



Gylden Magick

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April 2022

PRACTICAL MAGICK & UNIVERSAL ENERGY FOR EVERYDAY LIFE

Editor's notes

by Gylden Fellowship

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

Dear readers of **GYLDEN MAGICK**,

It's April (the [Seed Moon](#)) – I've been reflecting on seeds and new projects. Since Ostara, the hours of daylight have been growing steadily. As we look around, all of nature is flowering after the winter: buds are on the trees, seeds start to germinate and spring flowers appear everywhere. The power of the sun increases each day as the nights get shorter.

Dates for your diaries – not least **Hanamatsuri** (the Buddha's birthday) on 8 April, **First Cuckoo Day** on 14 April, **Rama's Feast** on 18-19 April and **Earth Day 2022** on 22 April (see later in this issue). The First Cuckoo Day was a traditional marker

to herald the Spring – anyone who heard the first cuckoo was destined to enjoy good luck. And we look forward to **Beltaine** (at the end of the month).

Spring offers the opportunity for planning new projects. Our website has a new collection of tales from the [Storyteller](#), with another in the pipeline and we've added a selection of poetry from [Nicola Ison](#).

This edition has a definite emphasis on spring - the altar colours for this period leading to **Beltaine** are green, purple and yellow. But no ads – after all, we're like a pagan public library and all the information is free.

We continue with our regular series about celestial forecasts, sacred art, folklore, Beltaine and environmental issues. Our crystal expert, Charlie, turns her attention to pyrite and our science writer, Mark, has two pieces

this month, both examining cosmic energy. One looks at quantum gravity and the other looks at strange metals.

In past years, we would be frantic with preparations for the Wandering Witches' Fayre, but not so in 2022. We will go along to catch-up with friends and look forward to the return of all the festivals, camps, fayres and markets in a post-covid world.

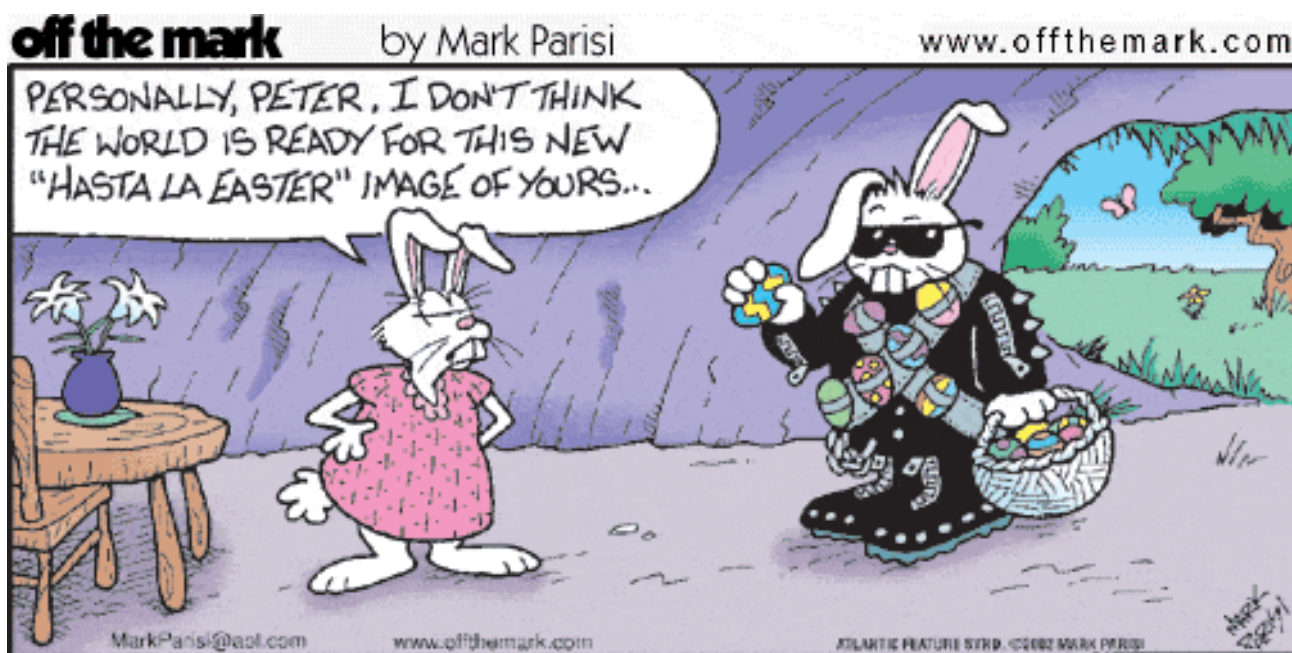
Thank you for all your feedback and many blessings.

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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Crystal clear: pyrite

By Charlie Foreverdark

Time to send greetings to another regular author to **GYLDEN MAGICK** – Charlie Foreverdark. Charlie is a noted blog writer and participant in many online crystal and gemstone events.

The glittering iron sulphide mineral pyrite (FeS_2) is known to most people by the synonym, *fool's gold*: something that promises great value, but is intrinsically worthless. In truth, however, far from being without worth, pyrite played a vital and pivotal part in human evolution. The role of pyrite in fire-lighting is a common feature of all ancient civilisations and led on to the development of modern chemical, pharmacological and armament industries.

The majority of people will have likely encountered the phrase, *fool's gold*, in one form or another. Whether in the Stone Roses song of the same name, used in the last scene of *Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels*, or in great literature such as Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*, where the medieval caveat was used to express the notion that shiny and attractive things are not always precious. Shakespeare wrote: "All that glisters is not gold; often have you heard that told", and he was not the only person to express this idea in his writing. 12th century French theologian, Alain de Lille, penned the line: "Do not hold everything gold that shines like gold", and in 1380, Geoffrey Chaucer wrote: "Hit is not al gold, that glareth" in his poem, *The House of Fame*.

Led Zeppelin opened their song, *Stairway to Heaven*, with the lyric "There's a lady who's sure all that glitters is gold", but it's fair to say that the sentiments of Shakespeare, de Lille and Chaucer will serve you better when applied to the business of gold prospecting! Although lighter and more brittle than gold, the brassy colour and metallic lustre of pyrite caused inexperienced prospectors to mistake it for the rarer and more valuable gold, earning it the synonym of fool's gold.

Despite having been something of a disappointing find when compared with a nugget of pure gold, within the crystal lattice structure of pyrite, there is often actual gold to be found. The two minerals often form together, and some pyrite deposits even contain enough included gold to warrant targeted mining, but in the majority of cases, the gold content is much lower and averages just a few tenths of a percent.

Extracting any gold from the pyrite is an extremely difficult process which consists of grinding and heating the composite specimen and then treating it with sodium cyanide. But it is a worthwhile process. Scientists believe that around 24% of the gold on the market is refractory, (meaning that it has to be extracted from other minerals) and somewhere between 5% and 10% of the world's gold production actually derives from pyrite. So, uncovering fool's gold wasn't quite as dispiriting as you might have concluded from the historic accounts of disheartened prospectors.

Though they appear similar, pyrite and gold each have their own unique properties. Pyrite is brittle and will fracture, whereas gold is ductile and will bend. There are simple ways to differentiate as pyrite sits on Moh's scale at between 6 -6.5, and pure gold is much softer at 2.5. The scratch or streak tests are both applicable, assuming that you don't mind a destructive effect on the specimen that you are attempting to identify! X-ray fluorescence analysers can be used to definitively distinguish the two minerals from one another without causing any damage.

The name, *pyrite*, comes from the Greek word, *pyr*, meaning fire, because it emits a spark when struck against a harder material such as iron or flint. It may not be generally appreciated how important pyrite has been when it comes to providing the basics for our current civilisation.



Predating pivotal points of the development of humankind (such as sanitation, agriculture, and the wheel), the **discovery of fire** enabled immediate and drastic progression in our early evolution. Pyrite has been used to start fires since prehistoric times. Evidence of compact ignition kits have been found on early Homo Sapiens excavation sites throughout Eurasia. These portable kits comprised of a nodule of pyrite, something durable to strike it against and an inclusion of dried vegetation matter for tinder - and were typically carried in leather pouches like a prehistoric Zippo, if you will!

Prior to the application of pyrite, access to flame for early humans was limited to forest fires ignited by lightning, or a burning flare of natural gas venting from a fissure. These were non-portable sources of fire and difficult to harness effectively. The discovery of pyrite provided essential portability and aided in mankind's mastery of fire hundreds of thousands of years ago. Fire was an instrument of great change and development. Cooking plants and flesh rendered them safer to eat and easier to digest, so a wider range of nourishment became available. A warm fire extended the day, and enhanced safety and security by providing a light source in the dark nights. Fires kept early settlers from freezing in the winter, and gathering around the source of heat and light might arguably have contributed to the development of speech and language! So, fire was a pretty big deal, and pyrite was a pretty big part of that.

This particular property of pyrite also made it useful for early firearms, providing the ignition spark for the gunpowder; Wheel-lock guns, in which a spring-driven serrated wheel rotated against a piece of pyrite, were used before development of the flintlock, but this application is now obsolete.

Pyrite has also been used in jewellery dating back centuries before our time. Examples of pyrite jewellery such as polished pins, earrings and amulets from ancient Greek, Roman and Inca burial sites have been uncovered. It was also a popular decorative material in Victorian Britain. Pyrite is highly reflective so flat tablets were even polished and used as mirrors.

Pyrite is widely distributed worldwide, and forms under extremely varied conditions. It can be produced volcanically within molten rock (magma) or within hydrothermal solutions and can even form as stalactite growth. It occurs as an accessory mineral in igneous rocks and within vein deposits alongside quartz and sulphide minerals.

Myriads of microscopic pyrite crystals can be found in soils and sediments such as limestone, black shale, and coal. Pyrite which forms in organic-rich sediments, such as coal and shale is formed by bacteria and can replace organic materials such as plant debris or shells to create amazing pyritised fossils. As the decaying organic material consumes oxygen and releases sulphur, pyrite forms as a replacement mineral; creating exact replicas of the ancient sea creature or plant life. More than 90% of the pyrite on Earth is formed by this microbiological process.

Pyrite is composed of iron and sulphur; however, the mineral does not serve as an important source of either of these elements as there are easier and more lucrative options for obtaining them. Because of the availability of far better sources, pyrite is not generally used as an ore. In calcite and quartz veins, pyrite can oxidise to form iron oxides or hydroxides such as **limonite**. Such oxidised zones are called **gossans**, and appear as autumnal coloured rusty zones at the rock surface. Gossans can be good drilling targets for gold and other precious and base metals, as they are a good indicator that there will be other metallic mineralisation in the underlying rock.

Cuboidal crystals tend to be the most common visible formation of pyrite, with square prisms being more probable than perfect cubes. There are also balls of radiating pyrite crystals forming from a central axis, which are commonly found in limestone and chalk. Pyrite can even form as irregular pentagonal, dodecahedral, and octahedral crystals but these occur less frequently.

The most common occurrences of pyrite are as microscopic globular aggregates of individual pyrite spherules. These are known as **framboids**, because under the microscope they look like tiny raspberries. Pyrite framboids, with diameters of around 0.01mm, are invisible to the naked eye. However, improved microscopy in the early 20th century showed that each individual specimen can contain as many as one million tiny similarly sized and shaped pyrite crystals. The abundance and distribution of pyrite framboids is somewhat extraordinary. A reasonable estimate for the total number of framboids on the planet is around 10 billion times the number of sand grains in the world or about a million times the number of stars in the universe, with billions more being formed every second! They are found in rocks and sediments of all ages, but the oldest reported pyrite framboids were found in 2.9-billion-year-old sediments from South Africa.

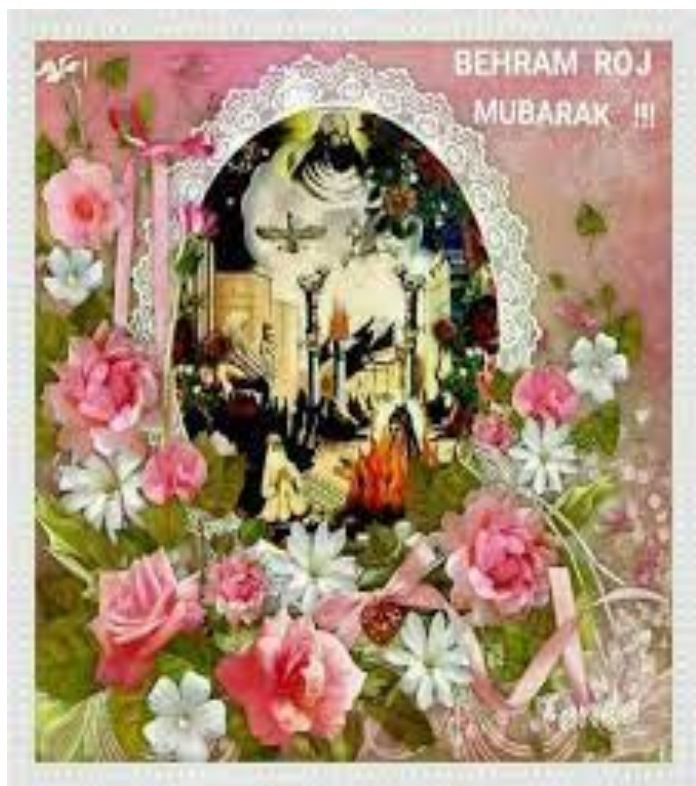
When pyrite reacts with water and oxygen, it releases sulphuric acid, which can pollute groundwater and cause acid mine drainage, a serious environmental problem across the globe. However, this toxic substance is not without its uses - sulphuric acid has become one of the most important industrial chemicals, and more of it is used each year than any other manufactured chemical. Pyrite continues to be mined worldwide as a major source of sulphur, the basic constituent of sulphuric acid. Sulphuric acid is used in the chemical industry in the production of detergents, synthetic resins, dyes, pharmaceuticals, petroleum catalysts, insecticides, and antifreeze. It is also used in the manufacture of pigments such as paints, enamels, and printing ink. The list of applications is long and even includes the production of batteries, cellophane and explosives! For many years Spain was the largest producer of pyrite, but today Italy and China are the world's largest producers, followed by Russia and Peru.

Pyrite is already playing a significant role in frontier areas of science and technology, such as nanotechnology and energy conversion. Several studies are underway to evaluate iron pyrite for application in solar cells for renewable energy. Researchers are working to iron out several potential techniques and should issues with developing the full potential of iron pyrite be overcome, this mineral could prove an extremely valuable energy resource in the future.

Gylden
Magick
April 2022

Sacred art: Adar Mah Parab (Zoroastrianism)

Collated by Gylden Fellowship







Environment: UK news update

By The Mammal Society

The Mammal Society is all about science-led, evidence-based conservation. As such, members have access to research briefings, e-bulletins, conferences, regular journals, training, etc. More details may be had from www.mammal.org.uk. This piece is a summary of recent news and lots more can be found in the Spring 2022 issue of *Mammal News*.

Let's start with **Invasive Species Week**, which falls on 16-22 May and will concentrate on British deer. The Society's status review of 2018 showed that all 6 species of deer have increased significantly over the last 2 decades. On one hand, this might be good news, except that only 2 species are native to Britain – red and roe deer. For Invasive Species Week, the Society will be providing daily blogs on deer species, discussing the pros and cons of each species and helping people to identify types of deer.



From there to some forthcoming Mammal Society **online training events** – listed below.

- Dormouse ecology and conservation: 27 May, 29 July and 30 September
- Wild boar workshop: 24 June
- Water vole ecology, mitigation and legislation: 14 October
- Dormmice and development: 28 October.

With legislation in mind, the government has changed the law relating to the **trapping of shrews** for scientific or educational purposes. Such purposes might include ringing, marking or examining such marks. Every trap must be inspected, where food or bedding are provided, at least twice every day at intervals of no less than 3 hours and no more than 12 hours. That was the law, but the time limits have now been decreased due to animal welfare and to reduce the risk of high mortality rates. The change took place under Condition 5(a) of the General Licence CL01.

In 2022, the Mammal Society is taking part in the 6th **National Otter Survey**, in collaboration with Natural England and the Environment Agency. The survey will take a year and intends to monitor some 3000 sites for the status and distribution of otters. In 1970, otter numbers in Britain were very low and this survey will review whether the otter population has declined, remained static or increased. The survey will also record any sightings of mink, water voles and beavers.

Celestial notes

By Joanna Bristow-Watkins, Harmony Healing

We are very pleased to feature **Joanna Bristow-Watkins** as one of our regular contributors for **GYLDEN MAGICK** and, here, we're including a few details about her expertise – many thanks to Rebecca Granshaw for suggesting Joanna. Joanna runs **Harmony Healing**, which may be accessed at www.harmonyhealing.co.uk

*We are also re-running the **New Moon New Vision** virtual course for a full lunar cycle. To assist with therapeutic and abundant alignment with the moon cycle, our next Lunar Alignment Programme commences with the New Moon on Friday 1 April and runs until Saturday 30 April. During this programme, we learn together how to take full advantage of energetic support from the moon cycle which assists manifestation when waxing and promotes release when waning.*

*As we progress into April, a theme emerges which venerates spring, renewal and fertility as well as nourishment. Known for **April Fool's Day and April Showers**, the month often hosts Easter, as it does this year. In the forest, we start to see (and smell) the beautiful bluebells, a marker of ancient woodland, which reach their full splendour in May.*

The month of April was supposedly named after the Roman Goddess, Venus (leading to Her Veneralia festival on 1 April), originally named Aphrilis after her equivalent Greek Goddess Aphrodite (Aphros) or the Etruscan version Apru. To the Anglo-Saxons, April was called Easter-mōnaþ - Easter Month, Month of the Goddess Ēostre. No prizes for guessing which Christian Festival took its name from this annual festival.

April begins with April Fool's Day as well as the Roman Festivals of Veneralia & Fortuna Virilis, as well as an early New Moon, hence our Moon Alignment Programme runs for the entire month until the following New Moon on 30th. This New Moon sets the scene for Ramadan, which runs throughout the month. Full Moon, which is the Easter Pink Moon, is on 16 April, which is Easter Saturday. This year, we have Easter on 15-18 April, although Orthodox Easter is a week later culminating on 25 April. In the Roman calendar, April also hosted Magna Mater on the 4th & Floralia on 28th, widely believed to be connected to Beltane.

April is also a month for some international awareness days including Autism Awareness Day on 2nd, World Health Day on the 7th and Earth Day on 22nd. In the UK, we celebrate St George's Day and Shakespeare's birthday on 23rd

*For those who celebrate the chance to get outdoors, we have the Lyrids Meteor shower peaking, on 21 April and we have a Forest Bathing event scheduled for the **Sunday 24th April at Harry Edwards**, near Shere (Surrey) which may feature some early bluebells, of which there are thousands at Harry Edwards.*

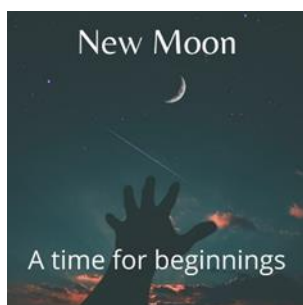


Thursday 1 April is April Fool's day. A day for practical jokes, April Fool's Day may originate from the move from the Julian calendar to the Gregorian calendar. This moved the start of the year almost three months from the Spring Equinox to the start of January! Those who refused to recognise the new calendar and still saw April as the start of the year were labelled, "April Fools".

Thursday 1 April, in addition to being April Fool's Day, is also the Roman celebration of Veneralia and Fortuna Virilis. Both celebrations seem loosely connected with Venus who is honoured on this day and whose advice is sought on matters of love.

Friday 1 April @ 07.27 is the 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 2022.

Friday 1 April is the start of our ***New Moon New Vision; lunar cycle alignment programme***, running until 30th April 2022. Cost is £155. This lunar cycle applies the transformational properties of spiritual alchemy to help you feel rejuvenated and purposeful about the rest of the year, via the creation of a Vision Board. It's a special one lunar month empowerment and attunement programme combining the solar & lunar balancing with various ceremonies throughout the month. The next Moon Alignment Programme begins with the New Moon on the 1 April and culminates with the New Moon on 30 May, which is also Beltane Eve.



Saturday 2 April is United Nations-sanctioned World Autism Awareness Day. This year marks the 15th annual World Autism Awareness Day. This is a day when organisations around the world hold special events to raise funding and awareness of autism. One of the ways that organisations have recognised Autism Day in the past, was to light their building blue, as part of the Autism Speaks "light it up blue" campaign. It was their way to shine a light on autism. Many famous buildings and structures were lit up blue, including the Empire State Building & Niagara Falls, USA, Christ the Redeemer statue, Rio de Janeiro (Brazil), the CN Tower in Toronto, Canada, the Great Buddha in Japan and the Sidney Opera House, Australia. For 2021 & 2022, the UN theme for World Autism Acceptance day is "Inclusion in the Workplace: Challenges and Opportunities in a Post-Pandemic World". Find out more about resources for children at [twinkl.co.uk](https://www.twinkl.co.uk). Apparently, there is an entire World Autism Acceptance Week, 28 March to 3 April, which is recognised in the UK, see [autism.org.uk](https://www.autism.org.uk) for details.

Saturday 2 April: *Harmony in Nature, and Harmony Healing, have stands at the **Harry Edwards Spring Fair**. Come and meet us and browse through Angela McGerr's angel books and cards. Enjoy a spring day in the beautiful surroundings of Harry Edwards Healing Sanctuary and Burrows Lea Country House. Browse the many visiting stalls - jewellery, candles, gifts, books, essential oils, skin care, therapies and much, much more. Delicious homemade refreshments available.*

Saturday 2 April: Ramadan begins after midnight on the 1 April. Ramadan is the Islamic remembrance of the reception of the divine revelation by Muhammad as recorded in the Qur'an. Complete fasting is observed from sunrise on 2 April to sunset for 30 days, until **Saturday 30 April**.



Monday 4 April, this year, is also Magna Mater in the Roman calendar. This is the festival of Cybele, Phrygian Great Earth Mother. Her priests took on female clothes and identities to commemorate her lover or, in some sources, her son, Attis, who was castrated and died of the wounds but was later resurrected.

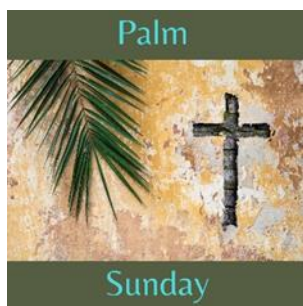
Thursday 7 April is World Health Day. The message of World Health Day is simple: giving people access to healthcare without the prospect of financial hardship. COVID-19 has highlighted, that our world is an unequal one, with access to healthcare being entirely dependent on the geographical location and conditions into which people are born, live, work, grow and age. The theme for 2022 is **Our Planet, Our Health**.

Sunday 10 April is Palm Sunday in the Christian Calendar this year. Palm Sunday, also known as Passion Sunday, is the 6th Sunday of Lent and the final Sunday before Easter. Traditionally, it marks the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. The name is believed to commemorate the placement of palm leaves on the road to soften the surface for the donkey on which he was riding.

Friday 15 April is the Christian Festival of Good Friday, which is a Bank Holiday in the UK as part of the Easter break. This commemorates the day when Jesus was crucified. It was not called Good Friday until 4th Century and may be a corruption of God's Friday.

Saturday 16 April is Easter Saturday in the Christian Calendar.

Saturday 16 April is also Easter Pink Full Moon @ 19:57 UK time (GMT+1), we are holding our Full Moon Meditation tonight, see entry below. Between Full Moon and the next New Moon is considered as a good time energetically for detoxing the body. For details of Full Moon timings for the year, as well as instructions for an Angela McGerr Angelic Meditation with Gabriel, see [Harmony Healing Full Moon](#) link.



Saturday 16 April, 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.

Sunday 17 April is Easter Sunday, which is generally taken to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus three days after his crucifixion. Intriguingly, Easter Sunday is not a set date but is calculated according to the Lunar cycle, so it can move around between 22 March and 25 April. It's fixed as the Sunday following the first Full Moon after the Vernal (Spring) Equinox. This points to the celebration being linked to an earlier pagan celebration, which were all associated with seasons and moon cycles. The name, Easter, itself is derived from the pagan god, Eostre. The Easter Egg is reminiscent of the pagan egg to symbolise fertility. And of course, the Easter Bunny, a strange addition to a crucifixion story, makes a lot more sense when viewed as a sign of spring and, possibly, a hare. Watch my YouTube presentation: **Was Easter superimposed into an earlier Pagan Festival?** The Hare is another ancient symbol of fertility, with a 28 day gestation period very linked to the lunar cycle. In Ancient Egypt, the hare is a hieroglyph meaning existence.

Monday 18 April is Easter Monday, which is a bank holiday in the UK.



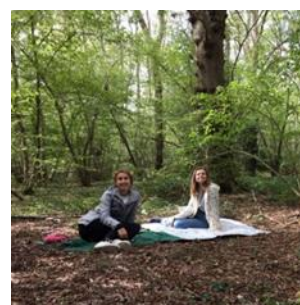
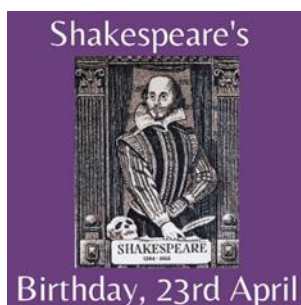
Wednesday 21 (late) until dawn Thursday 22 April is the Lyrids Meteor Shower. The Lyrids are an average shower, usually producing about 20 meteors per hour at their peak. These meteors can produce bright dust trails that last for several seconds. This year the shower peaks on the night of 21-22 April, although some meteors can be visible from 16-25 April.

Look for meteors radiating from the constellation of Lyra after midnight, the later you view in the morning of the 22nd, less meteors will be below the horizon and therefore more will be visible but as sunrise approaches light pollution will hamper viewing. However, the proximity of the Full Moon on the 16 April, means light pollution from the waning moon could be a hindrance. See rmg.org for more.

Friday 22 April is Earth Day, which is heralded as a pivotal opportunity for people, corporations and governments to join together to create a global green economy. The theme for 2022 is Invest in Our Planet, see more at earthday.org. It is hoped that coordinated efforts now will be recognized by future generations as a turning point.

Saturday 23 April is St George's Day in England, celebrating England's patron saint, St George. England's National Day is celebrated on the anniversary of his death, which is on 23 April. According to

legend, St George was a soldier in the Roman army who killed a dragon and saved a princess. The English flag is the red Cross of St. George, which is widely displayed as a symbol of national identity. It's also supposedly Shakespeare's birthday and death day. However, 23 April is not a Bank Holiday.



Sunday 24 April, 11am - 2pm, Forest Bathing+ in the grounds of Harry Edward's Healing Sanctuary, £35 (+ Paypal fee = £36.75). 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, which 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 3-hour session which will take place in all weathers except 30+mph winds or electrical storms. Book via our the [Harmony Healing shop](#) or our [London Meetup](#). Email katieandjo@harmonyinnature.uk to go on our forest bathing mailing list.

Thursday 28 April is the Roman fertility festival of flowers and crops called Floralia, that later developed into celebration of sexuality and may have influenced the subsequent celebrations for Beltane and May Day. Bright coloured clothes are worn (if any!), races and shows are performed.



Thursday 30 April, is the Pagan Eve of Beltane; celebrations begin with people dancing around the fire clockwise, singing. Sometimes two fires are set, and cattle are driven between the fires to purify them. Dew gathered from the grass at dawn is used in potions for luck and indeed it is believed to be lucky to roll naked in the dew!!! On Beltane, it is traditional to drink from a well before sunrise. Wash in the morning dew, and adorn yourself with greenery. Watch the sun come up, dance round the Maypole, and otherwise abandon yourself to the season. Round Full Moon Cakes are eaten and blackberry, elderberry, dandelion wine or cider is drunk. Sacred springs are visited and healing water is drunk.

Saturday 30 April @ 21:30 UK time (GMT+1) is the 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 2022. This marks the end of our April New Moon New Vision Programme.

Earth Day 2022

By Gylden Fellowship

Earth Day is one of those regular events, supported by many pagans, particularly those in the USA. It occurs this year just before Beltaine, on 22 April and 2022 marks the 52nd anniversary of Earth Day; it is a chance for us all to promote our principles of environmental protection and recognition of Gaia.

What is Earth Day?

The first Earth Day on 22 April 1970 is widely credited with launching the modern environmental movement. In the USA, many environmental laws were passed soon afterwards, dealing with such issues as clean air, clean water and endangered species. Today, the Earth Day Network (EDN) works with over 75,000 partners in 190 countries to broaden, diversify and mobilise the environmental movement. More than 1 billion people now participate in Earth Day activities each year, making it the largest public event in the world.

The main theme for Earth Day 2022 (earthday.org) is **Invest In Our Planet**. From their website, it's a case of "All TOGETHER now! This is the moment to change it all — the business climate, the political climate, and how we take action on climate. Now is the time for the unstoppable courage to **preserve and protect our health, our families, our livelihoods... together, we must Invest In Our Planet**. Because a **green** future is a **prosperous** future.

We need to act (boldly), innovate (broadly), and implement (equitably). It's going to take all of us. **All in**. Businesses, governments, and citizens — everyone accounted for, and everyone accountable. **A partnership for the planet**. And while there is still time to solve the climate crisis, time to choose BOTH a prosperous and sustainable future, and time to restore nature and build a healthy planet for our children and their children, **time is short**.

The Earth Day 2022 Theme is Invest In Our Planet. What Will You Do? "

In addition, the EDN's **Canopy Project** incorporates the protection of the environment by planting trees to help communities around the world to improve local economies. Trees reverse the impact of land degradation and provide food, energy and income, helping communities to achieve long-term economic and environmental sustainability. Trees also filter the air and help stave off the effects of climate change. The EDN aims to plant several billion trees over the coming year.



What can I do on Earth Day 2022?

OK then, first, it's unlikely that anyone can attend a mass gathering in person due to covid, but it's not impossible to express your views online and support climate action causes. Climate action includes such diverse causes as anti-fracking, safe water, defence of the rainforests, stop drilling for fossil fuels, etc. Everyone can do something on 22 April and here are some suggestions.

- Add your voice to these global demands for action with #EarthDay2022.
- Join in on social media for 24 hours of action on earthday.org and on @earthdaynetwork - every hour, on the hour, we'll have a new, powerful way for you to demand action and drive change.
- Demand change with civic action — call your local councillors or tweet your MPs. There are so many ways to tell your leaders that human and planetary health must be the top political priority.
- Send a message to the government on 22 April and get registered, educated and ready to vote in the next set of local, regional and national elections.
- Throughout April, earthday.org will have ways to get involved in local, state and national politics in the USA as the Vote Earth campaign is launched.

The first Earth Day seized the power of education through campus-wide teach-ins that sparked conversation, engaged local communities and informed change. Now, as Earth Day 2022 goes digital, the EDN is bringing 12 teach-ins to a global scale. Some of the world's most inspiring musicians, artists, scientists and spiritual leaders will use digital teach-ins to share their experience, expertise and lessons to a global audience across the 24 hours of the Earthrise initiative.

There's so much you can do to help protect and restore our planet, from joining a small clean-up of plastic pollution or litter on your daily walk to hosting an online event in your own community!

The EDN has created a citizen science platform to unite people on a global scale and encourage participation...to collect relevant and accurate data on the environment. This environmental platform has been called **Earth Challenge** and seeks to bring people together, when many are isolated across the world. Through the Earth Challenge app, anyone with a smartphone can contribute to a global database of information on air quality and plastic pollution (for example).

This data will improve the EDN's response to a changing planet and guide future environmental policies. In future months, the platform will continue to expand to include data on other environmental issues, e.g. water quality, insect populations, climate change and food security.

So, it is worth remembering that protection of the environment is often high on the list of priorities of pagans, whether they live in the USA, in the UK or anywhere else. The Pagan Federation (PF) lists love for, and kinship with, nature as a staple of pagan practice, i.e. reverence for the life force and its ever-renewing cycles of life and death. In fact, it's probably worth quoting the PF on this one:

"The first principle of the Pagan Federation emphasises the importance of love and respect for nature in paganism. It recognises that human beings are part of nature and that our lives are intimately interwoven with the web of life and death".



Tales for spring evenings: the Longwitton Dragon

By the Storyteller

This traditional tale comes from Northumberland and it has a seasonal feel for this part of the year, featuring a dragon. **Editor's note:** a new collection of the Storyteller's tales, *Winter Chills*, has been published on the **Gylden Fellowship** website and is free to download.

Close to the town of Longwitton in Northumberland, there was a wood containing three wells famed for their healing powers. One day a local man went to the wells to collect some of the healing water, but instead found a large dragon lapping from the wells with a long black tongue. The dragon suddenly disappeared, but the man could still sense its presence nearby.

From that day on, the dragon would let nobody approach the healing wells. Then one day, a young knight in search of adventure heard of the dragon and rode into Longwitton, intent on killing the beast.

Before setting off to do battle with the dragon, the young knight rubbed a magical ointment onto his eyes which would allow him to see the invisible. He charged into the woods and fought with the dragon all day. However, the many wounds he inflicted on the beast seemed to heal almost instantly. Exhausted, the knight returned to the village - ashamed of his failure.



He rode out the next day determined to finish the dragon off, but the same thing happened again and the knight was forced to retire once more. On the third day, the knight decided to change tactics. He attacked less frequently and watched the dragon's movements closely. Noticing that the dragon always kept its tail on the surface of the wells' water, the knight decided that the best course of action was to lure it away from the wells.

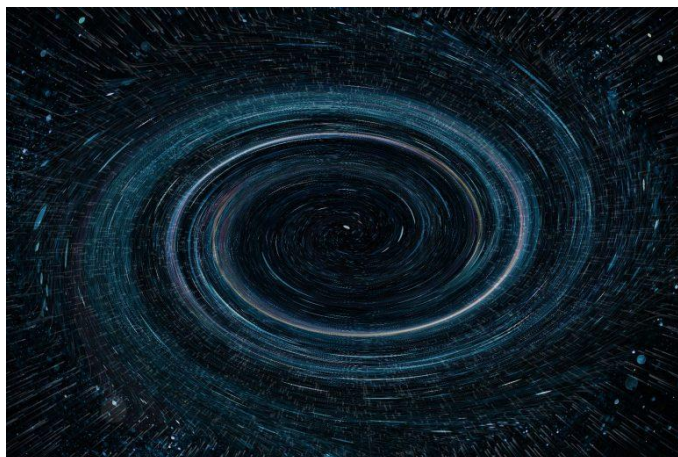
He dismounted from his horse and feigned defeat. The dragon sensed victory and rushed forward to finish him off. The knight, however, jumped back on his horse and rode past the dragon, blocking its path to the healing wells. The dragon was furious and attacked more ferociously than before, but the brave knight inflicted several mortal wounds and the dragon eventually succumbed to blood loss. With the dragon defeated, the wells returned to their former glory and the people of Longwitton rejoiced.

Cosmic energy: quantum gravity

By Mark Sharpen

As ever, I'm not going to give anything more than an overview of quantum gravity, but it does link into our understanding of black holes and other cosmic phenomena. More info may be had from the [Department of Mathematical Sciences at Chalmers University of Technology](#), which was the source for my text.

Gravity as defined by Newton, Einstein and innumerable others, has suggested that it obeys universal laws, but how does Einstein's theory of gravity match quantum mechanics? Einstein's theory of relativity describes the universe on a large scale, and quantum mechanics describes our world at an atomic level. Thus, a theory of quantum gravity would need to encompass both the atomic and universal levels. A similar example might be a theory about black holes – a black hole is created when a sufficiently heavy star expands and collapses under its own gravitational force, so that all its mass is concentrated in an extremely small volume. The quantum mechanical description of black holes is still in development.

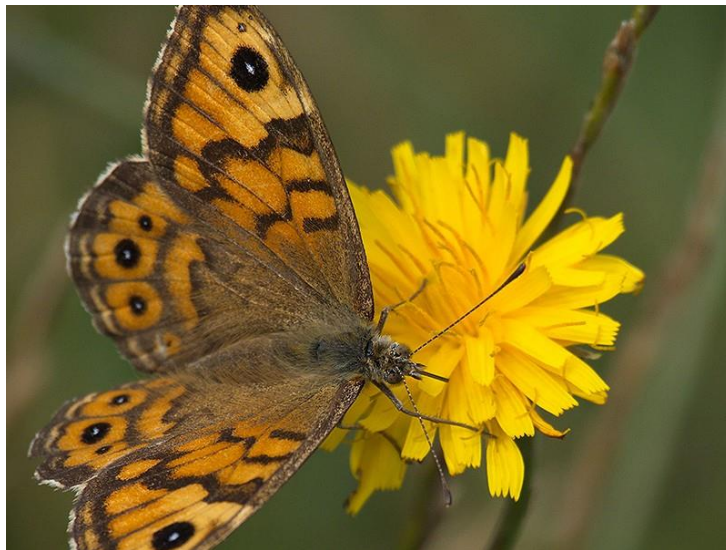


Just as everyday phenomena, namely the flow of a liquid emerges from the chaotic movements of individual droplets, gravity can be seen as an emergent phenomenon from a quantum mechanical system at the microscopic level, according to Robert Berman, Professor at the Department of Mathematical Sciences at Chalmers University of Technology. In a simplified form, this quantum gravity can be seen via the model of the [holographic principle](#).

This is where the ground slopes away a bit, but we're now in the area of study of dark energy. Here's an example of what I mean. In Einstein's general theory of relativity, gravity is described as a geometric phenomenon. Just as a newly-made bed curves under a person's weight, heavy objects can bend the geometric shape of the universe. But according to Einstein's theory, even the empty space (the vacuum state of the universe) has a rich geometric structure. If you could zoom in and look at this vacuum on a microscopic level, you would see quantum mechanical fluctuations or ripples, known as [dark energy](#). It is this mysterious form of energy that, from a larger perspective, is responsible for the accelerated expansion of the universe. These quantum energy ripples or fluctuations at a microscopic level, provide the foundation for new research into the link between Einstein's theory of relativity and quantum mechanics, in respect of the microscopic description of black holes.

Environment: Spring photos

By Sussex Wildlife Trust (Andrew Holloway)





Seasonal magick for Beltaine

By Nick the Witch

This is a Celtic fire festival, celebrated this year on 1 May, which is symbolic of the start of summer. It is known as Beltaine, but also as Calen Mai or Bealtaine. For the Saxons, Beltaine was the time to move the sheep to the upland pastures. The Calen Mai is a Welsh term that refers to the calends of May, traditionally marked by the flowering of hawthorn blossoms. In Ireland, the fires of Tara were the first ones lit every year at Beltaine and all other fires were lit with a flame from Tara.

The festival of Beltaine has a tradition of maypoles, dances, bonfires and offerings to the gods. In rural areas, cattle were driven through the smoke of the balefires, blessed with health and fertility for the coming year. For many Celts in England and Wales, Beltaine was a time of handfasting for the god, Cernunnos, and his bride, Ceridwyn (or Cernunnos and Brighid in Ireland). While the Irish-Gaelic word for May is Bealtaine, the literal translation is *bright or brilliant fire*, derived from the bonfires lit in honour of Bel, the god of light, fire, and healing.

Some Wiccan pathways support a symbolic battle between the May Queen and the Queen of Winter at Beltaine. Other pagans include maypoles, decorated with green and yellow ribbons, in their Beltaine rituals and they dance around the pole in ever-complex patterns. Other pagan practices at Beltaine include spring flower magick, planting of seeds, færy magick and spirit communication. As at Samhain, Beltaine is seen as a time when the veil between worlds is thinner and you could plant a tree or shrub as remembrance for an ancestor.



Here are some ideas for **celebrating Beltaine**, either at home or in an online group.

- Build a sacred fire outside, e.g. in a fire pit.
- Chant or sing Beltaine songs.
- Make a spring crown of flowers.
- Make a basket of spring flowers.
- Weave or braid natural plants like willow, long grass or ivy into pentacles.
- Contact spirits of those who have passed over.
- Creative visualisation of your soul and its dreams, blooming like colourful flowers.

We have come together this day as our ancestors did before us, to celebrate the festival of Beltaine, to welcome in the summer and to ask that it be once again a fruitful time in which to grow our harvest for the year. For the Saxons, this was the Feast of Summer when flocks were moved to the upland pastures and people made ready for the growth of crops. April was a time of fertility for new life in the earth and its people. For many Celts in England and Wales, Beltaine was a time of handfasting for Cernunnos and Ceridwen.

Incense for Beltaine

As we're just approaching Beltaine (1 May 2022), perhaps it would be a nice idea to have some altar 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, fruit, resins, etc. 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, e.g. 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 fruit, flowers, dry herbs last. Traditional incense for Beltaine includes:

- Jasmine
- Patchouli
- Frankincense
- Rose
- Peach
- Vanilla
- Ylang ylang

Am Beannachadh Bealltain (The Beltane Blessing)

*Bless, O threefold true and bountiful,
Myself, my spouse, my children.
Bless everything within my dwelling and in my possession,
Bless the kine and crops, the flocks and corn,
From Samhain Eve to Beltane Eve,
With goodly progress and gentle blessing,
From sea to sea, and every river mouth,
From wave to wave, and base of waterfall.*

*Be the Maiden, Mother, and Crone,
Taking possession of all to me belonging.
Be the Horned God, the Wild Spirit of the Forest,
Protecting me in truth and honour.
Satisfy my soul and shield my loved ones,
Blessing everything and everyone,
All my land and my surroundings.
Great gods who create and bring life to all,
I ask for your blessings on this day of fire.*

Poetry: Rose petal reflections

By Nicola Ison

Editor's note: a new collection of Nicola's poetry, **Gra, Dhraiocht na Cairdeas**, has been published on the **Gylden Fellowship** website, www.gyldenfellowship.co.uk, and is free to download. The title loosely translates from the Gaelic as **Love, Magick and Friendship**, but the poetry is in English!

I sip my rose petal tea and let my mind drift,
 On a calming wave of serenity.
 The memories flood back from earlier in the year,
 When all was confusion and darkness.

Panic and bewilderment fought a constant battle,
 With loneliness, pain and despair.
 And then, like a colourful springtime flower,
 Help arrived in the form of kindness and concern.

I remember sunny meetings in a country churchyard,
 As companions, we talked and gazed upon peace –
 Lambs in the field, scented plants and diet coke.

All around us, the headstones showed another peace,
 But you, my friend, stopped me from joining them,
 Far too early, now I reflect with my tea.

And, perhaps, I should share this with you alone –
 It needs repeating, because you don't really believe.
 Your spirit is so kind and you have an inner beauty,
 That shines out like a radiance for all to see.

As I gaze idly on autumnal colours in the garden,
 I feel I should have had a photo or two of that,
 Peaceful country churchyard and of you too.
 But my memories are clear and comfort me,

When the dark times appear now and then.
 Occasionally, I say online that I'm thinking of you,
 Sending blessings or healing for you, but really,
 It's a peaceful country churchyard that has a place,
 In my soul and, always, you join me there too.

The Wonderful



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Strange metals - part 1

By Mark Sharpen

Having written earlier about quantum gravity, I was reflecting that I'd cover something a little different – strange metals and the quantum speed limit.

As with much research into quantum phenomena, new principles arise constantly. With respect to the category of superconducting materials, there's a growing belief among physicists that an unknown principle governs the collective behaviour of particles and determines how they spread energy and information. Experimental results in 2018 from the [University of Sherbrooke in Canada and the National Laboratory for Intense Magnetic Fields \(LNCMI\)](#) in France, indicate that electrons inside a variety of ceramic crystals called **cuprates** seem to dissipate energy as quickly as possible, apparently bumping up against a fundamental quantum speed limit. Past studies in 2013, found that other exotic superconducting compounds (such as strontium ruthenates or pnictides) also burn energy at what appears to be a maximum allowed rate.

This speed limit is linked to the numerical value of Planck's constant, the fundamental quantity of quantum mechanics representing the smallest possible action that can be taken in nature. This energy-burning behaviour occurs when the cuprates and other exotic compounds are **in a strange metal phase**, in which they resist the flow of electricity more than conventional metals. But when they're cooled to a critical temperature, these strange metals transform into perfect, lossless conductors of electricity. Physicists have been struggling for 32 years to understand and control this powerful form of superconductivity, and the behaviour of electrons in the preceding strange-metal phase is increasingly seen as a key part of the story.

Exactly what electrons, the carriers of electricity, are doing in strange metals isn't known. But experts believe that they may be organising themselves into a chaotic quantum state, in which the properties of each electron depend on those of every other. This state of maximum chaos might allow the electrons to scatter off one another and spread energy as quickly as the laws of quantum permit.

This chaotic state is quantum strangeness in the extreme. In the 1930s, Albert Einstein bristled at the idea of two particles becoming entangled, with properties that stay interdependent even after the particles have travelled far apart, but the recent experiments indicate a pioneering entanglement of millions of electrons leading to a whole state of matter.

The study of strange metals and superconductivity is not new. In 1986, scientists at IBM Research Zurich created a new cuprate of lanthanum, barium, copper and oxygen atoms. When cooled, its electrical resistance decreased linearly with the falling temperature, so that when plotted it formed a downward-trending straight line. For conventional materials, this relationship forms a more complicated curve. Other labs soon discovered cuprates and other compounds that superconducted at even higher temperatures. Since then, physicists have dreamed of finding or synthesising materials that superconduct electricity all the way up to room temperature. Such materials could make human electrical infrastructure vastly more efficient and could power magnetically levitating vehicles, revolutionising the way we live.

I'll leave this theory here until next month, because there's lots to say about recent research, but this is the foundation.

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

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Our website: www.gyldenfellowship.co.uk

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