



Gylden Magick

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April 2019

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 fast becoming one of the most extensive pagan libraries in S.E. England. Its website presence, which can be seen at www.gyldenfellowship.co.uk, is growing too – the Ostara blog alone reached some 4500 people in just 3 weeks.

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

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

In this issue, there's *practical magick*, i.e. spells, crystals and herbs. This is the Seed Moon and the altar colours for this period leading to Beltane are green, purple and yellow. And, we have the next part of our altar tools series, i.e. cauldrons.

The **Market Square** gives a useful overview to genuine sources of guidance, as well as items for your own interest. This month, we feature **Bang to Rites Drummers**.

We'll be looking at how various groups write and run their own rituals – this time, as we're between sabbats, we'll look back to a recent open ritual for **Ostara**.

Date for your diaries – don't forget **7 April 2019** for the **Wandering Witches' Fayre**, i.e. lots and lots of magick and natural healing, not least from our stall!

What else is there? Well, we take a look at the Rollright Circle, some chalice magick, there's lavender drinks, a piece about Extinction Rebellion, a folk tale about sea serpents, another monthly meditation, poetry and a new series on divination too.

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, eg the solstices and the equinoxes, as significant to us today as to our ancestors.

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

Contents: April 2019

Monthly features

Crystal healing — Malachite

Spellwork — Charging a pendulum

Kitchen witchcraft – Lavender drinks

Herbal healing — Plantain herb

Altar tools — Cauldron

Meditation — Forest of the soul

Pages 3-5

The Market Square by Lisa Baskerville, Bang to Rites Drummers

Page 6

March photos – pictures from March events

Page 7

Sparkly reflections by Rebecca Granshaw

Page 8

Spi-rituality – Celebrating Ostara with Basingstoke Pagan Circle

Page 9

The Storyteller's archive – the Sea Serpent

Page 10

Chalice magick by Gylden Fellowship

Pages 11-12

Extinction Rebellion by Simon Hyde

Pages 13

Divination (new series): Tykhe dice by Mike Dennis

Page 14

Shrines: the Rollright Stones by Julia Pissano

Page 15

Gylden contact info

Page 16



Spell of the month: pendulum

Let's start by saying that routines you have for cleansing crystals after each use, can also be applied to crystal pendulums. Examples of crystal cleansing include:

- Smudging by passing the crystals through the smoke of a burning sage stick.
- Placing the stones outside or on an open window sill between a full moon and new moon.
- Burying the stones in a pot of sandalwood or rose petals.
- Burying the stones in a pot of soil, point down, for deep cleansing.
- Placing the stones in a stream or under cool tap water, point down again.

Mind you, if your pendulum is made of wood, metal or another non-crystalline material, different cleansing methods may be needed and here's a spell for that.

Set-up: full moon, pendulum and 5 tealights.

- Create your sacred space and put tealights in a circle or pentacle around the pendulum.
- Light the tealights.
- Chant five times:

"By air and earth, I charge this tool,

By water and fire, I charge this tool.

Despite the darkness of the night,

By æther's power and moon's bright light,

I charge this tool with my spiritual might,

For my intent in the Goddess's sight.

So mote it be."

- Let the tealights burn out.
- The spell is finished and the pendulum is charged.



Crystal of the month: malachite

Last month, we looked at blue jade – this month is malachite, a very ancient stone that was used in magick from Ancient Egypt onwards. Archæologists have uncovered malachite jewellery from Ancient Greece and Rome and, more recently, from Imperial Russia. And, it's a very distinctive stone when polished, with rings or bands across the surface (*see picture below*). The **magickal uses** include the following.

- Protecting against negativity or evil eye hexes.
- Enhancing visionary powers.
- Warning of forthcoming danger.
- Strengthening the heart chakra.
- Stimulating dreams.
- Helping with grounding processes.

From the **healer's point of view**, malachite is good for lots of things, but it should be noted that it is a toxic stone in its rough form and is best used when polished. OK then, don't inhale malachite dust, but use it like so.

- Protection against fear of flying or travel sickness.
- Absorption of electronic smog, radiation and other negative energies.
- Protection from menstrual problems or cramps.
- Relief from fever and Parkinson's disease.
- Malachite is good for dis-ease in the kidneys, gall bladder or bowel.
- It also a good crystal for circulatory issues, such as high blood pressure.
- And it helps with joint or bone problems – we covered comfrey a few months back: malachite enhances the herbal benefits of comfrey salve.



Herb of the month: plantain herb

I was sorting through some salves the other week and came across a blend from last year, where I'd mixed comfrey and plantain into an ointment. And, looking out of the window, I see that there are both rib-leaved and broad-leaved plantains all over the back garden. They're not really weeds though, so here's an overview of their medicinal uses – you use the leaves and they're both very safe herbs to use.

Broad-leaved or common plantains (*plantago major*) and rib-leaved plantains (*plantago lanceolata*) are good for these [complaints](#).

- Colds: plantains work against catarrh and combat yellow mucus.
- Irritable bowel syndrome, wind and blocked stomach.
- Cuts or wounds: plantains have an antiseptic effect. This also works for insect bites or rashes.

So, how would you [use plantains best](#)? As mentioned above, a salve or cream is OK, perhaps with another herb.

- Have a daily infusion for digestive problems – big handful of leaves + boiling water + honey, let stand for 5 minutes & strain off before drinking.
- Add fresh leaves to an insect bite or sting.
- Or, you could make a poultice by pulping up some plantain leaves + adding boiling water + soaking a bandage (or clean towel) in the mixture and covering the wound.
- Internally, you could also tweak the infusion so that it becomes a syrup (less water and more standing time) or a juice (adding more leaves).
- I've not done this, but I'm **guessing** that a plant with anti-catarrhal properties would work well as a steam inhalation. This method works fine with eucalyptus – I'm happy for feedback on this one.



Recipe of the month: lavender

Last month, we looked at lavender's healing properties in respect of calming people and many other medicinal uses. This time, we're looking at healing from the inside, starting with a [lavender infusion](#) to help with cardiac issues and then a [spring-time juice](#).

Ingredients for an infusion

- 1tsp lavender
- 1tsp hawthorn flowers
- 1tsp jasmine
- 1tsp orange peel
- 1tsp rose petals

Put all the ingredients in a teapot, add 500ml of boiling water and infuse for 10 minutes before serving.

Ingredients for juice

- 1-2 drops of lavender essential oil
- Lavender sprigs
- 200ml runny honey
- Juice of 6 lemons
- Approx. 6 pints spring water

Blend all the ingredients and chill – add more honey or water if required.



Altar tool of the month: cauldron

OK then – last month, we looked briefly at chalices and we'll look at some chalice magick later on, but let's spend a little time on cauldrons now. But first, you can get cauldrons of all sizes from online sources, witchcraft fairs or even charity shops. Try to buy a cauldron that:

- Is either cast iron or a metal good for heating.
- Is easy to clean after use.
- Has a tight lid, good handle, three legs and a fire-proof base. Safety is vital if you're burning something – best to have a fire-proof site too.
- Is the right size for your lifestyle and your spells.
- Costs about £20-£25 (for decent quality).

Tip: cleanse the cauldron after purchase, to lose any unwanted magickal energy- salt is good for cleansing.

Next thing to consider is how to **use your cauldron** and some of this advice will depend upon its size and your own pagan pathway. For example, I've been in a group where we used a cauldron to burn poppets, but this may not be to everyone's persuasion. Here are some things that you might do with your cauldron.

- Burn incense, perhaps with a charcoal base or incense cones or sticks. One can walk from place to place with a cauldron of incense, for the smoke to cleanse a pentacle or room.
- Fill it with water for scrying purposes.
- Take a pestle and mortar to grind up herbs in it.
- Use the cauldron to boil infusions or herbal elixirs.
- I have a spell for releasing negative energy under a full moon. To do so, within a group setting, requires floating candles that are set alight in a cauldron of spring water.



Monthly meditation: soul forest

This meditation is all about bringing a sense of serenity to your life and can be done every day, if you wish. The keystone is that of **joy** and flows from your heart chakra. As with many meditations, ensure that your environment is quiet and free from interruptions – start with **Gauranga** breathing.

1. Inhale slowly and count the 4 syllables of ga-ur-an-ga in your mind. Then exhale, emptying your lungs and saying Ga-ur-an-ga aloud.
2. Repeat for 5-7 times until you feel rested.
3. Sit quietly and focus on your crown chakra in your head. Imagine that you are in a room with a lift.
4. Enter the lift and the buttons show different floors (one for each chakra) – you press the heart button.
5. The lift starts to descend, down past the third eye and throat chakras. It stops at the heart.
6. The doors open onto a forest that you know – trees of different species, undergrowth, you can hear birdsong and see the shapes of animals. You may discern small streams or caves too.
7. Dappled sunshine shows bright glades where forest flowers bloom. Be at peace and wander from glade to glade or down forest paths – let your daily worries be replaced by heart love.
8. The heart chakra has been described as the forest of the soul. You may meet old friends there, kindly animals and the forest spirits too. My forest includes the laughter of small streams, lots of birds, bright crystals or shells and mushrooms, but each person is different.
9. When you feel rested, retrace your steps to the lift doors and go inside – press the button for your head (crown chakra) and ascend to daily life. The forest of your heart is still there and can be revisited at any time.



The Market Square: Bang to Rites Drummers

In last month's issue of **GYLDEN MAGICK**, we met Paul Pearson and the Greenmantle Magazine team, in the town square on market day. But, what's this? We hear the sound of distant drums, coming ever closer. It must be the **Bang to Rites Drummers**. Let's try to visualise the scene. It's market day in a small country town and the traders are setting up their stalls, putting out their stocks. As you read further issues of **GYLDEN MAGICK**, so we'll introduce you to lots more traders, but for now, they're here and putting up their stands. It's a lovely sunny day in the town square, with cobbled stones underfoot and an Eleanor Cross in the centre. There are old buildings all around and roads off to the side. So, let's listen to **Lisa Baskerville**, as she pauses from the drumming, to tell us about **Bang to Rites**.

Bang to Rites Drummers is a group of community-based performance drummers, located around the borders of Wiltshire, Oxfordshire & Gloucestershire. The group was formed in the summer of 2013, after some friends were asked to drum for a druid group at their Summer Solstice celebrations at Stonehenge.

As a result, several of these friends decided to get together – formally - to practise drumming as a group, incorporating different types of drums and rhythmic styles within its repertoire. Today, the group continues to thrive - growing from strength to strength!

Bang to Rites performs at a variety of pagan and non-pagan events, including:

- charity concerts
- street markets
- community days
- village fetes
- carnivals
- festivals and celebrations
- public and private gatherings – to name a few!

Mainly performing locally, they have also been invited to attend venues further afield, such as Bracknell, Southampton, Avebury and Stonehenge. You will find them at the Enchanted Market every year delighting the shoppers and attendees.

At Summer Solstice they form part of the Kings Drums at Avebury. Bang to Rites provide musical accompaniment (and colour!) to Highworth's annual **Jack in the Green May Day Festival** and they also form part of the parade at **Pagan Pride South**.

The group has come together for many worthwhile causes. Last year, the drummers collected for two breast cancer charities – Breast Cancer Now and Breast Cancer UK - to support one of their members who battled breast cancer for many years. Bang to Rites raised money at their gigs and, in addition, the group held an auction together with a gruelling 24-hour sponsored Drumathon, all of which raised over £2000!

Bang to Rites is a small, but big-hearted group of drummers who enjoy drumming through companionship, fun and friendship. The drummers meet twice a month at Highworth Community Centre and are always welcoming new members. It is an open and inclusive group, regardless of belief and no previous musical or drumming experience is necessary to join. If you fancy a go, more details can be found at: www.bangtorites.org.uk or www.facebook.com/bangtorites.



Gylden
Magick
April 2019

Recent moot and other spiritual events 2019



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Sparkly Reflections

By Rebecca Granshaw

I don't know

I don't feel I know much about anything these days,
Minutes pass,
Changing everything that time touches,
Even things one clings on to with might,
The easy to give up evaporate fast,
Leaving only the obvious,
That one has spent a lifetime avoiding looking at,
Yet has known all along that that is where the gold lies.

Well the time has come,
And if you are reading this,
You know exactly what I mean.
And where your own gold is buried.
Dig deep. Now.
Know you are not alone,
You are supported.
And it's time to BEcome YOU.
Much love dear brothers and sisters.



Spi-rituality: Ostara ritual

Ritual by Paul Oakwolf Coombes & report by Gylden Fellowship

In last month's *GYLDEN MAGICK*, we featured a druidic Imbolc ritual. This month, we're looking at sabbats again and Ostara, in particular. Read on for an open ritual report.

On 24 March, **Basingstoke Pagan Circle** held its spring equinox/ Ostara ritual in the War Memorial Park in Basingstoke. In the past, it must be said that I've attended some extremely cold and/or extremely wet Ostara ceremonies on hillsides or in yew groves. Not so this time - it was very sunny and, almost, too hot for those of us in robes, cloaks or Viking gear (it's an open ritual).



The open ceremony was written by **Paul Oakwolf Coombes**, leader of this group and Archdruid for Basingstoke. As the name suggests, this rite was designed for all types of pagan – there's a druidic structure, but the format is quite OK for heathens and witches too. And, the use of a talking stick permits members to contribute poems, stories, songs, etc. Here is an extract from the ceremony.



“The land is alive with abundant fertility and it is a time to celebrate the returning sun, the whispered promise of Imbolc is now dawning with new life. Fertile energy is all around us – it is the first day of spring.

Winter's bareness has subsided – from the death of winter springs new life. Spring is coming to the land. The days grow longer and warm breezes begin to stir.

All around me, I see signs. The growing things are beginning anew. It is a resurrection of the dance of life – the dance of the stems and stalks as they push forth from the earth.

It is the season of creation and the land has become fertile again. The earth is caressed by the loving touch of the mother. Where her hand passes, buds burst open, leaves and vines unfurl. She creates a vision of green beauty.”

The group then performed the shared offerings and blessings of fresh bread and mead. And, since it was Ostara, the egg being a druidic symbol of life, chocolate eggs were distributed to the participants by an Ostara hare!

And then, as normal, the Druid Oath was spoken by all.

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

The Storyteller's archive: The Sea Serpent

In 1906, a passenger on the Newhaven ferry, one Charles Dawson, reported seeing a sea serpent in the English Channel. He noted it in his diary, along with many other verified discoveries of dinosaur teeth and fossil finds. And so, we come to this tale from February 1774, which took place off the North Tyneside coast, near to modern-day Sunderland. The strange and terrible story of the Grange brothers and their encounter with a sea serpent is long remembered in that area.

There were three brothers – Simon, Peter and Joseph Grange and all of them were local fishermen. They had two small boats and went out each day: one boat with two brothers using nets to catch cod and herring to sell at market and the other brother using traps to catch crabs and lobsters. On 2 February 1774, the sea was not calm, but there had been a storm on the previous day and no fishing had been done, so the brothers set out with Joseph checking the crab traps and Simon and Peter doing the main fishing.

They cast their net early and, almost immediately, knew that there was a problem. They shouted to Joseph to row over to help them. As he started to go over, he glanced up and saw his brothers struggling with their net and he watched a vast, ribbon-like creature rear out of the net and crash down on the boat, breaking it in two. The creature had long dorsal fins and, by Joseph's reckoning, was easily 40 feet in length with snapping teeth.

By the time Joseph had rowed over, his brothers were nowhere to be seen and there were just a few fragments of wood in the water. He dived overboard, but there was no sea monster and no sign of his brothers. Sadly, he rowed home, knowing that his family would be grief-stricken, but from that day, he vowed that he would revenge himself on the sea serpent.

And that day came just the next week. Joseph had checked for crabs and taken that catch home and now he went out further with a small net for any fish that could be found. He also took several knives and a sharpened pole, in case the monster serpent showed up again. He had warned other fishermen in the village to take care when checking their nets, but hoped to kill it himself.

He stopped close to where his brothers' boat had sunk and cast his net. Now there was no mistake, because he had caught something very large and close to the surface. He let it come up on its own and, as it left the water, Joseph was ready with his sharp pole and speared it close to the head. Too late though – the serpent crashed down and broke the boat into many pieces. But Joseph was alive and he started to swim ashore - he was rescued by another fisherman who'd seen the fight from afar.

And the serpent, or rather the remains of it, washed up on the beach a few days later. It was just over 40 feet long and weighed over 500lbs.



Chalice magick

By Gylden Fellowship

Last month, we featured a short overview about chalices as one of your altar tools. OK, so you've brought your brand-new chalice home and are wondering how best to consecrate it or even charge the chalice with your intent – the spell set out in respect of pendulums (earlier in this **GYLDEN MAGICK**) can be used for a chalice too. You can use this cleansing spell each time that you use the chalice for a new purpose.



What then is the **significance** of the chalice? Here's some basic concepts.

1. For many Wiccans, a chalice is one of four elemental tools of witchcraft (with the pentacle, the athame and the wand).
2. A chalice represents the cardinal element of water.
3. It is a symbol of containment and represents the womb of the Goddess.
4. The base is symbolic of the material world, the stem symbolises the connection between man and spirit and the rim or opening symbolically receives spiritual energy.
5. In the Wiccan Great Rite, a chalice is the feminine principle and is used in combination with the masculine symbol (a ceremonial black-handled athame). Basically, it's a ritual that is symbolic of sexual intercourse and also of universal creativity.

Of course, for many pagans, if you say "*chalice*", their first thought may be for the Chalice Well in Glastonbury. The waters of the Chalice Well flow at a steady rate and temperature, usually with a reddish hue. One of the myths is that these waters represent the blood of Jesus, miraculously springing forth from the ground when Joseph of Arimathea buried or cleansed the chalice that caught Jesus's blood at the Crucifixion. For other people, the well waters are seen as symbolic of Gaia's gift to all beings – it is one of the oldest holy wells in the UK.

Most commonly, we use chalices or drinking horns to hold some sort of liquid during a ritual act of worship, regardless of whether it's in solitary practice or in a moot ceremony. As is said in ceremonial practice, as we pass around the chalice to each other, "*May you never thirst*" and then give an offering to Gaia.

The liquid could be water, but also wine, mead or juice. Ah yes, that reminds me – if you opt for a resin chalice, the inner part will perish with repeated use of mead or wine.

Chalices have no universal form or specifications. They can be made of beautifully ornate silver or animal horn – your choice. Likewise, silver or silver plate chalices are popular due to the link between silver and the moon or the Goddess, but such chalices should be cleaned regularly to avoid tarnishing.

I have a ceramic chalice that has served me well, is cleaned easily and is plain, rather than posh – if you get that wave. What you can do is to use a cup or chalice that has been in your family and dedicate it to your use, which bestows an ancestral connection for your spells.



What else can you do with a chalice then? Well, it can be a substitute for a cauldron in certain spells and the suggestions below offer some **magickal applications**.

1. As I write this, it's raining quite heavily outside. The new moon is due soon and, at that time, I could put my chalice outside overnight to collect rainwater that is charged with new moon energy. Then, I could bottle the water until I need some new moon energies for a spell. This method can be carried out at any phase of the moon.
2. Now I think about it, what you could do is to collect water with full moon energy, decant it into small bowls and then cleanse your crystals in the water (not good for selenite). Or, you could place crystals in the chalice in water during the time of a full moon, which would mean a double cleansing.
3. Make herbal potions or elixirs as usual and then pour them into the chalice to aid with healing spells.
4. Actually, there's no reason why a chalice can't be used for drinking herbal infusions or tea or coffee.
5. A chalice can be used for scrying purposes.
6. Almost always, a chalice is intrinsic to a handfasting ceremony.
7. Some people opt to burn incense in their chalice – this has to depend upon how fire-proof it is and its composition.
8. A chalice can be used for the purpose of mixing herbs or even oils.



“As is said in ceremonial practice, as we pass around the chalice to each other, *“May you never thirst”* and then give an offering to Gaia.”



The Extinction Rebellion from a pagan perspective

By Simon Hyde

I love this planet and the beautiful diversity that is around me.

From a Wiccan view, I act "to harm none", BUT my government has chosen for us profit over science, short termism over long termism and more money for the super-rich over freedom for all. As a lifelong searcher for truth, I try to follow the facts and speak the truth about what I find along the way, I expect that of those around me and require that of those in power.

Looking at this skew, I am shocked and appalled. I am in favour of representative decision-making, but our current decision-makers have (in a Faustian sense) sold their souls for money.



Throughout my life I have followed the rhetoric that if I want to reduce carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, I should look at my own footprint first. But, after having no children, installing solar panels, reusing, recycling and turning vegan. I realise this is not enough.

For over 30 years that the science has been known, we are committing genocide. and ecocide. Over 60% of the species that existed when I was born are now extinct and so-called wild animals now count for only 4% of the whole. It is not just exotic, faraway creatures that are affected - our foxes, hares and badgers are hunted ruthlessly. Bees and bats are now on the endangered lists too.

I cannot just stand by and watch. On my own, I feel powerless. The Extinction Rebellion founders did many years of study of successful struggles against oppression, apartheid, sexism, racism and ecological issues from a sociological perspective. They have distilled from the results of successful struggles to find those things needed to help us to succeed.

First, non-violent mass civil disobedience is key. Non-violence encourages inclusiveness, and does not incite violence. The Extinction Rebellion (XR) is a non-violent worldwide group of activists with these aims.

1. Get the decision-makers and media to TELL THE TRUTH about the existential climate catastrophe about to engulf the planet.
2. To reverse the policies that are hastening a climate catastrophe.
3. To leave the how to achieve this to a citizens' assembly of people chosen by sortition.

Extinction Rebellion groups extend non-violence within their organisation and world views. They consider the whole membership as important, not just those who are arrested or are directly involved in actions. Members of the organisation help in these important ways.

- Acting as legal observers.
- Waiting outside when people are released from custody.
- Providing first aid.
- Singing songs or playing music/drums.
- Talking to the media or passers-by.
- Handing out leaflets.

Avoiding fear and violence sets Extinction Rebellion apart, giving a collective strength beyond the truncheons, arrests or guns. Being open about what is planned is part of not living in fear.

All this puts compassion and love to be at the forefront.

Divination: Tykhe dice

By Michael Dennis and Gylden Fellowship

Earlier this year (January 2019), we featured a piece about *spiritual palmistry by Sam O'Neil* – and there'll be more on this topic from Sam later in 2019. Anyway, we thought that a new series on **divination** might be interesting for **GYLDEN MAGICK** readers. So, we'll be looking at tarot, numerology, rune reading, astrology, tea leaves and similar subjects on the way. But we'll start with Tykhe dice.

Back in 2016, I went along to a workshop on Tykhe dice, run by Michael Dennis and friends. Tykhe what, I hear you say? Well, these dice are a type of fortune-telling based on dice symbols cast onto a special board. Tykhe is an ancient Greek word that means a deity of providence or fortune, but shrines to Tykhe were common in the Roman Empire.

Each set of Tykhe dice has three dice with different symbols on each face that represent different aspects of life. In most cases, the cast represents past, present and future, but a fourth dice can be added and its importance lies on where it lands on the board. The technical term for this type of divination is **cleromancy**, namely divination via the random casting of dice.

The Tykhe board itself echoes a Mandala style interpretation of the universe and unfolds from four quarters, to a casting area of 29cm x 29cm, the diameter of the casting circle measures 12.4 diameters of the dice, corresponding to the number of Moon cycles each year. The board has many different symbols on it, including the solar system, the cosmos, zodiac symbols, metals and elements. It contains several circular zones and is also divided into two halves – one for the moon (feminine) and other for the sun (masculine). So, the interpretation for each person depends partly on the symbols shown on the dice and also on the final location of each dice on the casting board. Most people's influences are a mix of both these energies.

Next question, I guess, relates to the name. Well, Tykhe (also Tyche) was a goddess in Ancient Greece, but was absorbed into the Roman pantheon as Fortuna. She governed good fortune and fate, particularly for humans. However, the idea of the rolling dice is an almost universal concept when it comes to gambling or chance. Thus, Tykhe dice have endured in one form or another over the ages.

More information and handmade sets, which include an introductory book and shipping costs, are available from <http://www.tykhedice.com>. It is possible to buy a set of Tykhe dice and casting board, but I believe that it will be many years before I do so, because one needs to be an experienced interpreter. Anyway, more info may be had from www.tykhedice.com.



Shrines and sacred places: the Rollright Circle

By Julia Pissano, Rollright Circle of Friends



I was visiting my mentor for the first time, back in 2002, around Beltane. He said he wanted to show me around and off we went until the car made a turn into a quaint country lane. We neared a rather unimpressive spot, a sign saying *Rollright Circle* by the side of the road. After Avebury, this circle seemed very small, with its lichen-covered stones. I wandered about, looking at my mentor, who was nonchalantly preparing his pipe.

"What is this place?" I asked him.

"One of the oldest circles local Pagans visit, some of my mates helped taking care of it. It is not as famous as Stonehenge or Avebury, thankfully".

"OK", I thought, still a bit confused regarding what I was supposed to do here. By then, I knew that asking was no good, as the answer would always be "nothing, enjoy the scenery", only for something weird to happen next. He did point out a couple of stones, one wide and short, the other narrower and tall, but nothing else. I went about, trying to "feel" the place, a bit bewildered, and, I admit, a bit bored. I approached the taller stone, hands stretched out to touch it, when something like "stop!" froze me in place. Is this stone "refusing" to be touched?? Sound crazy, but that's what I felt.

I took some distance, palms out, and things calmed down. Then I went to the other, which was far more "amiable" and sat on the grass by its side. It was so weird, reclining on a stone which felt, to the touch, cold and hard, but somehow felt also like a mother's lap. After that, I was very excited, walking around, exploring this circle which suddenly had become "alive", like a gathering of old souls greeting visitors.

Then, something unexpected happened. I was lying on one large stone when a sudden headache felt as if an axe had hit me on my left eye. There was something like a sudden **pulse**, throbbing like concentric waves or lines going from one stone to the opposite, crossing at the centre. I walked around, trying to follow the pulse, until I reached the spot where I thought they were crossing. The whole place seemed like vibrating at its own wavelength. At that time, I asked my mentor and his wife whether we could go back, as I felt exhausted. This pulsating feature was something completely unexpected.

Back home, I did some online research and, to my surprise, the circle had a website, which also mentioned some experiments, performed in the 1970s, regarding magnetic pulses, and reports of people suffering headaches. By then, I was hopelessly hooked on these Rollright Stones - their magic had already infected me and somehow bound my soul to them.

"It was so weird, reclining on a stone which felt, to the touch, cold and hard, but somehow felt also like a mother's lap."

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