updates.

The photo above is indicative of the winter season – the feast of Imbolg falls on 1 February. **The meaning of**

**Imbolg is described in the first piece below.**

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. Talking of festivals, it's great that several are starting up again, namely PaganFest 2025.

For more info, why not join the **Gylden Fellowship** community on Facebook today and catch up on our news?

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# Looking towards Imbolg

By Gylden Fellowship

Imbolg/ Imbolc/ Oimeic is a Celtic festival that falls on the mid-point between Yule and the Spring Equinox at Ostara, this year on Thursday, 1 February. It was known as *Oimeic* or *I'mbolg* and the light increases each day. At burial places like Newgrange, underground chambers align perfectly with the rising sun on Imbolg. At this time, many moots and pagan groups are holding online ritual celebrations, but some open-air rituals may be found, namely Basingstoke Pagan Circle.

Let's start with *Oimeic*, which is a Gaelic word meaning "ewes' milk", whereas *I'mbolg* means "in the belly". Both words refer to the start of the lambing season for Celtic farmers: many ewes had given birth to lambs and this was a time of celebration. Spring was not far off and it would be time to plant the crops as the ground thawed. Both the new lambs and the ewes' milk would help people to survive the winter, as the stocks of meat and grain stored at Samhain might be running low.

The Goddess, Brighid (or Bride) is the keeper of the sacred flame, the guardian of home and hearth. As a way of honouring Brighid, rituals of purification and cleansing are common. Her name means "bright one" and she was the daughter of the chief god, Dagda. Brighid is a goddess of poets, healers and midwives, but also symbolises a war-like aspect as the fabled Brigantia who battled the Romans.

A Celtic celebration at Imbolg was not a massive community fire like those at Bealtaine or Samhain. As Brighid looked after homes, each home would have its own fire, burning through the night. If the home was built of wood or thatch, some would prefer that candles were lit in each living area. Here are some ideas for celebrating Imbolg in your own homes.

- Making a Brighid doll (brideog) out of straw, flowers or shells.
- Cleansing the home for spring.
- Lighting a white or green candle, if you don't have an open fire.
- Making a Brighid cross or a straw cradle or bed, the leaba Brid.
- Good time of the year for scrying or divination.
- Placing snowdrops or swan feathers on your altar.

As we're coming up to Imbolg (1 February 2025), perhaps it would be a nice idea to have **some Imbolg incense**, regardless of whether it's just for you or for a small group ritual. You can make your own quite easily, using a blend of herbs, flowers, wood bark, resins and berries. The first step is to gather your ingredients, together with jars, lids, mortar, pestle, mixing and measuring spoons. Any guide to incense lists the parts and a part is simply 1 unit of measurement - a cup or 1tsp.

Start with the essential oils or resins, mashing them up with the mortar and pestle. Or, you could use a blender or coffee grinder. Then add berries, flowers, dry herbs last. The Imbolg incense could consist of:

- 2 parts cedar or sandalwood
- 2 parts frankincense
- 1-part pine resin
- 1-part dragon's blood
- 1-part orange peel
- 0.5-part lily or snowdrop petals
- 1-part spice, e.g. cinnamon or nutmeg.

If you want to add ritual to your incense, focus on your intent, such as anything you would like to achieve in 2025. State your intent out loud as you blend the herbs to charge up your incense and again as it burns.

Talking about burning incense, Imbolg is the time that Christians celebrate as Candlemas - here's a  **candle spell that's designed to give basic protection for ritual or altar work.**

A lot of candle magick involves writing on the wax and I find that using a crystal to write on the candle can give a boost to the spell. Never blow the flame out - just pinch it or snuff it out.

**Please note that all the spells used or quoted in *GYLDEN MAGICK*, were written by members of Gylden Fellowship.**

**Set-up:** a dark blue candle, a small container of patchouli oil, pine or sandalwood incense, salt and water. Altar colours for Mabon-Samhain are yellow, orange, brown or gold.

1. Anoint the candle with some of the patchouli oil.
2. Chant, "***Candle of protection, power and might,  
Protect me from evil with your pure light***".
3. Light the candle and the incense.
4. Anoint your forehead with some of the patchouli oil.
5. Sprinkle salt and some water around the candle.
6. Visualise all negative thoughts and stresses fading away.
7. Chant, "***Let all the elements now combine,  
To protect my heart and mind,  
Let darkness and evil fade away  
So only good shall come my way***",
8. Let the candle burn out completely and repeat as needed.



Some of you may have moved home recently or may be thinking of doing so in 2025 – this magick is for you. A  **blessing for a new home**  is not so hard to carry out. There are several options and smudging every room with white sage is an easy task. Here's a blessing for smudging each room.

*For negative forces in my sacred site,  
I banish you hence with peace, love and light.  
You wield neither power nor control here,  
I stand and confront you without any fear.  
The smoke sends you forever away,  
This my home and you will obey.  
So, mote it be.*

Or, one could use a pinch of salt in the corners of each room with this invocation.

*I cleanse and purify this room of all negative and lingering vibrations.*

Those of you who know me also know that I usually suggest making a witch bottle for a new home (see details in **GYLDEN MAGICK** for January 2021). The key question is normally that of location. There are two schools of thought on this, and you can decide which one works best for you. One group swears that the bottle needs to be hidden somewhere in the home - under a doorstep, up in a chimney, behind a cabinet, because that way, any negative magick aimed at the house will always go straight to the witch bottle, avoiding the people in the home. This school of thought works well for flats. The other philosophy is that the bottle needs to be buried on your property, but as far away from the house as possible, so that any negative magick sent towards you will never reach your home in the first place. Whichever one you choose, be sure that you're leaving your bottle in a place where it will remain undisturbed permanently. Here's a blessing for your completed witch bottle.

*O Lord and Lady of hearth and home,  
Guard my home with all your might,  
Protect my home from all ills that be,  
With this bottle sealed so tight.  
Protect this place, I beseech you,  
So, this bottle acts as guard,  
Bring here good, but not the evil,  
And grant goodwill from near and far.*



Gylden  
Magick  
Jan. 2025

## Year of the Wood Snake: Japan & China

Collated by Gylden Fellowship







# Language: Cardinal directions

By Jerry Brotton

*Editor's note: this piece is an abridgement of a much longer text by Jerry Brotton on the Diverse Origins of the Language of Cardinal Directions, published by Atlantic Monthly Press in November 2024. Jerry Brotton is Professor of Renaissance Studies at Queen Mary University of London. We hope that it is of interest to GYLDEN MAGICK readers.*

Humans do not have an innate neurological toolbox like animals, but they do possess language. The configuration and language of the four directions is common to many cultures. They pre-dated astronomical observations of the Sun's movements and the stars and were first inspired by the **egocentric coordinates of the human body**. Our most basic corporeal orientations are fourfold: front and back, left and right.

In many ancient languages, front and back are synonymous with east and west, while left and right are often equivalent to north and south. So, in **Hebrew**, east (*qedem* or *mizrach*) also means forward or front, while west (*acho*) is a synonym for behind. In **Arabic**, north is *al-shamāl* (left) and south is *al-janūb* (right). For both these languages, the universe (in which sacred and ritual beliefs are based on facing east), mirrors the body. Other cultures use the body's position to interpret directions in very different ways. Many of the terms used are *deictic* - they depend on their physical context and can shift according to the speaker's point of view. Examples include ancient Chinese, Japanese and many south-eastern African Bantu languages also use corporeal references to distinguish between the four cardinal directions.

In **Kihehe**, the language of the Hehe people of Tanzania, north is *kumitwe*, which derives from *mitwe*, (or head) and south is *magulusiika* (meaning leg). Along similar lines, ancient rock art made by the Dogon people of Mali often depicted a personification of the life of the world as a simple diagrammatic figure personifying the Dogon creation myth in which the deity, Amma, stretched an egg-shaped ball of clay in four directions with north at the top to create the world grasped in the god's hands. Cave paintings show a figure with a torso and arms forming a cross that represents the four cardinal directions. The head is north, the legs south, the left arm east and the right west.

Dividing orientation into four directions emanating from the body is part of a larger symbolic fascination with ordering natural phenomena. In mathematics, four is the smallest composite number (a number divisible by a number apart from one and itself). In geometry, it is related to the cross and the square and their associations with totality and completeness. The **Arabic numeral 4** originated in a simple cross which added the diagonal stroke that is now most familiar in Western numerals. Quadripartite symbolism has provided many cultures and religions with an organising principle for the seasons, continents, winds, elements, ages of man and the four corners of the Earth.

The ancient Chinese dynasties divided their domains into four lands and imagined the world formed by four seas. Each of the four cardinal directions were imagined as intelligent creatures:

- the **green dragon** of the east
- the **crimson bird** of the south
- the **white tiger** of the west
- the **black turtle** of the north

**Note:** each coloured direction matches the hues of the soil in the corresponding Chinese regions.

Buddhism believes in the four cardinal directions representing elements and cycles in life, moving from east (dawn) through south (noon and fire), west (dusk and autumn) and north (night and dissolution). Hinduism reveres the four *Vedas* (religious texts) and, alongside, Hindu mythology includes the *Lokapāla*, the four guardians of the cardinal directions: *Indra* (east), *Yama* (south), *Varuna* (west) and *Kubera* (north).

The earliest surviving record of the four cardinal directions was made during the first great Mesopotamian empire, the Akkadian dynasty (c. 2350–2150 BCE), whose ruler Naram-Sin (r. c. 2254–2218 BCE) is the first known to have adopted the title of King of the Four Corners of the World. Archaeological excavations undertaken in 1931 at Yorgan Tepe, south-west of Kirkuk in modern Iraq, unearthed hundreds of clay tablets containing Akkadian and Sumerian cuneiform inscriptions. One of the most significant of them is a topographical map, usually referred to as the **Gasur map**.

The Gasur map is the oldest known map to show and name cardinal directions. The damaged semi-circle top left is labelled *IM-kur* (east), the one bottom left is inscribed *IM-mar-tu* (west) and to the centre left *IM-mir* (north). Presumably, the missing section of the tablet's right-hand side originally included the inscription *IM-ulù* (south). Yet the naming here is not quite what it seems. The prefix *IM* (tumu) refers to winds and the map identifies four directions by meteorological experiences rather than astronomical observations. These cardinal directions referred to quadrants rather than points and derived from specific aspects of human and physical geography. For the farmers cultivating the land in Azala (Kurdistan) over 4000 years ago, the four cardinal directions in terms of prevailing winds were not only a means of orientation: understanding wind direction and changeable climatic conditions was crucial for the cultivation of crops: the difference between feast and famine.

On the Gasur map, *IM-mir* is established as a word with connotations of fertility, renewal, prosperity and temperance, in contrast to *IM-ulù*, which operates within Akkadian social conventions and language as a term evoking volatility, danger and the fear of outsiders. At this stage in history, the connotations of these two directions became embedded in the rhythms of sedentary, agricultural societies with little or no reference to travel or orientation, which were largely irrelevant to such communities.

The words and connotations of cardinal directions that are spoken give shape and order to societies; they are part of an activity that anchors people within their physical world and makes sense of their surroundings. The Mesopotamian combination of meteorological, geographical and ethnological words for the four directions and their various connotations find parallels, across the globe and in many languages throughout early recorded history. The prevalence of other directions, using landmarks or objects are greater in some languages.

Indigenous cultures like that of the Guugu Yimithirr people in Queensland in Australia's far north have an acute sense of cardinal directions, but with little perception of egocentric coordinates. Instead, they use a system of absolute geographical orientation, referring to things and places as relative to the cardinal directions, rather than themselves. Some societies, such as the Yurok people of northern California, possess no terms for any of the four directions. Compass points are common to most societies, but they are not universal.

The words and connotations of cardinal directions that are spoken give shape and order to societies. What was strikingly different about Mayan and subsequent Mesoamerican cardinal directions from those of Mesopotamia and other cultures was that they operated on three, not two axes. The Aztecs saw the Earth as a horizontal disc divided by the dual east-west and north-south axes. At its centre ran a third, vertical axis *mundi*. The result was a *quincunx*, a geometric pattern of five points arranged like a cross, effectively structuring the Aztec world picture according to *five* directions. In 1325 CE, the Aztec city of Tenochtitlan (Mexico City) was founded around the Templo Mayor, which symbolised the Aztec centre of the world, where the vertical and horizontal axes of the cardinal directions met and the heavens, the Earth and the underworld came together.

# Alchemy: The Violet Flame of Amenti

By Joanna Bristow-Watkins

Since time immemorial, alchemists have sought to change base metals into gold. But the transmutation of metals like lead into gold is a metaphor for spiritual alchemy; which is the alchemy of self-transformation. It is often understood as the process by which base metal can be turned to pure gold and/ or the quest for the Philosopher's Stone (used to create an elixir of life). The word, **alchemy**, is almost certainly derived from the ancient indigenous word for Egypt (Khem or Khemit), implying that the art or science, was practised in Egypt before the land took on its current name following the Greek occupation of around 330BCE.

There is a plethora of evidence suggesting that the ancient Egyptians were very proficient at metallurgy and may have developed a process for creating gold from lesser metals. **Khem** means the *black lands* and described the fertile plains of the Nile Valley; these also gave their name to chemistry. However, the ultimate goal of the *Spiritual Alchemist* is to transform the chaotic primordial First Matter (the *Khem*) into perfection; a goal that is accomplished through spiritual enlightenment and self-transformation. Such practitioners sought a way to change the lead of negative human energy into the gold of divine energy and some of them achieved this by using the violet flame. The **violet flame** (also called the violet fire) is a unique spiritual energy that can heal emotional and physical issues, improve relationships, help spiritual growth and simply ease any life situation.

The colour, violet, has an established association with spirituality. Within the visible spectrum, violet, sustaining the highest frequency, is at the point of transition to the next octave of light. During the pre-Dynastic period of Khem, the Violet Flame of Amenti was ruled by the Deities *Ausar* (also known as Wzr or Osirus), brandished by *Sekhmet*, and made freely available to *Akhenaton*. Both in Atlantis and during the Essene era (which spanned the lifetimes of *Mother Mary*, *Jesus Christ* and *Mary Magdalene*), this powerful tool was retained under the Guardianship of Angels *Melchisadec* and *Ariel*.

Saints and adepts throughout the ages, including the great Alchemist and Wizard *Merlin*, have known how to wield the violet flame, but humanity was only recently considered worthy of its powers under the strict supervision of an Ascended Master called Saint Germain. Ascended Masters are enlightened spiritual beings who were once incarnate on earth, but have resolved all of their karma and successfully fulfilled their souls' purpose.

Used for spiritual alchemy and transmutation, the Violet Flame has long been revered as a potent form of protection. Further, the Violet Flame of Amenti reputedly has the power to transmute the cause, effect, and even the cellular memory of our past wrongdoings. Transmutation means to change from one form, nature, substance or state into another. The violet flame converts negative into positive, dark into light, *destiny* into opportunity. The flame even erases the consequential *bad karma* of our misdemeanours. With such amazing versatility, the Violet Flame must be an essential component in any healer's portfolio?

*I am offering a rare in-person Violet Flame of Amenti course on Wednesday 22nd January. Course hours are 11am - 7 hours to give us 6¾ hours of interactive time plus lunch and an afternoon break. During these interactive training sessions, you will learn how to use this versatile alchemical antiseptic to improve your environment and life circumstances. The optional attunement into the Violet Flame of Amenti strengthens your connection with this amazing Ancient Egyptian instrument for spiritual transformation. Cost is £88 or £111 (to include optional attunement), with a generous 75% discount to course repeaters, regardless of when you previously studied the course and whether it was online or in-person. Violet Flame of Amenti interactive online training modules are offered every 2-3 months and also cost £88 or £111 (with the optional distant attunement), which includes 6¾ hours mentoring.*

# Eternal flames

By Mark Sharpen

In New York state, a small fire can be seen behind a waterfall. It's a natural phenomenon that has captured imaginations for thousands of years: the **eternal flame**. These continuously burning flames are found around the world. Caused by gas spilling up from deep underground reservoirs, some have been burning for millennia and may have inspired Biblical tales. So, I'm having a little look at the science of eternal flames and how they manage to burn for so long?

According to **Giuseppe Etiope**, a geologist at the National Institute of Geophysics and Volcanology in Rome, "*Eternal flames can be considered a special case of seep*". Etiope is considered to be the world expert on natural gas seepages. Seepage happens when natural flammable gas underground, mostly methane, ethane, and propane, travels to the surface from pressurised reservoirs through fractures or holes in the rock. "*In special conditions*", says Etiope, "*when the gas reaching the surface has a high enough concentration of methane, it can burn autonomously, like a flag that says, here is an intense emission.*"

Fuelled by a continuous emission of gas, some flames can burn for thousands of years. This is why such they have been called eternal flames. This eternal flame (shown below) is tucked into a cove under a 32-foot waterfall in Chestnut Ridge County Park, New York State. Its flame can be around three to eight inches high, depending on the weather and the seasons. "*It shines from behind a veil of cascading water*" says Arndt Schimmelmann, a senior earth scientist at Indiana University.



Eternal flames are usually found near petroleum fields. They can be seen in many countries including the USA, Romania, Italy, Turkey, Iraq, Azerbaijan, Taiwan, China, India and Australia. Some may be thousands, tens of thousands or even millions of years old. These eternal flames feature in many mythologies. In Azerbaijan, a flame burning on a hillside near Baku is named **Yanardağ**, which means burning mountain; it was considered sacred in the Zoroastrian religion, which believed fire was a representation of the divine.

Chimaera in Turkey's Antalya Gulf (once called ancient Lycia) is named after the fire-breathing monster with the head of a lion, the body of a goat and the tail of a snake from Greek mythology. Close to a temple of Hephaestus, the Greek blacksmith god of fire, it may be where the Olympic flame was lit. This one was referenced by Pliny the Elder in his *Historia Naturalis* about 2000 years ago (from 77 BCE).

Baba Gurgur is located in Iraq. It is a huge crater with a flame burning in the centre. Some believe this the burning fiery furnace used by King Nebuchadnezzar in the Old Testament. If so, this eternal flame has been theoretically burning for 4,000 years.



Although some of these fires have burned for millennia, eternal flames can be extinguished. Splashing water or rainfall can extinguish these flames, but they can often re-ignite autonomously, depending upon the amount of seepage and ground conditions. On the other hand, eternal flames may be hyperbole, because "geology tells us that nothing is eternal on Earth," says Arndt Schimmelmann.

In Chestnut Ridge, splashing water into the cove can quench the fire. *"I did that a few times myself when I was about to sample the gas for geochemical analyses,"* says Schimmelmann. *"It is always a challenge to re-ignite the flame without being doused by the gushing water of the waterfall."* He notes that he always successfully re-ignited the flame before leaving. Eventually, this flame will be lost to natural erosion as the waterfall recedes. Losing the shelter of its cove will cause the flame to go out on a regular basis, although the flow of gas may continue.

Geological hydrocarbon seeps, including eternal flames, are natural sources of greenhouse gases, like methane, and photochemical pollutants such as ethane and propane. The Chestnut Ridge flame releases about 1kg of methane every day.

There are so few eternal flames across the Earth that the environmental impact is negligible compared to the thousands of gas seeps and industrial emissions. And, it should be noted, that the policy of drilling for gas could reduce nearby eternal flames by lowering the pressure of the gas reservoir that fuels them. That's why the Chestnut Ridge eternal flame is rare, because no drilling has so far occurred in that particular region.



# Chronic inflammations

By Mark Sharpen

Time to move on from eternal flames to inflammations. OK then, what do I mean by **inflammation**? In short, it is the body's natural response to injury, illness or infection. It acts as a protective mechanism and can start off the healing process, which is good in the short term. This is **acute inflammation** and can show by redness, pain, bruising or swelling.

When inflammation becomes persistent, it can lead to a phenomenon known as **inflammageing**. This term (a combination of inflammation and ageing) emphasises how chronic inflammation accelerates the ageing process. So, **how does inflammation age you?**

Problems arise, when inflammation becomes **chronic**, which means extra wear and tear on our bodies over a longer term. This ongoing state is where the body's immune response is continuously active; it may be due to illness or it may occur without a clear issue. Long-term inflammation can be caused by problems like prolonged exposure to irritants, auto-immune disorders, persistent infections or an unhealthy diet. The results of chronic inflammation include ageing, heart disease, diabetes and cancer.



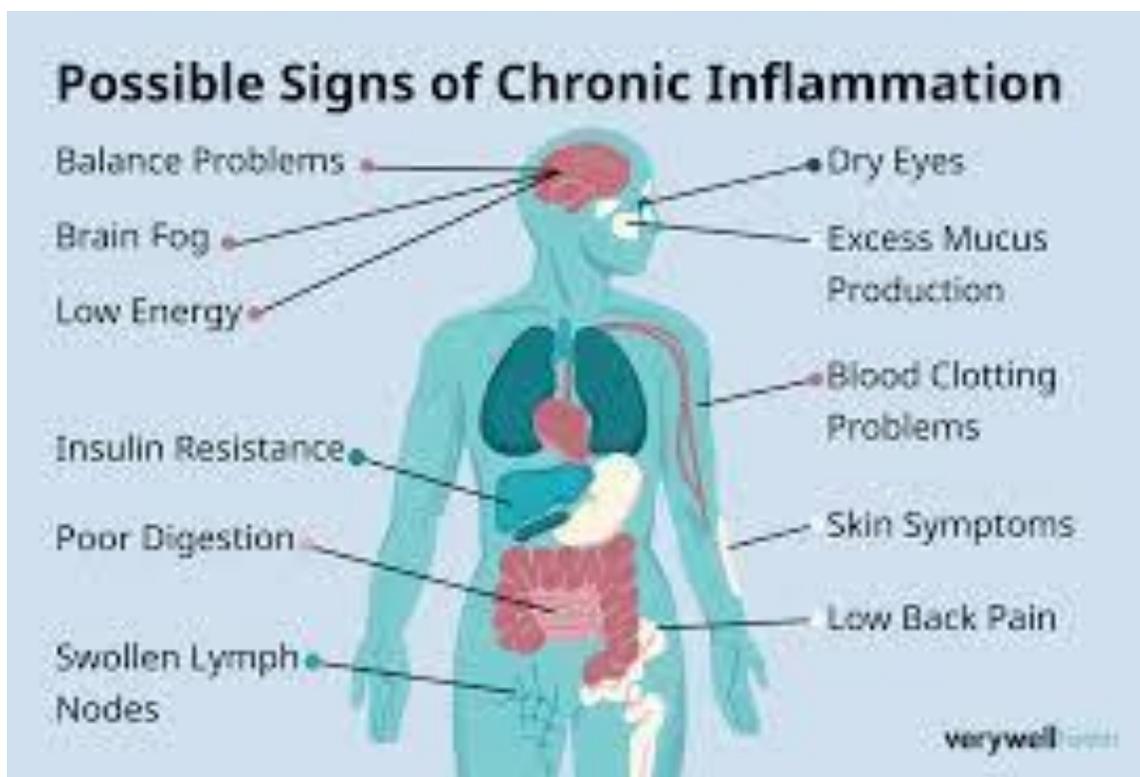
Right then, let's have a look at what chronic inflammation can do to your health in more detail.

1. It damages cellular health **Telomeres** are DNA-protein complexes, found at the ends of chromosomes that protect them from damage and maintain genomic integrity. Longer telomeres are associated with longer lifespans, while shorter telomeres may contribute to higher rates of chronic disease. One way that chronic inflammation has been shown to shorten our lifespan is that it causes our telomeres to shorten. When inflammation is present, this shortening process happens faster. If telomeres become too short, cells may not be able to divide or work properly any more, which may accelerate ageing.
2. It reduces energy by contributing to **mitochondrial**.stress. Mitochondria are responsible for producing energy for cells. Chronic inflammation can lead to oxidative stress, which damages the mitochondria, potentially impairing their ability to produce energy efficiently. As mitochondrial function declines, cells have less energy to repair and regenerate. This energy deficit may hasten the ageing process, making the body more susceptible to age-related diseases and leading to a decline in vitality and physical performance.

3. When inflammation is chronic, it can interfere with **normal metabolic processes**. It has been proven that long-term inflammation may lead to insulin resistance and type 2 diabetes. Similarly, certain health conditions may increase your risk of inflammation, which may, in turn, lead to diabetes. For instance, *metabolic syndrome* (a condition linked to a higher risk of diabetes and accelerated ageing) is often marked by higher levels of chronic inflammation.

**Can chronic inflammation be prevented or reduced?** The good news is that yes, it can and here are a few suggestions for doing so.

1. Adopt an **anti-inflammatory diet**, such the Mediterranean Diet. Dietary programs prioritise whole foods full of antioxidant-rich fruits and vegetables, anti-inflammatory fats from fish, nuts and seeds, no excess sugar and limited alcohol intake. Certain nutrients may be particularly helpful, namely omega-3 fats in fatty fish, walnuts, flaxseeds, soybeans and chia seeds. Curcumin (the active compound in turmeric) is renowned for its potent anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties, making it effective in managing conditions like arthritis.
2. Take part in **regular physical activities** like walking, strength training or any form of movement really. This will boost the immune system and reduce inflammaging. Aerobic exercise like brisk walking, cycling or swimming is good, but stress-reducing workouts like yoga are good too, as stress and inflammation are linked closely.
3. **Adequate sleep** is important as poor sleep increases chronic inflammation. However, behavioural changes to treat insomnia have been shown to decrease inflammation. So, establishing a regular sleep routine and creating a restful environment is crucial. Adequate sleep is hard to define, but try to ensure 7-9 hours of quality sleep each night.



# Shrooms

By Erica Zann

Hi, welcome to more witterings from an elderly resident of a small English village. On balance, Yuletide was peaceful. One of my friends introduced me to the idea of hygge, which comes from Sweden or Norway or some such, Scandinavia anyway. And then I listened to a *Woman's Hour* programme during Christmas that concentrated on comfort, including hygge! It includes keeping warm, relaxed ambience, good reads and so on. I'd managed to visit family over Yule and we watched *Wallace and Gromit* together. My Yule included lots of TV, books, films and the wireless – and no shortage of food, as I'd bought in about 2 weeks of groceries beforehand!

Hasn't it been cold? The nights have been very cold for those like me who have gout or arthritis. Also, it's very wet and blustery, which makes me sad for those who are forced to sleep on the street. All I can do is support local food banks and charities where possible, ignoring all the tosh from the Tories about benefit scroungers and homelessness being a lifestyle choice. It's just a bit sad, to my mind, that so many people take the right-wing cant as the truth. (*Editor's note: this is the opinion of the author.*)

What's due in January? Well, our sheltered housing company put on a Christmas Eve party in the lounge, which was very convivial and I enjoyed some hot mulled wine. Someone had donated a bottle of port, which was kind of them – it brings back memories of port and lemon. We had a chat about past drinks from our youth that are less common now. I remember Campari and soda, Dubonnet and lemon, while others recalled Daiquiri, Cinzano, Gold Label and Bloody Mary.

Actually, the fact that it's so cold or raining means that I can play bingo, Tri-ominoes (like dominoes, but with triangular pieces) or Rummikub with my friends this week. We play in the residents' lounge during the week – it's very civilised with coffee and cakes or biscuits. The keys to life are to slow down, listen to others, find out news and shared memories. Some of my friends are aged 90+, but memories are so important to them and I learn things too.

Some of them have achy backs or legs from the cold weather and I tend to recommend a ginger poultice, which is really easy to do. Put some grated ginger root in a mix of hot water and sunflower or olive oil. Stir well and dip a towel in the mixture. Apply to the bare skin where it aches and add a dry towel on top.

This type of magick that is used to heal people is very old. When I have a moment, I try to make some basic remedies for my fellow residents. Examples are winter syrups for sore throats, oil of calendula for dry or chapped skin, oil of cleavers for psoriasis, spearmint teabags for upset stomachs, rose and lemon balm teabags for de-stressing and oil of comfrey for joint pains or pulled muscles.

Winter blessings to you all.

*Erica*

# Folklore: The Vampires of Drakelow

By the Storyteller

Two peasants who lived in Stapenhill in 1090 (under the administration of Burton Abbey) absconded to the village of Drakelow (this name in Old English means Dragon Mound), then in the ownership of Nigel de Stafford, liegeman of Earl Roger the Poitevin. The peasants said they wished to live under the lordship of de Stafford rather than the abbot - both men spoke evil words and laid false accusations against the abbot and stirred up Lord Nigel against him. They also took the crops they had grown from their storage barn to Drakelow.

Geoffrey Malaterra, an eleventh-century Benedictine monk and historian (possibly of Norman origin) having gone barefoot to pray for guidance at the shrine of Modwenna, ordered that their crops be seized by the monastery. The charges that the men brought against the abbot are not recorded, but they were enough to anger Nigel to the point that he threatened to kill the abbot. Lord Nigel sent his men, along with the two peasants, to take back the stolen crops, along with whatever else was stored in the monk's barns in Stapenhill.

The next day at around 9 o'clock in the morning, the two peasants had just sat themselves at the table to eat when they were both struck down dead. They were buried the following day in wooden coffins in Stapenhill churchyard. That same evening, before sunset, the two dead men came to Drakelow, carrying their wooden coffins; they spent the evening and night walking the paths and fields of the village, terrifying the inhabitants by banging on the walls of their houses and exhorting them to join them, shouting, "Come with us!", "Move!" and "Follow on!". This continued night after night for some time, with the undead vampires shifting between the shapes of men, bears, dogs and other animals, horrifying the villagers, Lord Nigel and his staff.

Next came something worse: the village of Drakelow was struck by plague, which ravaged the village, killing many inhabitants. Three men survived, including Drogo, who was Lord Nigel's reeve, and two others. As one of his villages had been devastated, Lord Nigel went to the abbey a repentant man, to pray to the abbot and to Modwenna that they might lift the curse upon Drakelow. He restored the looted grain and Drogo was sent to found a new village (which he did and called it Gresley). The two other men were struck with an ailment that left them bedridden.

The shape-shifting vampires continued to harass the locals and, eventually, the villagers went to the graves of the two peasants and opened the coffins, to find that the linen covering their faces was soaked in fresh blood. They took out the bodies, hacked off their heads and placed them back in the coffins between their knees. They cut out their hearts, reburied the bodies and carried the men's hearts back to Drakelow, where the villagers built an enormous pyre and, casting the hearts into the flames, continued to load wood onto the fire all day. Eventually, the heat from the flames grew so hot that a great cracking sound was heard: the hearts burst asunder. As they did so, an evil spirit in the form of a great crow was seen to rise from the flames and fly away.

As the great bird flew off, the two sick peasants arose, gathering their wives, children and belongings as they left Drakelow for Gresley. Drakelow was left empty and was considered cursed for many years (people giving thanks to Modwenna for saving them). Nigel de Stafford's family adopted the name of Gresley instead of Drakelow, despite the family seat remaining at Drakelow - the village of Drakelow, considered cursed, was never refounded.

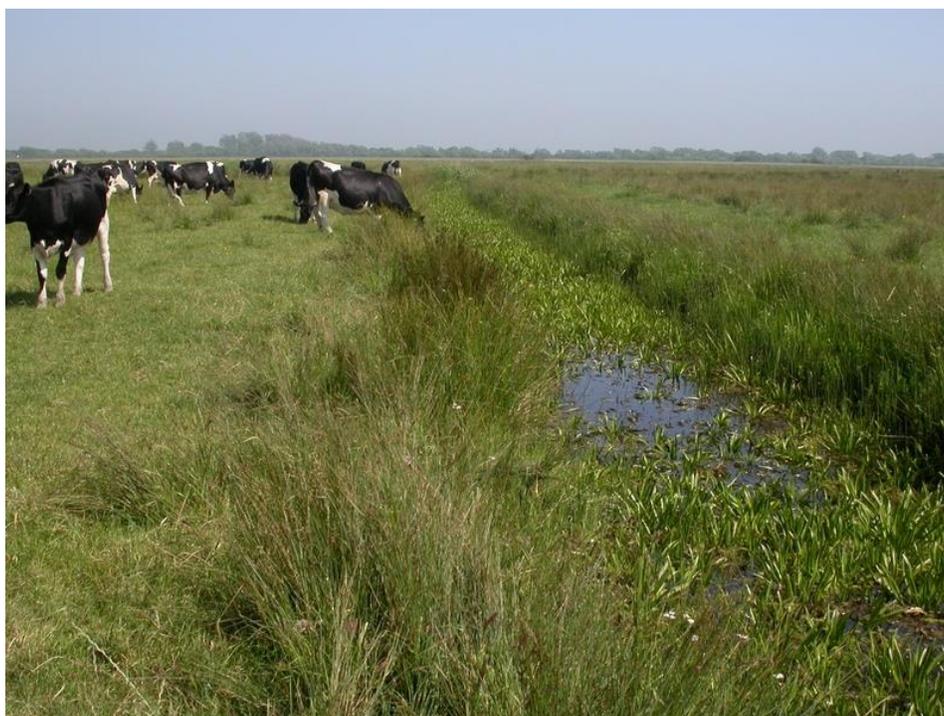
# Nature: Pevensey Levels

By Jamie Parsons, Head of Nature Reserves, Sussex Wildlife Trust

Sussex Wildlife Trust and National Highways have joined forces to launch an exciting and ambitious Network for Nature project to bring Pevensey Levels back to life as one of the great biodiverse wetlands of the UK, benefiting people, nature and wildlife.

You pass through the Pevensey Levels driving from Eastbourne to Bexhill on the A259. It stretches over 3500 hectares (13.5 sq. miles) between Eastbourne, Hailsham and Bexhill. It has many designations, such as SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest), SAC (Special Area for Conservation) and RAMSAR (an International Designation for Important Wetlands). Yet, many people are unaware of its international importance.

It is a landscape dominated by big skies, acres of lush wet grassland, intersected by many miles of ditches filled with nationally rare aquatic species. However, there used to be another element that Pevensey was famous for, which has all but disappeared, and that is huge flocks of wetland birds. Throughout history, the levels have transitioned from salt marsh through to freshwater marsh, then grazing marsh and, today it's an important grazing area for agriculture in the South East, with animals being turned out in spring for finishing (fattening up) on the lush wet grassland before market.



Cows grazing at Pevensey © Graeme Lyons

In 1996, Sussex Wildlife Trust purchased 150 hectares of land on the Levels, which was subsequently designated a National Nature Reserve along with a parcel of land owned by Natural England. The reserve supports at least 25 rare aquatic molluscs, 16 species of Odonata such as Hairy Dragonfly, along with a huge number of rare aquatic invertebrates and plants.

However, when we purchased the site in the late 1990s, there were large flocks of waterfowl and waders overwintering on the reserve, along with small numbers of Lapwing and Redshank breeding. Today, these flocks have all but disappeared from the Levels.

So what has caused this decline? Essentially, it comes down to water. Availability of water at the right time of year is critical for a healthy, balanced system. This balance has been altered due to extensive water management infrastructure installed on the Levels in the 1970s. Water is pumped off the Levels in winter and held back in the summer, resulting in water levels being held at a constant all year round. This is good news for farming, but when you bring in challenges of increased water extraction and climate change, suddenly this system starts to fail. With less water flowing through the system and hotter summers causing more evaporation, the system is working to a deficit with less and less water being held within the wetland, causing it to dry out.



Drought at Pevensey © Sam Roberts

With £600,000 funding from the Network for Nature project, we have begun our restoration project by carrying out earth works on our reserve. These have been taking place over recent months. The aim is to create a mosaic of habitats by blocking and meandering ditches, digging scrapes and creating deeper ponds as well as undulations.

Together, these measures will help 're-wet' the Levels, allowing wetland species to re-colonise lost territories. We are also working in partnership with farmers, neighbours and partners, in order to raise water levels and create new habitats where we can restore wetlands more widely on the Pevensey Levels. The aim is to create an archipelago of wetland habitat right across the Levels, providing stepping stones for species to move through the landscape.

# Beliefs: Forest worship in Germany

By Richard Hacken, European Studies Bibliographer at Brigham Young University, Utah

For millennia, the German forest has been much more than a botanical phenomenon. In a 1983 interview, the then Federal Chancellor (Helmut Kohl) said, "*Mythology, Germans and the forest – they all belong together*".

From the beginning, the germination of the German nation involves the imagination of a people that mythologised, symbolised, anthropomorphised or otherwise imagined their forest. Certainly, some of the thematic elements of the German forest are also found in other cultures or even universally. But this study directs attention to those aspects of the [sacred forest](#) that seem typically German.

Woodlands provide potent and vivid symbols of life, death, regeneration, social process and collective identity. Why has there been such a German preoccupation with its woods, even to the point of worship? A portion of the answer lies in the Germanic victory over the Roman army of occupation at the battle of the Teutoburger Wald (Teutoburg Forest, in modern North Rhine-Westphalia) in the year 9 CE. It was a major turning point in history, as Rome ceased to be an empire. It left a major cultural (not to mention linguistic) divide between northern Germanic Europe and the Romanised south that would continue to appear throughout European history. The victory also gave the woodland warriors, having overcome the greatest military power on earth, a symbol of invincibility in the forest.

The sustenance of Germanic tribes focused on their sacred common forests. In the melodramatic, but indicative, words of Hans Wolfgang Behm: "*Then came a time of fulfilment when man understood it was time to pray when the treetops rustled in the wind. That was the hour when the German soul was born*". The nobility of German man, he suggests, is rooted in the forest. Those with reverence for trees among the Germanic tribes equate man with plants. Early medicinal practices held that a tree could remove or call back diseases; a specific living tree, spiritually conjoined with a person, could serve as a *doppelgänger* to share, forecast or even determine that person's fate.

Geographic differences (between Hessen, Baden and other regions) develop in the forms and functions of forest spirits and wood sprites. Some are imagined to be anthropomorphic vegetation demons, such as the Rain Girl, the Wild Leaf Man or one of many May Tree totems, later attached to the May Pole as guarantors of tree-like health and vitality. Hansel and Gretel, centuries before the Brothers Grimm, make mythological appearances as stuffed effigies atop the May Tree.

Another early tree custom that continues to this day is the German *Richtfest* (or Topping Out) ceremony of placing a tree on the top beam of a newly completed housing structure. What the buffalo hunt was to Native Americans, tree cutting is to early Germanic tribes; the unused topmost part of the tree would be prayerfully attached atop the new shelter so the tree spirit would not be homeless. German immigrants to North America brought the custom with them and now, ironically, it has been mostly ironworkers who perform the topping out ritual on iron and glass skyscrapers. A bloodier ritual is the practice of human sacrifice within the limbs of trees, possibly patterned after the Teutonic god, Wotan, and designed to bring about rebirth and sustenance.

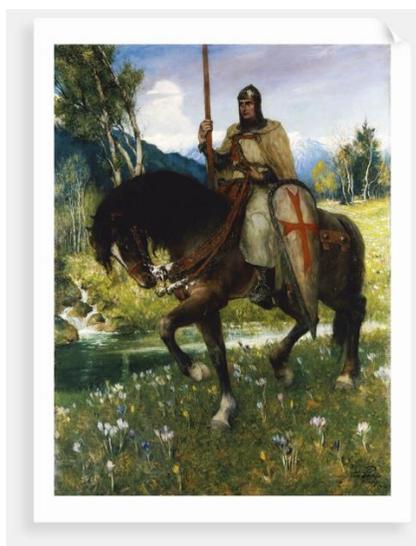
Incipient forms of Christian worship in the first millennium are heavily dependent on heathen remnants of tree symbolism. Even today, certain totemic elements found in or on wooden crucifixes, wayside shrines, forest chapels and pilgrimage churches from Bavaria to the Rhineland may indicate a relationship to earlier tree

worship. Early Christian missionaries were able to refer to German tree devotion during conversion: the Tree of Knowledge and the Tree of Life are seen as central features in the Garden of Eden; Christ compares a just man to a fruitful tree (Matthew 7:17) and curses an unfruitful tree (Matthew 3:10). It resonates in the conversion process that Jesus had been a carpenter.

Perhaps of top relevance for Germanic converts is the crucifixion, the most important sacrifice on a tree in human history and it involves regeneration. Wooden splinters from the cross become sacred relics. Efforts are made to root out heathen beliefs, literally. In the year 723 CE, St. Boniface, (the so-called Apostle of the Germans), felled the sacred Oak tree dedicated to Thor in Northern Hessen and the people converted to Christianity when Thor failed to intervene; Boniface used the wood to construct a chapel.

After felling a second sacred Oak at Geismar, Boniface pointed to a fir tree at its roots and compared the latter to Christ – humble, overcoming seasonal death, and pointing toward heaven. This is one plausible origin for the Christmas Tannenbaum tradition. The religious impulse carried over into early German literature. The medieval duality between traits of the forest and demands of the court is found in the Arthurian epic of *Parsifal*, written in Middle High German by Wolfram von Eschenbach (whose family name includes the word for ash trees).

The epic was later set to opera by Richard Wagner Parsifal was raised by his mother in a secluded forest to keep him ignorant of the ways of chivalry that had led to his father's death and leaves the forest in fool's clothing. Nonetheless, his innate qualities of compassion and spirituality guide him through a long series of adventures and seeming coincidences that lead to his recognition as the new king of the Grail. Magical guidance over the life and development of a young Parsifal become the type of enchantment that would later appear in fairy tales.



The Northern Renaissance forges strong parallels between the German people, scattered as they are, and their forest. Eight centuries after St. Boniface, Luther is said to have added candles to the fir tree at Christmas time, reminiscent of stars shining through the tree by night. Then, the **Tannenbaum** makes its way into other countries, where neither Boniface nor Luther presumably could have imagined that the Christmas tree would ever be constructed of plastic or lit with electricity. In art, it became natural that woodcuts and wood carvings should be prime media used to portray the sacred. Albrecht Dürer, considered the greatest artist of the Northern Renaissance, makes a series of woodcuts of the Holy Family that feature German trees, German houses and German forests as backdrops rather than the unknown Holy Land.

The genre of the landscape was jolted around 1510 when Albrecht Altdorfer turns the dense German forest itself into a grand protagonist that stands in clear contrast to stylised Italian art of the day. In *St. George in the Wood*, the title character, dwarfed by the vaulted tabernacle of green growth, seems in conversation rather than combat with a miniaturised dragon. But the woodland is the true hero of the piece, conventionalised somewhat to provide sacredness, but also providing staggering, twisting heights of naturalistic foliage to suggest wild grandeur and natural nobility.

In the Baroque period, during and after the prolonged devastation of the Thirty Years' War, contemplation often turned inward and upward toward personal and spiritual pursuits rather than national ones. One example is seen in a verse by the Baroque hymn writer, Paul Gerhardt, as he addresses God: *Make room for your spirit in me That for you I become a great tree, Sinking my roots deep in the earth. Allow me, solely for your praise Within your garden to raise Myself from sapling in rebirth.*

Two centuries later, Joseph von Eichendorf (whose family name means oak village) is a Romantic whose poetry has often been set to music as folksongs: *I stand in forested shadows As on the margins of life; The land becomes darkening meadows, The river a ribbon of silver. From far off, bells are ringing And sound carries into the woods; A deer lifts its head in alarm And quickly falls back asleep. But the forest stirs the treetops In a dream of solid rock, For the Lord is passing across the peaks To bless the silent land.*

Romantic composers, such as Schumann in his *Forest Scenes* collection, successfully unite music with poetry. The philosopher Kant is a key Romantic contribution to the imagined German forest. This leads from the sacred forest into the 19<sup>th</sup> century fairy-tale concept of an enchanted forest. The sense of holiness and enchantment increasingly took on psychological, sociological, nationalistic and ecological overtones. The latter elements dominate from the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the present. However, the German people still hold the forest, as diminished and secularised as it has become, for a place of spiritual refreshment, for a location of personal reconnection as originally understood in the word, religion.



# Celestial forecasts: January 2025

By Joanna Bristow-Watkins

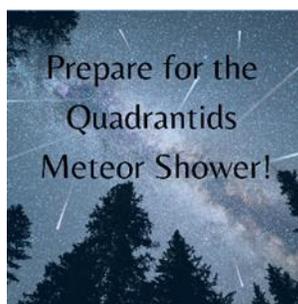
*January in Britain is the month when our daylight hours continue to extend bringing positivity and hope. Whereas December benefits from warmth still trapped in the land, the chill of our tilt away from the sun toward dark, cold space is felt now in January. The landscape still presents a stark beauty with occasional evergreens and frost is a regular morning visitor. Warm up with bashed neeps (turnips) and/or swede, together with carrots, beetroot, garlic, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, kohlrabi, cabbage, kale, potatoes and winter squash.*

*The month of January was named after the Roman God, Janus, who had two faces so he could see the past and the future and was also the god of doors. Interestingly, traditional New Year celebrations involved the door being flung open at midnight to let out the old year with the banging of saucepans to send it on its way. Nothing was taken out of the door on New Year's Day, not even empty bottles from the revelries of the night before! To the Anglo-Saxons, January was called **Æftera Geola**, or **After Yule**.*

*January begins with **New Year Day** (1st), which in Scotland extends into January 2nd and is called **Hogmanay** (see December 2024 Celestial Forecast for more). In the night sky the month, we have the **Quadrantid Meteors** peaking 3rd & 4th and the constellation of **Orion** is very prominent. We can look forward to the traditional British Festivals of **Epiphany** (6th) and **Plough Monday** (also 6th this year) plus the Hindu Celebration of **Makara Samkranti** (14th) and the Annual Scottish **Burns Night** (25th). We have our only **Harmony in Nature Woodland Therapy (Forest Bathing)** event this month 11am-1.30pm on **Saturday 18 January at Harry Edwards** in Shere (Surrey). To assist with therapeutic and abundant alignment with the moon cycle, our next **Lunar Alignment Programme commences with the New Moon on Wednesday 29 January and runs until Thursday 27 February**. Our **Full Moon Meditation takes place 7.30-9.30pm (UK time) on Monday 13 January** with **Wolf Full Moon** peaking at 17:54.*

*2025 is a 9 year in numerology. This means the digits of 2025 add up to 9. In numerology, the number 9 is associated with spiritual growth, wisdom, and completion. It is the highest-valued single-digit number, and is considered a powerful number. Interestingly, this blends well with the attributes of the Chinese Year of the Snake which we move into on 29 January. According to **creative numerology** ( I recommend checking out the link), a 9 year is about the end of an era and the start of the next; a time for review, completing unresolving past issues by tying up loose ends and moving forward unencumbered.*

*According to London Astrologer Tanya Cohen, with four planets moving into new signs and Pluto—the planet of transformation—settling into Aquarius for the next 20 years, we're entering an extraordinary and unprecedented time. All the planets, except Jupiter, will soon transition into air or fire signs, which means we can expect things to start moving very quickly. With so much potential for change and growth on the horizon, it's more important than ever to keep our intentions strong and focused. Email Tanya on **tanyaecohen@gmail.com** to receive her wisdom directly.*

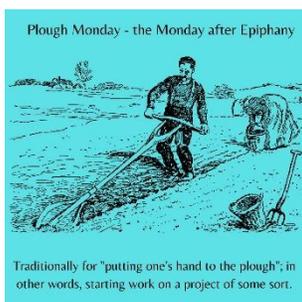


**Wednesday 1 January is New Year's Day and is a Bank Holiday in the UK and time for New Year's Resolutions!**

**Wednesday 1–Sunday 5 January (peaking on the 3-4 January) is the Quadrantid Meteor Shower;** visible from 1-5 January after midnight and peaking in the early hours of the 4 January. Typically, 40 or so bright, blue and fast (25.5 miles per second) meteors will radiate from the constellation, Bootes, some blazing more than halfway across the sky. A small percentage of them leave persistent dust trains. This shower usually has a very sharp peak lasting only about an hour.

The particles that cause the Quadrantid Meteors originate from the asteroid 2003 EH1, an asteroid that is probably a piece broken off from an obsolete comet. Since the orbit of 2003, EH1 is highly inclined to the orbit of the Earth, the Earth passes through it very quickly. Thus, the Quadrantid meteor shower is an extremely short one, lasting only a few hours. With the New Moon on Monday 30 December, there could be decent viewing this year, if the sky is clear. See [earthsky.org](http://earthsky.org) for more details.

**Monday 6 January is 12th Night, or Epiphany, in the Christian Calendar.** This is the day when, traditionally, the Christmas Tree and other decorations should be removed until the following year.



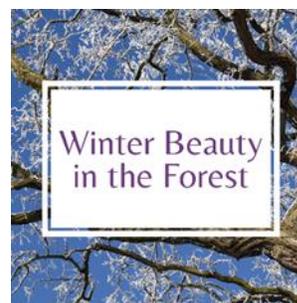
**Monday 6 January, this year, is also Plough Monday in England!** Traditionally, Plough Monday (the Monday after Epiphany when the Zoroastrian Magi visited the infant Jesus) is the day for setting aside the remnants and excesses of Christmas and *putting one's hand to the plough*; in other words, starting work on a project of some sort. A traditional delicacy from Norfolk, eaten on Plough Monday, is known as Plough Pudding, which is a boiled meat, onions and suet pudding.

**Monday 13 January @ 22:26 is Wolf Full Moon.**

Between Full Moon and the next New Moon is considered as a good time energetically for detoxing the body.

**Monday 13 January**, 7.30-9.30pm UK time (GMT) is our **Full Moon Unity Consciousness Meditation**. During this session, 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. Participants all receive a deeply healing experience. Cost to participate is £20 by online BACS payment (£1 admin fee added for PayPal, concessions to RSE/VFoA graduates), book at the **Harmony Shop**. This activity serves as a good taster of Joanna's 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. To find out how working on your own spiritual consciousness can help humanity and the planet by raising the overall human consciousness levels, see Joanna's **You Tube explanation**.

If you would rather do a different angelic meditation by yourself, click here for **Angela McGerr's Full Moon Meditation with Gabriel**. This ritual is taken from Angela McGerr's *A Harmony of Angels* book; this is now long out of print, but we have a few signed unused copies available from the **Harmony Shop**.



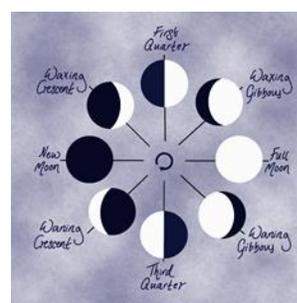
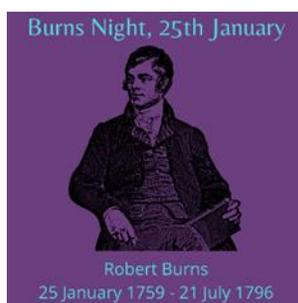
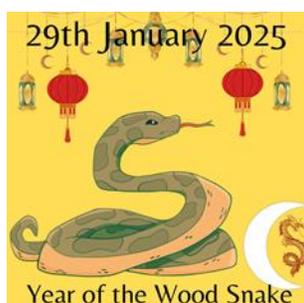
**Tuesday 14 January is the Hindu Celebration of Makar Sankranti, which is the Winter Festival of the reborn sun.** It is traditional to wear yellow clothes and eat yellow food. Bathing in sacred waters, lighting bonfires, kite flying, dancing and offering prayers are also traditional activities over this festival, with rural children going from house to house, singing and asking for treats. Most ancient Hindu festivals are observed according to lunar cycles, whereas *Makar Sankranti* is one of the few determined by the solar cycle. This means that it falls annually on the same Gregorian calendar date (14 January), except on occasional years (Leap Years such as 2024) when the date shifts by a single day to the 15th, because of the complexity of earth-sun relative movement.

**Saturday 18 January, 11am - 1.30pm, 2½ hours Forest Bathing** session with Joanna & Katie at the Harry Edwards Foundation (Shere, near Guildford, Surrey), £37.77. This Winter Forest Bathing session will take place in all weathers except 30+mph winds. It is a deeply relaxing and rejuvenating experience which, despite the title of forest bathing, does not involve any swimming! Some scientifically proven benefits of spending time in woodland include reduced stress levels, stronger immune system response, and a stabilised cortisol cycle. Book via our **Harmony Healing shop** or email **kateandjo@harmonyinnature.uk** to go on our monthly update list for seasonal events

**Monday 20 January is St Agnes Eve; a night for meaningful and deep dreams.** In Christian tradition, St Agnes appeared to her parents in a dream on the night after she was martyred.

**Saturday 25 January is Burns Night in Scotland.** Burns Night is a revered date in the Scottish calendar and celebrates, on the anniversary of his birthday, the life and works of their national Bard, Robert Burns. Born over 250 years ago; some consider his best-known poem as *Auld Lang Syne*, though others believe he did not write it himself, but was the first person credited with writing it down for posterity as part of his attempt to preserve Scottish traditional songs.

The evening centres on the entrance of the *haggis* (a type of sausage made from a sheep's stomach) on a large platter to the sound of ceremonial bagpipes. When the haggis is on the table, the host reads the *Address to a Haggis*: an ode that Robert Burns wrote to the Scottish delicacy! At the end of the reading, the haggis is ceremonially sliced into two pieces and the meal begins.



**Saturday 25 January is also St Dwynwen's Day in Wales.** St Dwynwen is the Welsh equivalent of St Valentine, being their patron saint of love.

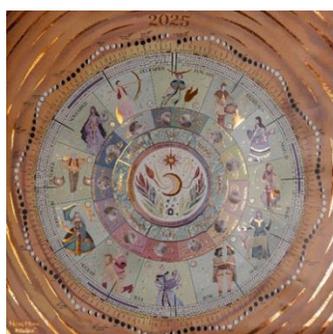
**Wednesday 29 January is New Moon @ 12:35 and the start of our New Year New Vision Lunar Cycle Alignment Programme.** Forget resolutions and set intentions for 2025! It's also the Chinese New Year of the (Wood) Snake.

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 **You Tube Page**.

**Wednesday 29 January is the Chinese New Year of the (Wood) Snake, which lasts until 16 February 2026.** In the Chinese zodiac, the snake is associated with wisdom, elegance, charm and transformation. People born in the Year of the Snake are thought to be intuitive, strategic, and intelligent. The Snake occupies the sixth position in the Chinese zodiac. Read more at **chinahighlights.com**

## 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 annual *Almanac*. Whilst considerable effort is made to ensure accuracy, this is not an exact science and sources are sometimes contradictory!



# All about angels

By Joanna Bristow-Watkins and Nic the Witch

Have you ever felt a nudge, like the universe trying to tell you something? That's the essence of angelic energy—gentle guidance, helping you align with your purpose. In a world driven by wellness trends, angels are making their way into the spotlight, not as religious figures but as spiritual companions.

But why are they so relevant today? Angels have transcended ancient beliefs and now play a key role in mindfulness, energy healing, and personal growth. Let's explore their place in modern spirituality and how they can elevate your health and wellness journey.

Angels are no longer confined to stained-glass windows or religious texts; they've become part of a modern, spiritual wellness toolkit. With the rise of holistic practices, more people are turning to angel energy for clarity and self-alignment.

Think of angel cards sitting next to your yoga mat or angel meditations guiding your breathwork. These practices don't require strict beliefs, making angels accessible to anyone looking for balance or emotional support. Why are they so popular? It's simple: angels are symbols of unconditional guidance and calm—a perfect match for today's wellness culture.

Did you know that angels have been around for thousands of years? From Sumerian mythology to Jewish, Christian and Islamic traditions, angels are universal figures of protection and insight. But what makes them timeless? Their ability to evolve. Angels have adapted to fit every era, including ours. In a fast-paced, tech-driven world, their ancient wisdom reminds us to pause, breathe and reconnect with something greater than ourselves. Don't you think we all need a little of that?

Do you want to bring angelic guidance into your life? It's easier than you think. You don't need elaborate rituals—just a quiet moment and an open mind. Start by meditating with a specific angel. For example, Gabriel is perfect for creativity and intuition, while Michael is ideal for setting boundaries. Journaling is another great way to connect. Write down your thoughts and ask your angels for guidance. Their wisdom often comes through in unexpected ways.

Feeling adventurous? Try angel cards! Pull one each morning for inspiration and focus. These small practices can bring clarity and peace into your daily routine.

What's the big deal about angels and wellness? For starters, they promote mindfulness. When you call on angelic energy, you're fully present, tuning out distractions and tuning into yourself. They also boost emotional resilience. Angels are like a comforting presence, helping you navigate stress or uncertainty. Plus, they're powerful allies in manifestation. By aligning with their energy, you can set intentions that attract abundance, health, or peace. Doesn't that sound empowering?

Are you spiritual, but not religious? If so, you're not alone. Modern spirituality embraces flexibility, making room for angels as symbols of higher energy and intuition. Angels seamlessly blend with other wellness practices. Imagine combining lunar cycles, crystal healing or yoga with angelic energy. For instance, invoking Gabriel during a full moon ritual can amplify your creativity and alignment. It's this adaptability that makes angels resonate with so many people today.

Ready to embrace angelic guidance? Start by setting up a sacred space. Use candles, crystals, or symbols that resonate with you. Then, take a few moments each day to reflect, meditate or simply invite angelic energy into

your life. If you're looking for deeper connections, explore workshops or mentoring programs. These guided experiences can teach you how to integrate angelic energy into every aspect of your wellness routine.

*Angels are more than ancient symbols: they're your companions on the journey to balance and wellness. If you're ready to explore their transformative energy, join my **New Moon New Vision Workshop** to connect with angelic energies and set powerful intentions for the year ahead. Using tools like lunar energy, zodiac alignments, and angelic insights, this course will help you step into 2025 with clarity and purpose. It starts on 29 January as an online mentoring course ([book your spot here](#)).*

Actually, while on the topic of angels, perhaps we could look at the idea of **angel numbers**. Angel numbers are sequences of figures, such as 111, 222 or 888, that appear in our daily lives, with believers convinced that their presence signifies a hidden message from an angel, a spirit guide or the universe itself. And, if you look closely enough, repeated angel numbers are everywhere: on car number plates, receipts, clocks, our screens and in telephone numbers. The term was invented in 2004 by **Doreen Virtue**. This name may be familiar to many pagans who know that Doreen Virtue made a career profiting from it through books, oracle cards and TV appearances. Since then, she reneged on her belief in 2017, dubbing angel numbers fortune cookie stuff.

On TikTok, there are many videos of people talking about the spiritual meaning of these numbers or instructing you how to calculate your own special figure (reached by adding up the digits in your birth date). Hollywood stars are not immune to this trend. Katy Perry's album, 143, is named after her own angel number and Jennifer Aniston has 11.11 tattooed on the inside of her wrist. It does seem to be mainly Gen-Z people who embrace angel numbers. However, each angel number has a different meaning. Seeing the sequence, 111, can represent good luck, a new opportunity or the ability to achieve your goals; 222 relates to balance, harmony and intuition and 333 is symbolic of growth or change. But it's open to interpretation based on what's happening in your life, like reading your daily astrological horoscope.

Numerologist **Richard Abbott** helps people find spiritual meaning in numbers. He says that angel numbers can be understood as protective energies, *"It doesn't have to be a literal angel in the sky with wings, but these numbers might be a key or connector to a particular angel or protective energy."* Numerology, which is traced back to ancient Greece, is based on the idea that numbers carry mystical meaning. And, under that practice, duplicated numbers are very significant. *"If you get a repetition of the numbers, then you're getting a really strong and intense amount of energy, which is acting as a protective shield for you in that domain of your life,"* explains Abbott. He thinks that angel numbers have become so popular, because we live in a digital world surrounded by screens, namely digital clocks or seat numbers on planes and in cinemas." As a numerologist, Abbott is an interpreter of numbers, almost like a tarot reader. He might add together a client's date of birth to get their angel number, or find the numerical value of their name instead, if A = one and B = two, and so on.



## Events: music

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