



Gylden Magick

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Alban Elfed 2024

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.

Dear readers of **GYLDEN MAGICK**,

This edition marks the start of our **seventh year of publication** and, as ever, we will be starting some new series over the next few issues, including magick (of course), but also more **nature, history and science pieces**.

September is the **Harvest Moon** and Alban Elfed is sometimes known as the **Feast of the Second Harvest** – more about that later. Altar colours are orange, brown and gold.

The **equinox**, Alban Elfed or Mabon, is on Sunday 22 September and we've included some seasonal blessings.

Other notable dates for diaries in September **are the Last Corn Harvest** on 2-3 September, the **Roman Festival of Jupiter Optimus Maximus** on the Ides of September (13th) and the **Feast of Michaelmas** on 29 September. Don't forget **18 September** for the **next full moon**.

Our website has two collections of tales from the **Storyteller – Winter Chills & Tales of Magick and Wonder**. There are also three sets of poetry from **Nicola Ison – Gra, Dhraiocht na Cairdeas, Mac Tire & Cuan Tuinn**.

Highlights in this edition include gemmology – the medieval St Alban's crystals, mammal update, fairy darts, autumn recipes, amber, beavers, the lunar standstill, the atomic clock and much more besides.

But no ads – after all, we're like a pagan public library and all the information is free.

Thank you for all your feedback and many blessings.

Gylden Fellowship admins

For more info, why not join **Gylden River LRC** or **Gylden Fellowship** groups on Facebook today and see our archives or new briefings?

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Looking towards Alban Elfed

By Gylden Fellowship

Doesn't really seem like a year has passed since last writing about the autumn equinox. Still, as one of the Gylden Fellowship members pointed out, Mabon is not really the name for this festival. Mabon was a title given to the feast of the second harvest by the American witch and writer, Aiden Kelly in 1973. The druid name for this equinoctial celebration is Alban Elfed (the light of the water). This year, the autumn equinox starts at 8.44am on 22 September, but many pagans opt to celebrate Alban Elfed either just before or just after.

The Wheel of the Year turns and the time of balance returns. **Alban Elfed marks the autumn equinox**, namely the balance of day and night before the darkness overtakes the light. The feast of the second harvest includes fruit that remained on the trees, cereals that ripened since Lughnasadh, the forest fruits and the fruits of the sea. Examples might include the following:

- orchard fruits
- cider
- stewed fruit
- berries
- mushrooms
- barley
- acorns
- oysters
- nuts.

It is this feast that comprises the central theme of the Alban Elfed ceremony - thanking the Goddess as Mother Earth for the second harvest in autumn. Leaves fall to make rich compost for new growth and trees let their life forces return to their roots. Livestock are brought back from the upland pastures, to be fed by the community during winter.

At a time of balance between light and dark, I hope that your Alban Elfed will be memorable and that your spirit will be overflowing. Blessed be this season of Alban Elfed, time of the second harvest, the harvest of fruit and wine. At this time, all things are in balance: Goddess and God, Life and Death, light and dark.

September is the harvest moon - 18 September is the full moon. For Wiccans, the Sun God is preparing for his death at Samhain and the Goddess is starting to mourn her loss. From the equinox, the darkness will conquer the light, leading us deeper into the waning year until the Sun God's rebirth at Alban Arthan (Yule).

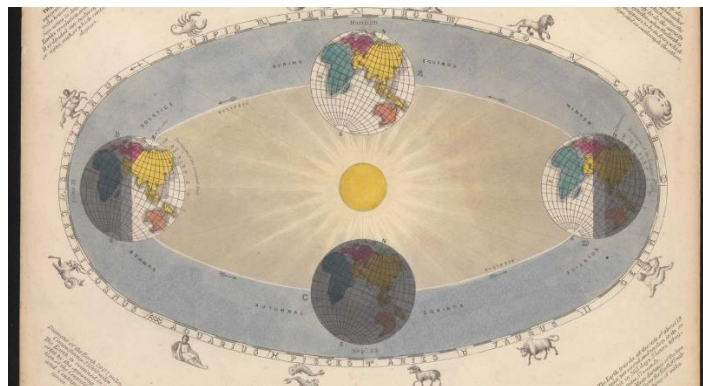


Autumn is a good time to let go of problems that afflict one's soul, to evaluate the seeds for the year to come and to imagine how the 2024 harvest is to be planted. Those pagans among us who follow an eclectic or solitary witchcraft path may also elect to perform a little magick involving apples, acorns, corn figures or other crafts. This pagan, who is pretty awful at handicrafts, tends to turn to kitchen or herbal witchery at Alban Elfed – that means plenty of syrups, cordials, herbal teabags and infused oils as plant medicines. Here are some **simple mantras and blessings for your personal autumn** – as you imagine the planting of new seeds.

Welcome to the autumn equinox.
 Times of waning bring a harvest.
 Towards endings, there are fruits.
 As we journey through winter, realm of death,
 The fruits of life sustain us.
 And the harvest, the grain that has been reaped,
 Holds seeds to be planted in the spring.
 For the circle of life is unbroken.
 (Rae Beth, 1982)

*Golden-haired mother,
 Red dying king,
 Leaves are falling,
 And sickles gleam.
 Abundant is the harvest,
 Blessed are the fruits,
 What withers and dies
 Is always reborn.*

*We find our joy in the simple fruits,
 Given to us by the earth.
 We find our joy in the sun that shines,
 And the breeze and river that sing to us.
 So, we listen to the wind and to the water,
 Hearing always what they say.
 Let us never forget to give thanks and praise,
 As we pledge to plant our Alban Elfed fruits in the soil for future growth.*



Gylden
Magick
Alban Elfed
2024

Corn dollies & harvest festivals

Collated by Gylden Fellowship







Medieval crystals: St Albans jewels

By Jack Ogden

Editor's note: we continue with our new series on archaeo-gemmology. Most of the articles will be by guest writers – scholars, learned members of the Gemmological Association, etc. Last time, we featured jaspilite – this month, we take an overview of some jewels from the Middle Ages.

Medieval documents can provide information about the types of gems in use at that time and their terminology. Some such texts show a level of sophistication regarding what we might consider to be early gemmology, prompting questions as to how such knowledge was passed on. This (abridged) article considers the range of gems used in thirteenth-century England and the level of gemmological knowledge at the time, based on an inventory of the treasures owned by St Albans Abbey that was drawn up in 1257. The compiler was the monk and polymath, Matthew Paris (ca. 1200–1259), and the inventory is noteworthy for its detailed descriptions and colour paintings of each object. From these we can learn about the range of gems familiar during that period, as well as the way in which different qualities and origins were described, and even some terminology used for jewellery settings.

For the modern gemmologist, one particular European illuminated manuscript of the thirteenth century stands out because it provides relatively detailed descriptions of gem-set jewellery and illustrates each piece in colour. This manuscript, now in the British Library, is the *Liber Additamentorum* - literally *The Book of Additions* (Cotton MS Nero D I 1; see also Luard 1882, pp. 283–289). Folios 146r and 146v contain a list of the jewels in 1257 that had been donated to St Albans Abbey in England (located some 32km north-west of London) by previous bishops, wealthy patrons of the abbey and others. The cathedral, founded in the eighth century and modified over time, still stands and is the oldest site of continuous Christian worship in Britain.

The *Liber Additamentorum* was originally compiled by Matthew Paris, who entered St Albans Abbey as a monk in 1217 and has been called the greatest chronicler of late-medieval England. He was an accomplished mapmaker - he illustrated a pilgrim's route map from London to Rome, which also survives and he was also an artist. The chronicler, Thomas Walsingham (?– ca. 1422), also a monk at St Albans, indicated that Paris was a skilled goldsmith. Given his many talents, it is not surprising that, when Paris compiled this inventory, he did it in a meticulous and beautiful way.



The gems illustrated and described in Paris's *Liber Additamentorum* are:

- a balas ruby (rubibalois)
- an almandine (almandinus)
- a peridot (peridotus)
- a topaz (topazius, but probably citrine or yellow sapphire)
- six sapphires (saphirus)
- a purple amethyst-like gem
- a magnificent cameo (kaadmau).

Smaller gems set in some of the jewellery include pearls (perlae), garnets (granatae) and some small gems not specifically described, but coloured blue and green, so probably sapphires and emeralds. The manuscript describes and illustrates the shapes of the gems, often with notes on their settings, and gives the weight of the complete jewels in pennyweights (denarius). As far as is known, none of the jewels survive today, although it is possible some of the gems do, perhaps, after being recut and reused over the centuries.

(Let's look at some of these jewels in detail.) The *Liber Additamentorum* includes a jewel set with a gem "commonly known as peridot" (peridotus) and a ring containing a topaz (topazius). Here, they are discussed together because *topazius* was originally a name for peridot, and the presence of both gem types in this manuscript provides an opportunity to reconsider their somewhat tangled nomenclature history. The peridot ornament was presented to the abbey by John, Bishop of Ardfert, who served in that position (in Ireland) until 1224. The gem was described as *subviridis*, which is probably best translated as greenish, and had a sapphire "of beautiful colour" set in its centre. It was mentioned as having a shield shape that was able to ward off spasms. The manuscript does not say what type of ornament it was, but from the illustration it appears to be a pendant.

The jewel was described as a ring in the *Liber de Benefactoribus* (about 1315) - possibly it had been remounted. A later record of it from the early 1400s makes no mention of the setting, but does not include it with the other rings. Another peridot ring had come to the abbey by about 1400, although that one was described as broken at the top. The topaz ring was described as "an ancient treasure of the church" and is depicted as yellow. The word here translated as yellow is *cerulia* in the text, a term more usually associated with blue: cerulean blue is still a colour description. However, *cerulia* originally referred to a brownish yellow wax and, confusingly, means yellow in some medieval texts.



Celestial notes

By Joanna Bristow-Watkins, Harmony Healing

September in Britain is back to school after the summer holidays. It's the month of harvest, blackberries abound on the bramble bushes and apples are plentiful on the trees, conkers and chestnuts are starting to ripen.

The month of September was named after 'septimus' meaning the 7th month in Latin. September was the 7th month when the year started in March. To the Anglo-Saxons, September was called **Hālig-mōnaþ** meaning Holy Month.

During September, we have the Equinox this year on Sunday 22 September, when night and day are equal length across the globe. This coincides with the Khemitian (Khem being the ancient name for Egypt) Festival of the Two Lands on the 22nd. This month I am offering a pre-recorded Equinox/Egyptian themed meditation for the night of **Sunday 22nd** is available to my students only. We can also look forward to three other annual Egyptian Festivals (4th, 5th & 19th) plus a selection of Chinese/Confucian (28th), and Roman (17th) annual commemorations and USA celebrates Labour Day, this year on the 2nd. We have a **full Forest Bathing event** on the **Sunday 15 September (Shere)**.

Saturday 31 August (@05:30) - Saturday 7 September (@23:30) is Paryushana Parva, the Jain celebration of human transcendence into spirituality and morality. It is an eight-day event, celebrated with sacred readings and exchanges of cards among loved ones...dates may vary. This popular Jain festival is organised every year in the auspicious month of Bhadrapad (mid-August to mid-September) of the Hindu calendar and extends from the fifth day to fourteenth day of the bright fortnight. The festival ordains the Jains to observe the universal supreme virtues in daily practical life: -

Paryushan Parva

I bow to the Arahants, the perfected human beings.

I bow to the Siddhas, liberated bodiless souls.

I bow to the Acharyas, the masters and heads of congregations.

I bow to the Upadhyayas, the spiritual teachers.

I bow to the spiritual practitioners in the universe, Sadhus.

This fivefold obeisance mantra,

Destroys all sins and obstacles,

And of all auspicious repetitions

Is the first and foremost.

(Originally obtained from infoindiadirect.com which is no longer functioning. Now detailed on timesofindia.indiantimes.com.)

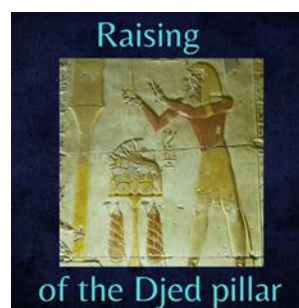
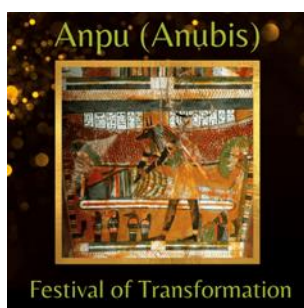


Sunday 1 September is the beginning of the Ecclesiastical Year the traditional Christian calendar. in Nicaea (325CE). The First Ecumenical Council decreed that the Church Year should start on 1 September. For the Hebrews, the month of September was the beginning of the civil year (Exodus 23:16), the month of gathering harvest and offering of thanks to God.

Monday 2 September, according to author Robert Graves, is the tenth moon in the Celtic calendar is the Vine Moon from 2-29 September, or Muin, after the Celts' Ogham tree alphabet. The bounty of harvest time is represented by the Vine, whose fruits can be made into wine. However, so can almost any vegetable or fruit, so don't feel constrained by the humble grape, if the mood takes you. Interestingly perhaps, Vine is associated with two deeply felt emotions - wrath or indignant anger and happiness, but we have not found mention of these being causally related to the vine!

Monday 2 September is also Labor Day in USA and Canada this year, as it's always the first Monday in September. As it's an American celebration, I've reluctantly used the American spelling of labour!

Tuesday 3 September @ 02.55 (Monday night/Tuesday morning) is the Vine New Moon. The **New Moon Abundance Ritual** should be carried out within 24 hours after the New Moon. It needs to be after the New Moon because the moon should be waxing (getting bigger again) to carry the manifestation energy. There are video instructions on my [Facebook Page](#) or [You Tube Page](#). New Moon is a good time to work on your Vision Board for the rest of 2024.



Wednesday 4 September is the Ancient Egyptian Ceremony of Transformation through Anpu (Anubis). The Egyptians believed that when a deceased soul entered the Halls of Amenti, they would undergo a ceremony involving the metaphorical weighing of the heart (of the deceased) against Maat's feather. During this ceremony, the weight of the heart represented the degree to which the deceased had lived in truth, measured by how much he/she had sinned; the more he/she had sinned the heavier the heart. The meditation guides you through a journey with Anpu to see how you would fare if your heart was weighed against Maat's feather at this point in your life. Whilst this meditation was devised for use on 4 September, it can be used anytime.

Anpu is the illegitimate child of Nebt-Het (Nephthys), born of her clandestine union with Ausar (Osiris), but raised as the son of Set. Cast out when his true lineage was discovered, he became associated with dark and lonely places, a wanderer through the shadow-realm between life and death. Therefore, Anpu bears witness to the darker side of mortality. He seeks out those lost souls who find themselves without guidance after their demise. He guards the Entrance to the Underworld, presided over by his true father Ausar. Hence, all who die will find themselves in the presence of this mysterious jackal-headed god, who escorts them away from this world and to the gates of the next. *An informative laminated poster of Anpu (Anubis) by Jacqui Taliesin El Masry is available from the [Harmony Shop](#) along with other Egyptian Deity posters by Jacqui.*

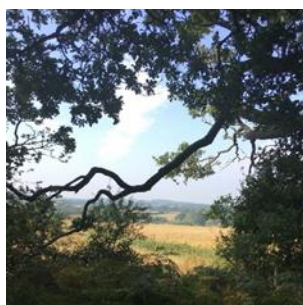
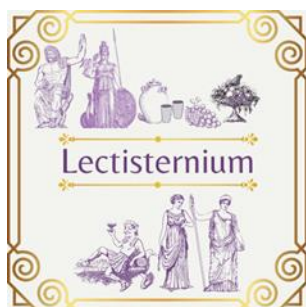
Thursday 5 September is the Ancient Egyptian Ceremony of the Raising of the Djed Pillar. The worship of the Djed pillar, and the annual Raising of the Djed ceremony, is amongst the earliest ritualistic religious practices of ancient Egypt. The Djed was stated to have arisen from the primordial mound of creation and believed to be the backbone of the Egyptian god, Wzr (also known as Ausar or Osiris), though sometimes associated with the earlier deity, Ptah.

Friday 13 September was been the Roman Festival of Lectisternium from at least 399BCE. The word, Lectisternium, derives from *lectum sternere*, meaning to drape on a couch. The statues of Juno, Jupiter and Minerva would, traditionally, be dressed up and given a feast!

Sunday 15 September, 11am-2pm, Forest Bathing in the grounds of [Harry Edward's Healing Sanctuary](#), £39.77.

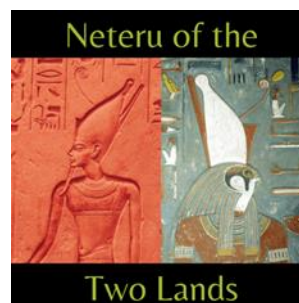
Immerse yourself in the healing elements of nature and connect deeply with all your senses. Spend 3 hours in the woods mindfully connecting to your surroundings and living fully in the present moment, guided by me in simple sensory exercises and a treelaxation. A deeply relaxing and rejuvenating experience, and which, despite the title forest bathing, does not involve any swimming!

Some of the scientifically proven benefits of spending time in woodland include reduced stress levels, stronger immune system response, and a stabilised cortisol cycle. This is a 3-hour Forest Bathing session which will take place in all weathers except very high winds or electrical storms. Book at [Harmony Shop](#). Please email us on katieandjo@harmonyinnature.uk to go on our monthly forest bathing update email list.



Wednesday 18 September @ 03:34 (Tues night/Wed morning, Vine Harvest Supermoon & Partial Lunar Eclipse). This is also the second supermoon of a sequence of four consecutive supermoons.

*As I will be away, there is no live online **Full Moon Meditation** taking place tonight, but [any Full Moon Meditation](#) is available, or the pre-recorded [Equinox Meditation](#) can be purchased. Between this date and the next New Moon is considered as a good time energetically for detoxing the body. Click here for Angela McGerr's self-conducted [Full Moon Angelic Meditation](#) with Gabriel.*



Thursday 19 September is the Fast of Tehuti, Kemet day; honouring the god Tehuti (Thoth), the god of magic, wisdom and secret knowledge.

An MP3 Meditation to visit the Akashic Records with Tehuti is available from the [CDs and Meditations](#) section of the Harmony Shop which also sells laminated and downloadable [Egyptian Deity posters](#) by Jacqui Taliesin El Masry from Alkhemi. This is a meditation to visit your personal Akashic record (which the Egyptians believed were housed in the Halls of Amenti) to see if hidden blockages to your spiritual growth and wellbeing may be revealed at this time.

The totality of the Akashic records is said to contain and describe all knowledge of human experience as well as the history of the cosmos; so they could be described as the DNA of the Universe. This meditation was devised for 19 August or 19 September (both being Festivals of Tehuti) would add emphasis, but can be used anytime.

Sunday 22 September at 13:53 is the pagan celebration of the Autumn Equinox, marking the time of harvest festival and fulfilment of summer; since, in the Northern Hemisphere, from now on there will be more hours of dark than light for the rest of the year. An equinox is an astronomical event when the plane of Earth's equator passes the centre of the Sun. Equinoxes occur twice a year, around 21 March and 22-23 September. **In the southern hemisphere, this is the Spring Equinox.** At this point in the year, the night and day lengths are exactly equal, so it's a time of balance and a good time for introspection, look for what is good and worthwhile to become seeds for next year.

Sunday 22 September is the Ancient Egyptian Ritual of the Neteru of the Two Lands. It's no surprise that this is always very close to the Pagan Equinox.

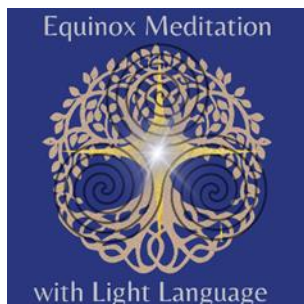
The Two Lands, comprising of Upper & Lower Egypt, were presided over by the more successful pharaohs. To the north was Lower Egypt where the Nile fans into the Nile Delta. To the south was Upper Egypt, stretching to Aswan. The terms, Upper and Lower Egypt, are derived from the unusual geography of the Nile, which (unlike most rivers) flows from south to north. Its origins are in the highlands of East Africa and it ends with the Nile Delta which drains into the Mediterranean Sea.

In spiritual lore, Upper and Lower Egypt could be said to represent the higher and lower self of the human body, and, as such, would need to be integrated on an annual basis with the help of the Neteru (Deities or Angelic Beings).

The unification of Upper and Lower Egypt occurred in about 3000 BCE, but the **pschent** - or double crown, worn by the pharaohs represented the combined regalia of both areas; the hedjet or White Crown for Upper Egypt and the deshret or Red Crown for Lower Egypt, each half representing sovereignty of one of the kingdoms.

Established Ancient Egyptian tradition generally credits Menes (also known as Narmer), as the king who united Upper and Lower Egypt. On the Narmer Palette the king is depicted wearing the Red Crown in one scene and the White crown in another, and thereby showing his rule over both Lands.

Sunday 22 September, 7.30-9.30pm (UK time = GMT+1), is a pre-recorded themed guided online meditation featuring the Ancient Egyptian Ritual of the Neteru of the Two Lands, as well as the harmony and balance reached when night and day are in perfect equilibrium on the Equinox (peaking at 13:43, see entry above). £20 with concessions to Harmony Healing students. Due to the inclusion of Light Language, this is available only to my RSE (use discount code RSEGRAD50) and Moon Course students. Purchase at the [Harmony Shop](#).



Saturday 28 September is Teachers Day - a Confucian day for honouring teachers of all types. This is supposedly the date of Confucius's birthday. It's a great day to be thinking about learning new skills.

Sunday 29 September, being the last Sunday in this month, is traditionally the Pearly King Harvest Festival in London, offering a spectacular display of historical London (more at [Londonist.com](https://www.londonist.com)).

The Pearly Kings & Queens are a popular Cockney tradition dating from the 19th century. It started when a young boy covered a suit with pearly buttons to raise money for the poor at fairs and charity events. Other boroughs followed suit and got their own Pearly King or Queen. (The Pearly King image is the author's property. The model is unknown, but willingly posed for the photograph; there is no commercial gain from the author's use of this photograph.)

From **1.30pm on Sunday 29 September**, pearly kings & queens from all across London and beyond assemble in Guildhall Yard, in the City of London - where cockney favourite songs such as *Knees Up Mother Brown* and *The Lambeth Walk* will likely be sung loudly to the crowd. Various mayors, dignitaries and Chelsea Pensioners will join the pearlies, and there may be folks dressed as Dickensian Londoners plus frivolities such as maypole and morris dancing.

At **2.30pm**, the pearlies process, with their harvest donations, to **St Mary-le-Bow** on Cheapside (home of the famous Bow Bells) where a special harvest festival service takes place from **3pm**. It's free for the public to attend, though it can get crowded. We stumbled across it with some sightseeing American friends and it was quite something to behold.



Folklore: fairy darts

By the Storyteller

To continue our series of provenance or looking at the context of folk stories, this piece considers elves. **Editor's note:** the latest collection from the Storyteller, *Tales of Wonder and Magick*, has been published on the **Gylden Fellowship** website and is free to download. Readers can also find a collection of ghost stories, *Winter Chills*, from the website.

The term, *fairy darts*, is one used in Ireland to describe **flint arrowheads found near strong circular earthen walls forming enclosures (raths), serving as ring-forts and residences for tribal chiefs, built in prehistoric times**. The Irish original for the phrase, *gáe sídhe*, *ga sí* (reformed), is rarely used. In short then, a *fairy dart* (plural *fairy darts*) are prehistoric stone arrowheads. They are also referred to as elf stones or elf arrows.



Sometimes, the fairy darts were made into jewellery. An example consists of an Early Bronze Age flint arrow head enclosed in a silver mount. In the 19th century it belonged to a family from Creetown. Often, Scottish farming families preserved the traditions of their forebears by turning unusual working items of superstition and folklore into high-status heirlooms. It is possible that this object is in the same tradition - either way, it is an interesting piece that evokes the beliefs and practices of a former time.

Arrowheads like this were often kept as healing charms against unexplained swellings to the joints, hands and feet in humans. More commonly, they were used by rural folk to cure cows who had been elf-shot. But what was this disease and why cure it using an ancient piece of stone?

In 1702, a clergyman wrote: *"these elf-stones, whether little or mickle [are] knowen to fall from the aire. The commonality superstitiously imagines that the fairies hath made and gives them that shape, and that they doe hurt by them, which we call elf-shot."*

Many agricultural workers in the Dumfries and Galloway (Stewartry) area of Scotland (up until the first part of the 20th believed that these arrow heads, usually turned up by ploughing or in the mud disturbed by cattle, were evidence of fairies and their attempts to shoot, maim, and injure their cattle (and/or human beings). Some

believed fairies or elves to be the old gods reduced by the spread of Christianity, but there are lots of other explanations too.

The belief permeated all aspects of life – almost daily, the people of the Stewartry and Wigtownshire considered the doings of fairies in their affairs. It was important to build houses and byres away from their dwellings, to leave fairy thorns (blackthorn) growing in fields well alone, or to leave offerings of meal or water out for them during the night.

Typically, an elf-shot cow had a small blemish near its heart, but it was not uncommon for a cow to roll over upon its horns, or to pant, for its hair to stand on end or to appear listless and tired. Many of these symptoms can be ascribed to *blackleg or quarter ill*, but many farmers were not convinced by the diagnosis of vets. A farmer once cut open an afflicted cow and found a hole in its heart – a sure sign, he said, of the work of fairies. In Kirkmaiden, around the year 1897, a skeely (skilled) woman was known in the district for her ability to cure elf-shot cattle. She carried around a piece of elf shot, i.e., an arrow head, and this was rubbed all over the affected animal who would then *"jump up as if nothing were the matter"*.

During the 1930s, when a cow was hit by darts thrown by the fairies, she was said to be *ill-shot*. The darts were little stones of different shape with the track of fairy fingers on them. A cow when hit by these became sick and, unless the cure was applied, she died (namely, she went to the fairies). If a cow was sick and if there was a doubt that she was ill-shot, she was measured. Her tail was straightened out for the measurement. The unit of measurement was the distance between the elbow and the tips of the fingers. She was measured three times and, if she made the same measurement each time, it was just some ordinary sickness that had attacked her, but if she measured different, she was ill-shot. If she was found to be ill-shot, nine darts (stone arrowheads) were put into a jug, some coppers (pence or half pence) and a two-shilling piece. The cross on the two-shilling piece had a certain charm. The jug was then filled with soft water. This was allowed to stand for a while and then the cow was bottled with the liquid. Some of it was poured into her ears and, if she shook her head, it was a sign that she would get well." The arrowhead, being sent by the fairies to cause harm, was seen as the best way to cure an animal of conditions caused by the fairies. This belief in sympathetic magick illustrates that like cures like.



September crystal: amber

By Nic the Witch

OK, I confess, amber is not a crystal, but fossil tree resin and organic. Resin protects trees by blocking gaps in the bark. Once resin covers a gash or break caused by chewing insects, it hardens and forms a seal. Amber originated from several species of pine tree in the family, **Sciadopityaceae**, which grew in Europe around 44 million years ago (during the Eocene Epoch). They are now all extinct except for one species which survives in Japan (the Japanese Umbrella Pine). As it is tree born, amber is classed as an **organic gem**: this classification includes any gemstone made or derived from living organisms.

Yet, amber is often used as a crystal healing tool. Amber is also a very spiritual gem. It seems to capture the light and warmth of the sun within its structure and, also, the vibrant, life-giving qualities of sunlight. The oldest piece of amber has been dated to some 320 million years ago, so you can imagine what powerful energies this stone holds. Some people believe that amber is the resting place of departed souls because of the preserved insects in the thick resin.

Geologically, amber is a mix of carbon, hydrogen and oxygen with traces of sulphur. Younger amber tends to be softer than amber buried for a long time. Amber from Myanmar tends to be the hardest and amber from the Dominican Republic is softer. Its colors are varied and often come in different shades of brown, orange, and yellow. **Reddish amber** is more valuable than golden amber, which is more valuable than yellow amber. Rarely, strong fluorescence can give amber a bluish or greenish appearance, which can be highly valuable. Oxidation might cause the material to change colour over time.

So, what are the **main healing properties of amber**?

- Amber is closely connected to preservation on a spiritual level. That means that it is often worn as an ornament or talisman to promote eternal youth. Amber is worn for good luck and protection from evil. It enhances your creativity too.
- The orange and gold colors of amber are known to stabilise stronger and higher energies in the body and can influence them by offering balance and protection.
- People use or wear amber to eliminate negative energies, eliminate fears, acquire patience and wisdom, and even soothe bodily aches.
- If you're nervous about tackling something in life, amber gives insight, strength and courage to branch out in new directions. Amber helps to put everything into perspective.
- Amber is essential for the relief of stress and anxiety. It will dissolve all traces of physical and mental exhaustion and it will help you eliminate your fears and worries. It is also good against depression.



Science: the atomic clock

By Mark Sharpen

It's amazing which items are caught in my trawl nets. A new clock has been created, which will only drop a second every 30 billion years while in operation. That's right: it's the most precise, accurate clock yet built. The time-keeping device was developed by scientists at JILA, a joint institution of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) and the University of Colorado Boulder. It is effectively an atomic trap, which keeps tens of thousands of atoms in place and measures time through the reliable movement of electrons around the atom.

The standard second is established, based on the cesium atom, but the new clock uses supercooled strontium atoms to keep track of time. As reported by *Science Alert*, the new clock is twice as accurate as the previous time-keeping record holder.

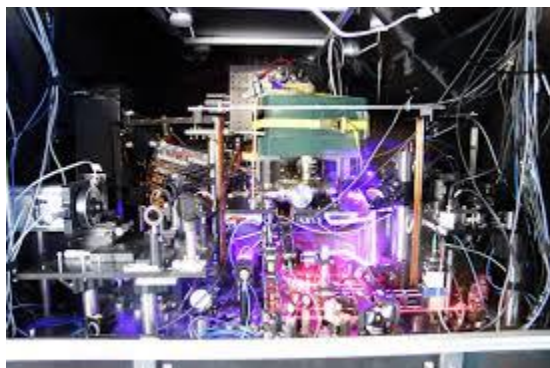
"This clock is so precise that it can detect tiny effects predicted by theories such as general relativity, even at the microscopic scale," said NIST and JILA physicist Jun Ye, co-author of the recent study (in a NIST release). "It's pushing the boundaries of what's possible with time-keeping."

As described in Einstein's theory of general relativity, time itself is affected by gravity. The newly invented clock can detect relativistic effects on its time-keeping. That's to say that, if the gravitational field around the clock changes, the clock will take account of the change. Gravity's effect on time will be a significant factor once NASA and its partners implement a separate time zone for the Moon or for other planets. Lunar clocks run 58.7 microseconds faster each day compared to those on Earth.

As humanity ventures to explore other planets, precise atomic clocks will be crucial to help space agencies navigate the cosmos without error. The methods used to control the supercooled atoms can also be used in quantum computers, which use atoms at or near absolute zero as bits (called *qubits*) for their operations.

"We're exploring the frontiers of measurement science," Jun Ye said. "When you can measure things with this level of precision, you start to see phenomena that we've only been able to theorise about until now."

The average atomic clock today operates at microwave frequencies. According to NIST, strontium atomic clocks operate at optical frequencies. It "ticks" trillions of times per second, and is accurate to within 1/15,000,000,000 of a second per year. And it only loses a second every 30 billion years, which means that if such a clock started ticking at the beginning of the universe, the universe would still need to be more than twice its current age for the clock to lose a second.



Health: Paper cuts

By Gylden Fellowship

After a detailed investigation into the matter, three researchers at the Technical University of Denmark believe they have determined which paper varieties are the most likely to induce a dreaded paper cut. But instead of simply warning the public, the trio of physicists created a single-use tool capable of slicing into vegetables, fruit and even some meat.

It doesn't take a major logical leap to assume that for as long as there has been paper, there have also been paper cuts. Aside from the searing pain, one of the millennia-old injury's biggest annoyances is its suddenness - in most cases, a victim isn't anticipating a razor-thin incision's sting when rifling through the everyday material. But what paper types should you be the most careful of when handling? In a study published in the *August 2024* issue of the journal, *Physical Review E*, it comes down to a combination of material, thinness, and physics.

According to an announcement on 27 August, Sif Fink Arnbjerg-Nielsen, Matthew Biviano and Kaare Jensen relied on ballistic gelatin as a stand-in for living subject. This recognisable, rubbery material is often used to simulate human and animal skin while assessing possible damage from dangerous environments and weapons. After reviewing multiple types of pulped wood and approaches, the team definitively landed on a few key attributes that can be found in the perfect paper cut.

First, there is a clear *Goldilocks zone* when it comes to a paper's width. If the material is too thin, like tissue paper, then it bends under pressure. Thicker notecards and photo paper, however, means the surface area simply won't cut through much. But the closer a paper is to 65 micrometres wide, the more primed it is for a cut. That fearsome measurement is most often seen in sheets of newspaper or dot-matrix printer paper (namely the old school typewriter or fax machine paper). Thankfully for fingers, both varieties aren't as common as they once were - the former due to the unfortunate state of print media, while the latter has been largely swapped out for inkjet paper.

That doesn't mean society is safe from paper cuts. As anyone who works in an office knows, those inkjet reams are still perfectly capable of ruining your morning. Meanwhile, both magazines and Post-It notes are also still thin enough to do damage.

However, material isn't the only factor for cutting potential. The physicists also learned that, much like a knife or sword, an angled motion is most likely to result in cuts instead of a straight-on approach to a target. And to put all this new knowledge to use, researchers then decided to showcase just how effective the perfect paper can be at slicing. After combining a 3D-printed scalpel handle with a small piece of dot-matrix printer paper, the group then put their tool (dubbed *Papermachete*) to use. According to *Science News*, the single-use blade could cut into cucumbers, apples, peppers and even chicken.

Ecology: Beavers

By Matt Phelps, Species Recovery Officer, Sussex Wildlife Trust

On 29 August, the Wildlife Trusts published [*A Vision for the Return of Beavers to England and Wales*](#). This landmark publication set out the urgent need for clarity from governments on the future for this species in England and Wales. Although now formally recognised by Defra and the UK Government as a protected native species, beavers in England and Wales can only legally be released into single, fenced enclosures, of which there are two in Sussex.

Sussex Wildlife Trust recognises the crucial role that beavers can play in restoring the natural life support systems that people and wildlife rely on - helping with natural flood management, wildlife recovery, water resources, improving water quality, and much more. The Eurasian Beaver is widely heralded as a *keystone species*, namely one without which whole ecosystems collapse.

Beavers are great examples of how some ecosystem engineer species create their own bespoke habitat niches, such as beaver meadows and beaver pools. Beavers instinctively manage their natural environment, meaning that we don't need to, and beavers do it so much better than we could. The natural instincts of beavers play an integral part in buffering our landscapes from flooding, pollution and drought and in creating thriving wetland habitats for a whole range of other wildlife. Wetlands are some of the most biodiverse landscapes on the planet and act as fantastic buffers against the effects of climate change. Bringing wild beavers back to Sussex will start to show us what healthy, wildlife-rich and climate-resilient wetlands truly look like.



While beavers can happily live in a diverse range of river systems, they are also returning to a cultural landscape which has forgotten how to co-exist with them. This brings both benefits and challenges in our lowland catchments. A key part of my role as Species Recovery Officer for Sussex Wildlife Trust is to help navigate some of the potential complexities of landscape-scale beaver recovery. To this end, we currently chair a **Sussex Beaver Partnership**, consisting of various stakeholders, and have plans to establish a beaver management group in due course as we move towards potential wild releases in the years to come.

It has been a long time since beavers have been part of our local landscapes, so we need to re-introduce people back to living alongside them too. If we want people and beavers to co-exist, we need to work closely with local landowners and communities to help them understand beavers and their management. Sussex Wildlife Trust hopes that local people and future generations can once again get to know this native Sussex species as a familiar part of the natural world around them.

Science: Lunar standstill

By Mark Sharpen

OK then, from atomic clocks to lunar events. A project was launched earlier in the year, to delve into the lesser understood links that may exist between Stonehenge and the Moon during a rare lunar event.

A major lunar standstill, which takes place **once every 18.6 years**, when moonrise and moonset reach their farthest apart points along the horizon, will take place in January 2025.

This will give archaeologists, astronomers and archaeoastronomers a rare chance to explore theories surrounding the event and the ancient people of Stonehenge. Some experts believe the people who built the monument were aware of the major lunar standstill and may have buried their dead in a particular part of the site because of its relationship to the phenomenon. It is also possible that four station stones forming a rectangle at the site, two of which are still standing, may have been positioned to mark the major lunar standstill.

Within a year or so, either side of a major lunar standstill, the Moon can be seen from time to time rising or setting unusually far to the north or south, giving a healthy window for studies to be made. English Heritage is planning to livestream the southernmost moonrise and host a series of events throughout the standstill season, including talks, a pop-up planetarium, stargazing and storytelling sessions and a new display in the exhibition space.

Clive Ruggles, Emeritus Professor of Archaeoastronomy at Leicester University, said the alignment of the monument to the sun at midsummer and midwinter meant there was little doubt of its significance to the builders of Stonehenge. “But what we’re a lot less clear about is whether there’s any physical connections between the monument and the moon,” he said.

During the early phase of Stonehenge, between about 3000 and 2500BCE, people were burying the cremated remains of the dead and placing offerings in the ditch and bank of the henge, and in the so-called Aubrey Holes (56 pits within the ditch that may originally have held upright timber posts). Many of these cremations were concentrated in the south-east of the monument, broadly aligning with the most southerly rising position of the moon.

The station stones were probably put in place around the same time as the large sarsen stones as they came from the same spot, West Woods in Marlborough. Ruggles said: “*The station stones align with the moon’s extreme positions, and researchers have debated for years whether this was deliberate, and – if so – how this was achieved and what might have been its purpose.*”

“People have been conscious of the phase cycle of the moon going back tens of thousands of years. What I think may have been the case at Stonehenge, and this is what we’re interested to explore, is that around the time of a major standstill people noticed the moon rising or setting unusually far to the north or south, realised this was something special, and came to venerate and eventually to monumentalise the directions concerned. You can imagine the elders recalling a time when they saw the moon in a sacred direction and then, a generation later, people’s awe at starting to see this again.”

English Heritage is also working with counterparts at the University of Colorado, Boulder, and the US Department of Agriculture’s forest service for a series of events comparing lunar alignments at Stonehenge and at Chimney Rock in Colorado, which is a Chacoan ancient settlement. Amanda Chadburn, an archaeologist and member of Kellogg College, University of Oxford, said: “*Observing this connection first-hand in 2024 and 2025 is crucial. Tracking the moon’s extremes isn’t straightforward, requiring specific timing and weather conditions. We want to understand something of what it was like to experience these extreme moonrises and sets and to witness their visual effects on the stones, for example, patterns of light and shadow.*”

Mammal Photographer of the Year 2024: photos

By the Mammal Society



Gary Watson (winner)



Gordon Roach (runner-up)



Jon Kelf (commended)



Beau Healy (commended)



Alice White (commended)

Magick for Mabon

By Nic the Witch

Alban Elfed/ Mabon has always been my favourite season with the changing colours of the leaves, loads of mushrooms and the end of the corn harvest. The autumnal equinox itself falls on **22 September 2024** (Mabon starts on 21 September and ends on 29 September); this text reviews some of the magickal things that we can do at this time of year. But first, let's consider what Alban Elfed/ Mabon is all about – more details will be included in the **Gylden Fellowship** sabbat blog, closer to the actual day.

At Lughnasadh, we counted and named some of our blessings. At the equinox, it is time to balance our lives, just as the light and dark are in equal balance. And so, we name some of those things that are surplus to our lives and that we choose to cast away.

The second harvest fruits include corn, forest fruits and seeds, fruits of the sea, herbs and flowers, but it is the **apple** that is an ancient symbol of life, death and rebirth. Take an apple and name the chaff to be discarded from your life. The apple tree tells us it is a time of fruition, a time to gather our resources and feel abundant. It also protects us from the more negative states of the mind.

Apples have long been used for divination and love magick. The blossoms were included in love sachets and used to scent candles to attract love. To ensure happiness in your relationship, light a red candle, cut an apple in half and share it with your loved one. Or, you could run this spell, **Apple seed spell to bring love into your life**.

Set-up: a piece of rose quartz, a red rose, a red apple and 2 candles (one green and the other pink).

Pick a time when you know you will not be disturbed, preferably close to the full moon. While getting all the things you need, think of the love you would like to invite into your life.

- ✚ Light the candles and place the rose in front of the burning candles.
- ✚ Hold the rose quartz in your hand and, as you stare into the candle flames, repeat the incantation below:
- ✚ *"Loving Goddess, I invoke thee,
To grant me here my desire,
I ask for love eternal and true,
Sealed with candle-fire.
May the fragrance of the rose,
Carry my wish afar,
And bring me only my true love,
To last for evermore. So mote it be."*
- ✚ All thanks to the Goddess and leave the candles to burn out.
- ✚ Eat the apple and save the seeds.
- ✚ Place the rose, the apple seeds, and the rose quartz on a window ledge where they will attract the magick of the moon. Next day, as soon as you wake up, plant the apple seeds in a pot of soil.
- ✚ Look after your seeds in a caring way and, as the seedlings begin to grow, love will come into your life.
- ✚ Keep the roses and, when they wilt, dry the petals, keeping them in a special place (with your rose quartz) to remind you of the spell.



Baked apples are a traditional bit of kitchen witchery in autumn and here's how to do them – allot one cooking apple per person.

METHOD

- 1) Pre-heat your oven to 180°C.
- 2) Wash the apples, then core and peel them.
- 3) Fill the core with cinnamon, sultanas and butter.
- 4) Put the apples in a shallow dish, standing in about 1 inch of cold water.
- 5) Bake the apples for about 30 minutes in the oven.
- 6) When cooked, place the apples in a serving dish and add either maple or golden syrup to each apple.
- 7) Serve with vanilla ice cream.

Apart from apples, you could also use some of the forest fruits at this time for your health. Here's the **Gylden Fellowship** recipe that we produce for the autumn MBS fayres, the **blackberry syrup** for sore throats or tickly coughs.

INGREDIENTS

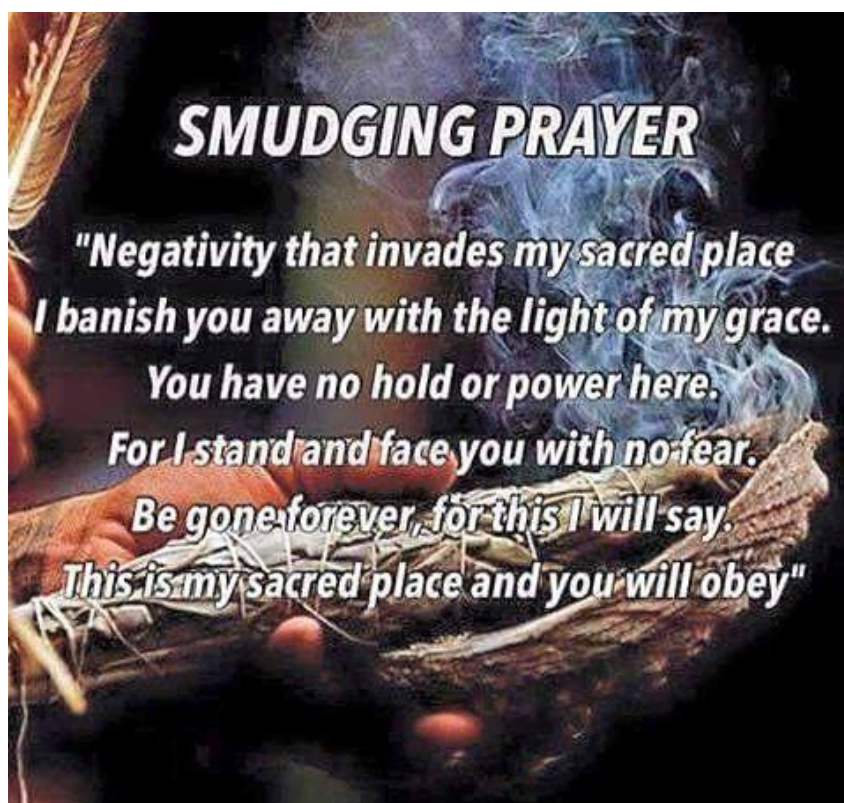
300g blackberries
Juice of 2-3 limes
300ml water
100g (max) caster sugar or maple syrup



METHOD

- 1) Mix the berries, lime juice and water together in a pan.
- 2) Put on a low/medium heat for 25 minutes.
- 3) Sieve mixture into another pan.
- 4) Add sugar/ syrup and heat until dissolved.
- 5) Simmer for 10 minutes.
- 6) Drink a glass & store any excess in a cool, dry place (not fridge)
- 7) Add water as necessary to make it a cordial rather than syrup.

To finish off, we'll include some **protection stuff**, first on smudging and then an *Autumn protection spell for families*.



Protection spell set-up: nine autumn leaves, a plate, a small yellow or orange candle and some salt.

- 1) Join with your family members in a circle and light the candle.
- 2) Everyone to focus on the positive feelings to be sent to each other or family members not present or another person/their family during this season.
- 3) Stack the leaves on the plate, one on top of the other, sprinkling salt in between each one.
- 4) All say these words,
*"Autumn leaves we ask of thee,
 Full blessings of safe family.
 With salt to make our wishes pure,
 Harming none, no less, no more.
 So mote it be!"*

Put the stack of leaves in a place where all can see it. At the end of the spell, bury the leaves in the ground to be recycled by the earth with thanks.

Autumn home recipes

By Nic the Witch

As mentioned above, an **apple** is a correspondence food for September when Alban Elfed was celebrated as the Feast of the Second Harvest, with orchard or forest fruits.

So, this recipe for apple tart follows on from all the bread-making activities that characterised Lughnasadh. And yet, it's a real recipe from **a chapel social event**, held in the early Edwardian period (about 1904). The recipe is estimated to make about 4-6 servings and I've tried it myself several times – and it all went well for my family's events.

Ingredients

1. 225g digestive biscuits
2. 125ml milk
3. 1kg cooking apples
4. 100g brown sugar
5. 1 egg
6. 25g butter.

Method

1. Pre-heat the oven to 180°C.
2. Peel, core and slice the apples – put to one side.
3. Put 1 biscuit aside – place the others into a mixing bowl, add the milk and egg and allow to soak in before beating everything together.
4. Grease a 1.1 litre ovenproof dish and add in a layer of the biscuit mixture.
5. Add a layer of sliced apples and then sugar.
6. Keep adding layers until there's no more mixture – the last layer should be the biscuit mixture.
7. Crush the last biscuit and sprinkle on top with small pieces of the butter.
8. Bake in the oven for about 40 minutes until it's cooked...serve hot with cream or ice cream.

Here's another good autumn recipe, this time with **mushrooms**.

Ingredients

400g mushrooms, perhaps chanterelles or shiitake.
Other root vegetables of your choice
600ml milk
25g butter
1 tablespoon plain flour

Method

1. Wash and chop all the vegetables.
2. Cook the other root vegetables until soft.
3. Fry the mushrooms in butter until soft, then reduce the heat and add the flour, stirring gently.
4. Add the milk and carry on stirring until the soup has thickened.
5. Add the cooked root vegetables and a little salt.
6. Serve with fresh bread.

Seasonal events in Autumn

New Forest Mind, Body & Spirit Fayres *Presents*

THE MIND, BODY & SPIRIT FAYRE TOTTON

Sunday 15th September 2024 - 10am - 4pm

£2
ENTRY



Crystals - Healers - Tarot - Books Gifts - New Age - Reflexology and More!

Free Talks and Workshops
Totton Conservative Club

Contact the team:

07800 734 911

Email: newforestfayres@gmail.com



Vintage Faerie Ball is a ticketed event. Entry to the Weekend Faerie Fayre is free. The theme for the October 2024 Faerie Weekend on October 19th & 20th will be Vintage Faeries. Inspired by The Cottingley Fairies era. Tickets for the Vintage Faerie Ball are available now on Allevants. Exhibitor applications open now, visit faeryevents.com Please join the newsletter for event updates at www.faeryevents.com and find us on Instagram too <https://instagram.com/karenkaysfaeryevents>

Farnham Antiques & Brocante Street Market

Antiques | Vintage | Flea Market



Sunday 8th September 2024

10am - 4pm

The location of this market has changed to a new temporary home due to major infrastructure works in Farnham.

**Farmer's Market site in Central Car Park off
Victoria Road, GU9 7RD**



Antique & Art Fairs



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