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Gylden Magick

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Feb. 2021

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 February (the [Snow Moon](#)) – I've been reflecting on love and new projects. Let's start with love. Of course, it's the [Feast of St Valentine](#) on 14 February, but also the Roman festival of [Lupercalia](#) on 15 February – more about this one later. Altar colours at this time are white, pink and rose, with Brighid crosses or dolls to adorn.

On the topic of love though, it's not just romantic love – the Ancient Greeks defined 7 different types of love, eg eros (most like modern romantic love), philia (love between friends), storge (love of family), agape (altruism), ludus (flirting),

pragma (practical or arranged marriages) and philautia (self-love or hubris). More on this topic in our new feature on page 5.

Imbolg offers the opportunity for planning new projects, while the winter rages outside. And we're in lockdown too until Ostara at least – this is a good time for dreaming, recharging, cups of tea and planning for the future. Nothing lasts forever, not even the pandemic.

This is a time to imagine yourself as a seed or a bulb, dormant in the soil, but ready to flower once the restrictions are lifted. And **GYLDEN MAGICK** has a host of new features to come this year, planned by the admins.

One thing to note is that Gylden HQ has moved its base – still in Haslemere, but now in a place of **dhraiocht** (that's Gaelic for

enchantment or a glamour placed by the sidhe).

In past years, we would be frantic with preparations for the Enchanted Market, but not so in 2021. We look forward to the return of all the festivals, camps, fayres and markets in a post-covid world. It didn't take very long for the markets and fayres to return to medieval communities after the Black Death – there's lots of hope for our community in late 2021 and 2022.

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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Animal spirit guides: puffin

Not all animal spirit guides take the form of primary mammals like wolves, lynxes, bears or birds, eg crows. It is common to have a reptile guide or an insect one. Last month, we considered the salmon as a spirit guide – now we think about the puffin. In the first part of this series, we looked at the *Place of Meeting*. So, you've crossed into the Otherworld and a spirit comes to you in the form of a puffin – what does it symbolise?



OK then, the puffin is really a symbol of love and care, particularly for other people, eg family and friends. It's also about self-love and finding out what is important to you – you can be guided to help others find their paths. The puffin spirit guide is a symbol of altruism. Self-love is vital, but caring for others is better and if the puffin is your guide, it's most likely that you feel drawn to helping in the community. Here are **some typical attributes** of those who have the puffin as a spirit guide.

- They are empaths and are very spiritual.
- They are not the leaders in a group, but are helpers.
- They prefer working in teams and make good teachers.
- They can be stubborn.
- They are good communicators, but not extroverts.
- They express their views on strongly-felt topics.

In reality, puffins are all about **family love and protection**. They dig burrows up to 2m into the ground to protect their chicks from predators. They fly miles in search of food for their chicks. So, how can we recognise someone with a puffin spirit? Most likely they have oodles of:

- Compassion.
- Kindness and love.
- Help for others and community spirit.

Crystals: haematite

Haematite is a mineral form of iron oxide – it's fairly common and can be found in Britain. The **main healing properties of haematite** are:

- As a crystal close to the base chakra, haematite is really good for dis-eases that affect the spine. So, one can place it at the top or base of the spine, to combat inflammations.
- In fact, haematite aids with spinal alignment and fractures.
- As its name suggests, haematite restores, strengthens and regulates the blood supply, healing blood conditions such as anaemia or Reynaud's Disease. It supports the kidneys and regeneration of tissues. Also, it helps to absorb iron in the blood for the formation of red blood cells.
- Haematite can be used to treat leg cramps, anxiety and insomnia.

From a spiritual stance, haematite is believed to represent grounding and protection, with a strong connection to the earth element.

- Haematite promotes such qualities as vitality, strength and courage.
- It stimulates concentration and focus, enhancing memory and original thought.
- It dissolves negativity and prevents you from absorbing the negativity of others.
- Haematite uses the magnetic qualities of our yin and yang energies to balance and to provide a stable equilibrium between the ethereal nervous system and the physical nervous system. It focuses energy and emotions for balance between the body, mind and spirit.
- It helps to overcome compulsions and addictions, eg overeating, smoking and other addictions.



Herb of the month: chicory

Common chicory (*cichorium intybus*) has been used over the centuries for eating as well as herbal healing. In foods, chicory leaves are often eaten like celery and the roots and leaf buds are boiled and eaten. Chicory is also used as a cooking spice and to flavour foods and beverages. Some coffee mixes include ground chicory to enhance the richness of the coffee. It contains high amounts of beta-carotene.

Chicory is a plant and healers use the seeds, roots and dried, above-ground parts to make medicine. When taken by mouth in food, chicory is safe for most adults.

Chicory root extract and seed are possibly safe for most adults when taken by mouth in short-term medicinal amounts. It is worth noting that taking chicory as a medicine may cause flatulence, bloating and stomach pains.

It's not a plant that would be prescribed by a doctor, but chicory can be used for the following ailments, with the proviso that more extensive research needs to be done.

- Its main medicinal use is as a mild laxative and can ease constipation.
- Chicory increases bile from the gall-bladder. This could be a problem for people with gallstones.
- Early research shows that taking chicory seed, infused in hot water, helps with weight loss in people with NAFLD. (non-alcoholic fatty liver disease).
- For diabetics, chicory may lower blood sugar, but diabetics need to monitor themselves for signs of low blood sugar (hypoglycemia) if they have diabetes and use chicory in amounts larger than the amounts normally found in food.
- Now I think of it, if you're due to have an operation, **stop taking chicory about 2 weeks beforehand, due to the changes in blood sugar.**
- It is an anti-inflammatory herb and reduces swellings.
- **Do not use chicory if you are pregnant.** Chicory might start menstruation and cause a miscarriage. There isn't enough reliable information to know if chicory is safe to use as medicine when breast-feeding.

Recipe: Oimelc custard cream

Thinking about correspondences in and around Imbolg, a correspondence food for February is anything dairy. With that in mind, here's an easy recipe for custard cream (not the biscuit) - this recipe is a real one from a sick room in a Victorian household, eg about 1890. The recipe is estimated to make about 4 servings – now, I don't use whole milk, but I'm **guessing** that oat or rice milk could be used instead.

Ingredients

1. 15g gelatine
2. Few drops of vanilla essence
3. 50g caster sugar
4. 4 eggs
5. 550ml milk.
6. Boiling water.

Method

1. Beat the eggs together in a heatproof bowl.
2. Heat the milk to boiling.
3. Pour it onto the eggs, beating well all the time.
4. Put the bowl over a saucepan of simmering water.
5. Stir occasionally and leave to cook until the custard covers the spoon.
6. Sprinkle in the gelatine and stir until dissolved.
7. Stir in the sugar and vanilla essence.
8. Take the bowl off the heat and leave to cool, but not set.
9. Pour the custard into a mould (825ml) and leave to set.

Serve when it is set – it's an easy dish for someone who cannot chew much or has problems swallowing.



Gylden Circle of Kindness

By Gylden Fellowship

When we first started Pagans of the Gylden River, one of the founders described it as a big circle of pagans all holding hands. That concept hasn't gone away with the advent of coronavirus. Just because there's fewer actual meetings or rituals (and even those have social distancing), doesn't mean that we can't still stay in touch with each other, on Facebook, zoom or other social media or via the Gylden network.

Quite a few moots have made the transfer to skype or zoom well, although not every member can use such platforms. Other groups have chosen to become Facebook moots with lots of memes, articles, photos, etc. Rather than holding hands, we're now in a world of virtual hugs and likes.



Still, we thought it would be a nice idea to introduce a new feature to **GYLDEN MAGICK** – the **Gylden Circle of Kindness**. Harking back to the original concept, the values are those on which our community is based, namely compassion, kindness, love and generosity. Just like all those different types of love in the editorial this month, the **Gylden Circle of Kindness** is based on storge (love of family) and agape (altruism or spiritual love).

And we need your feedback – yes, that means YOU. We are the Gylden family and we want to hear about stories of kindness from you...that's if someone has done something kind for you or one of your family in recent weeks. And yes, your pets are part of your family too.

What we'll do is to acknowledge these acts of kindness, if only to remind everyone that a kind word or thoughtful deed can make all the difference to someone sunk in the depths of covid-despair. On a personal note, 2020 was a car-crash of a year for me and it was only through the kindness of a few close friends that I'm writing this text – you may feel the same about someone or something. Let us know via email and we'll give credit to these heroes of kindness in future months. Email addresses are on our website, www.gyldenfellowship.co.uk.

Gylden
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Feb. 2021

Clare Coombes - contact: @Coombes.Crafts

Coombes Crafts is a small family run craft business making a selection of pagan and non-pagan themed gifts such as hand-painted glass and porcelain, plaster plaques, wirework jewellery, wands, dreamcatchers and a selection of handmade greetings cards.





Cosmic energies: teleportation

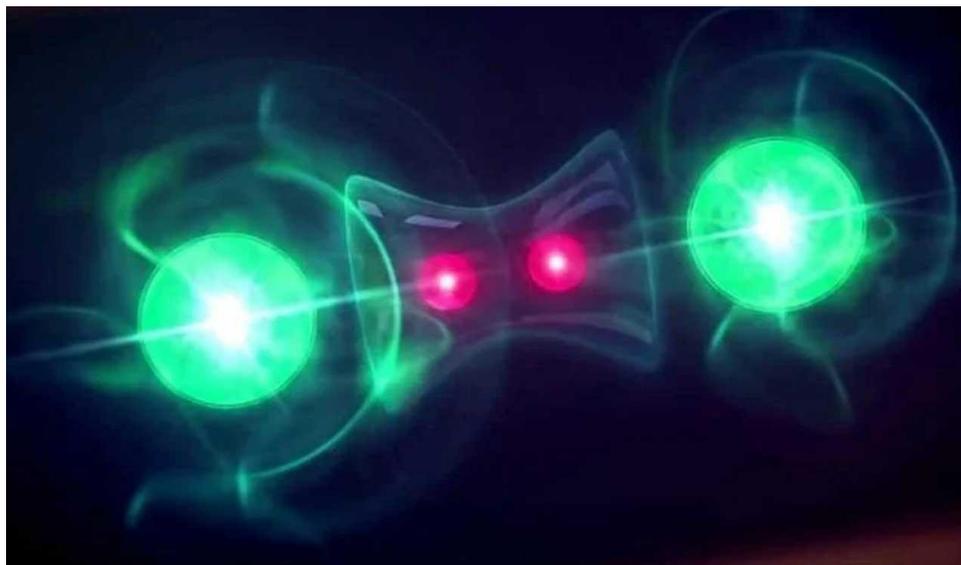
By Mark Sharpen

By rights, this piece should start with "Beam me up, Scotty", but we're not really introducing teleportation in that sense yet – it's closer to the transmat device in Doctor Who. And we're not in the realms of science fiction either. What I'm going to do here is to give a brief overview of a concept known as **quantum tunnelling**, namely the movement of quantum particles when confronted by material barriers.

Quantum particles are a long way from transporting people over distance, but it's a first step. As an analogy, if you were out walking and came to an obstacle that you couldn't climb over or go around, the answer might be to turn back and choose another path. However, imagine yourself as an atom or electron and another possibility exists: quantum tunnelling through the obstacle. It's not a new idea, because some electronic chips contain tunnel diodes that permit electricity to flow in only one direction.

The problem for quantum science was actually observing and measuring such tunnelling in practice. A magnetic clock-type of device proved ineffective and some scientists theorised that the quantum particles were transported instantly through the barrier, but there was no proof - until comparatively recently (reported in full in July 2020). The experiment took place at the Quantum Information Science Program at the Canadian Institute for Advanced Research in Toronto.

I'll try to be non-technical when describing the basic experimental methods. All subatomic particles have magnetic properties. When magnets are in an external magnetic field, they rotate and the amount of rotation (known as **precession**) depends on how long that particle is within that magnetic field. So, the scientists used a magnetic field to form their barrier. When particles are inside the barrier, they rotate (precess). Outside it, they don't - measuring how long the particles rotate told the researchers how long those atoms took to tunnel through the barrier.



The scientists amassed some 8000 atoms of rubidium, cooled them to a billionth of a degree above absolute zero. The atoms needed to be at this temperature or they would have moved around randomly at high speeds, rather than staying in a small clump. A laser was used to create the magnetic barrier – it was focused so that the barrier was 1.3 micrometres (microns) thick (that's the thickness of about 2500 rubidium atoms). Using another laser, the scientists nudged the atoms of rubidium toward the barrier, moving them about 0.15 inches per second (4 millimetres/second).

As theorised in advance, most of the rubidium atoms bounced off the barrier. This did not apply to all the atoms however. Due to the quantum tunnelling, about 3% of the atoms penetrated the barrier and appeared on the other side. Based on the rotation of those atoms, it took them about 0.6 milliseconds to tunnel through the barrier. As I said earlier, we're a long way off transporting organic objects, but it's a breakthrough on the long road to teleportation.

From the Grimoire: Goddess spells

By Nick the Witch

Note: my spells and blessings involve Brighid, but do include your own goddess in the spells. The first one is apt for Imbolg, as it includes a candle and, also, haematite (our crystal of the month)...it is designed for a better memory and should be cast during a waning moon.

What you will need: a black tumbled crystal (eg haematite, jet or tourmaline), a tea light and holder, a small piece of paper and 3 rosemary sprigs.

1. Write your problem (lack of memory) on a small piece of paper.
2. Take it to a moonlit windowsill and anchor it with the crystal.
3. Put the tealight in its holder nearby and light it.
4. Make a circle of rosemary sprigs around all the items.
5. Chant three times:
6. "O Brighid, queen of the moonlight,
Boost my powers of memory tonight,
Help me lose my forgetfulness,
Keeping my thoughts bright and fresh.
Let my remembrance be detailed and free,
As above, so below, so mote it be."

This next one reflects the Festival of Shiva on 24 February. Shiva is a moon goddess and the spell creates Goddess moon water.

What you will need: a glass bowl, silver or white paint, spring water, a round silver or white floating candle and a lighter or matches.

1. The best time for this spell is during a full moon.
2. Paint a full moon on the outside base of the bowl.
3. Put the bowl in a place where the full moon will shine on it.
4. Fill the bowl with spring water.
5. Put the floating candle in the bowl and light it.
6. Chant these words,
"Blessed shall be this sacred water,
A gift from the river and sea.
Now made pure by your moonlight,
To bring out peace and harmony".
7. Leave the candle to burn out.
8. At dawn, take out the candle and pour the water from the bowl into a corked or stoppered bottle – the water can be used in future blessings or spells.

Celestial notes

By Joanna Bristow-Watkins

As mentioned in the December 2020 issue, we are very pleased to welcome **Joanna Bristow-Watkins** as one of our new contributors for **GYLDEN MAGICK** in 2021 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. It should be noted that many of the training events are online at present – all details on Joanna's website.



Joanna is a Reyad Sekh Em® Egyptian Alchemy Healer and Teaching Mentor. We also have [meditations](#) available and a number of virtual courses including [Reyad Sekh Em \(RSE\) Egyptian Alchemy Healing Level 1](#) (which is now fully available as interactive training modules) and a [monthly virtual healing circle](#) - details on [Harmony Healing Virtual Events](#). Joanna also offers [distant intuitive readings \(past life and/or aura readings\)](#) and [distant 1-2-1 healings](#) and runs various [Meet-up groups in London and Surrey](#) and the [London & Surrey Alchemists Facebook Group](#) and posts regularly on [Instagram](#) and [Linked-In](#). [Harmony Healing Gift Vouchers](#) are available.

These monthly Celestial Forecasts (CF) are generally uploaded to the Harmony Healing website 2-3 months ahead and can be accessed via the drop-down box on the right. They are sent out to the main mailing list and CF subscribers a few days before the month starts

Monday 1 February & Tuesday 2 February is the Imbolc Ceremony, which is one of the four Great Celtic Festivals, and a Wiccan and Druid Festival of Fertility and Growing Light. The celebration is also known as Candlemas, while Imbolc (pronounced EE-molk) predates Candlemas and is the old Celtic word (*see also our sabbat info on the [Gylden Fellowship website](#)*).

It is sacred to the Goddess Brigit (also known as Brigid or Bridie), ushering in the power of the new moon, the Spring of the year, the flowing sea, and the Great Moon Mother - Patroness of Poetry Making and Healing. The tradition of corn dollies started with Imbolc. Brigit is a triple Goddess, so she can be honoured in all her aspects: she is associated with fire, fertility, midwifery and the young.

The Imbolc Festival marks the passing of Winter and the first signs of Spring, with the emergence of new leaves and early flowers such as the snowdrop and crocus, as well as being the transition point of the threefold Goddess energies from those of the Crone to the Maiden.

Imbolc is a Fire Festival, and it is traditional, at sunset, to briefly light every light in the house or light candles in each room to celebrate the return of the sun. If it's been snowing, take time to enjoy walking in the snow, draw an image of the sun into the snow and reflect on the sun's warmth.

Traditional foods for Imbolc include anything dairy, including sour cream, as the festival celebrated the calving season. Spicy and rich foods, such as curry or anything made with peppers, leeks, onion, chives and/or garlic are appropriate to celebrate the sun, together with mulled wine and anything containing raisins, which also represent the sun. As a festival of fire, which can burn away what no longer serves, Imbolc is a good time to clear clutter, look deep into the flames and meditate on what you want to achieve this year and ask Brigit's help in making it happen.

Wednesday 3 February is Setsubun, Bean-Throwing Festival, which is the day before the beginning of Spring in Japan. The name literally means "seasonal division", but usually the term refers to the Spring. Setsubun, celebrated yearly on 2 or 3 February, is part of the Spring Festival. It is accompanied by a special ritual to cleanse away all the evil of the former year and drive away disease-bringing evil spirits or naughty ogres or spirits called 'Oni' for the year to come.



Why bean throwing? Families celebrate by scattering roasted soybeans outside the door of their house to chase out the Oni (naughty ogres or spirits). They may also throw soybeans at a member of the family dressed as an Oni. If lockdown life is getting you all a bit stir-crazy, maybe chucking beans at each other is a good way to let off some steam!

Thursday 11 February is New Moon @ 19.05. 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 [YouTube Page](#). It is a good day for creating a personal or corporate [Vision Board](#) for the remainder of 2021.

Friday 12 February is the Chinese New Year. Following the New Moon on the 11 February, it will be the end of the Year of the Metal Rat and the start of the Year of the Metal Ox, which will last until Sunday 30 January 2022. According to the Chinese Zodiac, 2021 is more of a lucky year for men and women born in the Year of the Ox, the Year of the Snake, the Year of the Rooster, and the Year of the Rat. The Chinese calendar rotates through 60-year cycles based on 12 earthly branches, each represented by an animal year, as well as five element years which are wood, fire, earth, metal and water. 2020 was the Year of the Metal Rat and 2021 is the Year of the Metal Ox. Each earthly branch is characterised, on a deeper level, by a yin or yang force and its own element.

In the Year of the Rat, the force was the active, fast and hard, masculine yang energy whilst its element was water, known for being in constant flux. The ox's earthly branch, in contrast, carries yin energy, which is feminine energy that is passive, soft and slow. Its element is earth, represents stability and nurturing. It is believed these characteristics of the ox and its associated energies have positive and favourable synergy. The sign of the Ox is the second animal of the Chinese zodiac and represents hard work, positivity and honesty that will be manifested in all of us in the coming 12 months, according to astrologers. In order, the 12 zodiac animals are: Rat, Ox, Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Goat, Monkey, Rooster, Dog, and Pig.

Sunday 14 February is Valentine's Day and is all about love and compassion, which includes Universal Love for all other living things and also self-love, which is so often overlooked. Some bitterly refer to it as Singles Awareness Day and blame card manufacturers and our materialistic society for love being ritualistically forced upon us every year at this time.

This year, let's take it as an opportunity for a little extra self-care and self-love, pausing to reflect on who we are grateful for. That doesn't have to be a romantic partner, there will be others that you love, or who love you, including mother earth (despite us being unruly children). Pause also to send love to those you think may be in need.

Folklore indicates that Valentine was a priest during the third century in Rome. Emperor Claudius II outlawed marriage as he believed that single men made better soldiers than those with wives and families. Valentine, however, defied Claudius and continued to perform marriages in secret. Claudius found out and Valentine was imprisoned, where one version of the legend indicates he befriended a jailer with a blind daughter and he may have somehow managed to restore her sight, resulting in the jailer converting to Christianity. Claudius ordered that Valentine be executed on 14 February and allegedly before his death sentence was carried out, he sent a note to the jailer's daughter and signed it, "From Your Valentine." Hence Valentine's Day is celebrated in his memory.

However, his death day and his association with lovers and notes may have been convenient for Roman Christians looking for ways to blend existing Pagan/Roman celebrations into their Calendar - **15 February is Lupercalia in Ancient Roman tradition**. Apparently, this was the popular ceremony of fertility, featuring naked men running through the street! Roman images show men dressed as dogs (or possibly wolves since Lupus meant wolf) and goats, Cupid and other personifications of fertility.

Lenten festivals: the days leading up to and into Lent are Collop Monday, Shrove Tuesday, Ash Wednesday, Fritter Thursday and Kissing Friday.

1. **Monday 15 February is Collop Monday.** Collops are pieces of fried or roasted meat, eg fried bacon.
2. **Tuesday 16 February is Mardi Gras, also known as Shrove Tuesday or Pancake Day.** Being the final day before Lent, this was traditionally a day for confessing sins and using up all the foods banned during the Lenten fast. With pancakes containing butter and milk, they became associated with the date. The verb, to *shrive*, means to gain absolution for one's sins through confession and/or penance. Hence, Shrove Tuesday is derived from the tradition that Christians were shriven before Lent. The date of Lent - which takes place in either February or March, but always seven weeks before Easter - varies from year to year according to the lunar calendar which determines when Easter falls.
3. **Wednesday 17 February is Ash Wednesday,** which is generally said to have been named after the tradition of burning away old issues in preparation for Lent. It's interesting that this again has parallels in other belief systems of burning away what no longer serves. Ash Wednesday could also have obtained its name from an apparent tradition of placing a stick of ash down one's sock for good luck.
4. **Thursday 18 February is Fritter Thursday.**
5. **Friday 19 is Kissing Friday.** From what I can find out, this started out as a day of unsolicited kisses not being met with the usual slap! This day is also the **Moon Lodge Healing Women's Circle**, 7-8.30pm GMT, £11 + Eventbrite fee = £11.27. Run by Harmony Healing collaborator, Sarah Jane Dennis, this is a sacred circle for women in the community to come together as we once did, to connect in a safe and loving space to the energies of the moon and our own cycles. Contact Sarah jane on apriestesspath@gmail.com. Talk, support, heal, celebrate, and hold each other. It's a virtual event on Zoom. Book at [Eventbrite](#).



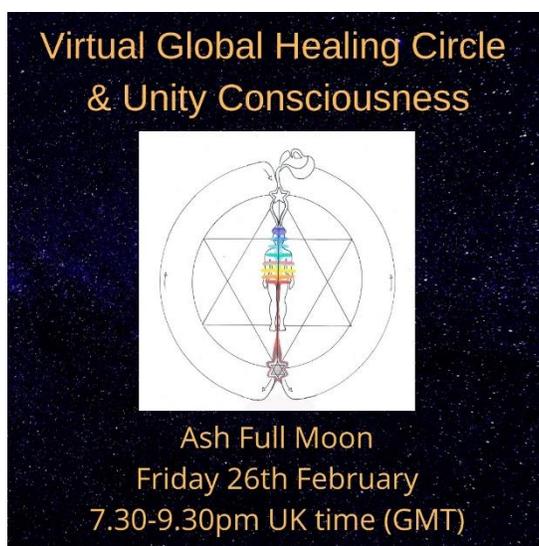
Caristia

A TIME OF RECONCILIATION
&
THE LOVE OF FAMILY

Monday 22 February is the Roman Festival of Caristia. This was a Feast Day occasion of family reunion, when Roman fathers would pay special attention to their families. It was a day of reconciliation, when disagreements were to be set aside, but the satirical poet Ovid apparently suggested this would be best achieved by excluding family members who caused trouble! Families gathered together to dine and offer food and incense to the Guardian Deities, collectively known as Lares.

Unity Meditation takes place on Friday 26 February, 7.30-9.30pm UK time (GMT) it is the [Harmony Healing Full Moon Virtual Healing Circle](#). This is the closest evening to the Full Moon on the following morning. Participants all receive a deeply healing experience. Cost to participate is £11 by Paypal (£10 by online BACS payment).

During these monthly sessions, 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. This activity serves as a good taster of my work in general and the virtual format of our Zoom-based programme. And, most importantly, it's a step towards making a difference to the global predicament. To find out how working on your own spiritual consciousness can help humanity and the planet by raising the overall human consciousness levels, see my YouTube explanation.



Saturday 27 February @ 08.17 is the Ash Full Moon. Between Full Moon and the next New Moon is considered as a good time energetically for detoxing the body.

Forest Bathing+ 2021: while my events are on hold for now, I will be back in the forest as soon as regulations allow, to help people reconnect with nature and themselves. Join us on a mindful, sensory journey through the beautiful woodland at Harry Edwards Healing Sanctuary, deep in the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Forest Bathing+ is based on the Japanese art of Shinrin-Yoku and involves a slow exploration of nature through your senses. Not only is this calming and relaxing but it also has well documented therapeutic benefits, including stress reduction. Cost is £25 + Eventbrite booking fee = £27.54. This is a 2-hour Winter Forest Bathing+ session which will take place in all weathers except 30+mph winds. These sessions meet the current government guidelines (or will be cancelled if UK lockdown is extended) and are exempt from 6 person restrictions; we are keeping numbers at 10 participants plus guide(s) to allow for adequate social distancing. [More on Forest Bathing+ on Harmony Healing website.](#)

Celestial Forecast is compiled by Joanna Bristow-Watkins of Harmony Healing, the original is published at Joanna's [Monthly Celestial Forecasts](#). It is created using many sources but notably the [Moonwise Calendar](#) and Lia Leendertz's 2021 Almanac. Whilst considerable effort is made to ensure accuracy, this is not an exact science and sources are sometimes contradictory!

Tales for spring evenings: The Mermaid's Comb

By the Storyteller

As we pass Imbolg, the evenings are a little lighter. So, we'll move away from the ghostly stories and have a few brighter ones, starting with a Cornish tale.

An old man from Cury (Cornwall) was walking along the seashore when he encountered a mermaid. She was sitting on a rock arranging her hair, and had not heard the old man approach. The tide had gone out, but there was a large pool of water next to the rock which she used as a mirror.

The old man watched her for a moment and then decided to speak. As soon as the mermaid heard his voice, she slid off the rock and into the pool. The old man tried to talk to her but the mermaid was terrified and tried to avoid him. She could not escape to the sea, because the tide was now out. The old man spoke in a soft, reassuring voice and, at last, she answered him. She was crying and begged him to leave. "I cannot," said the man, "It is not every day that I meet a merrymaid." He continued to speak to her gently and asked how she came to be on the rock.



The mermaid replied that she and her merman husband and her two mer-children had been out swimming in the ocean all day. Her husband had tired and went to rest in a small cave, while her children played in the waves, but the mermaid had been lured on to the rock by the smell of the spring flowers. Once there she had begun dressing her hair. She had not realised the danger until she heard a mortal speak to her.

"My husband is very cruel," she said, "When he wakes, he will be hungry and, if there is no food around, he may eat the children." Then she asked the old man to carry her to the sea, offering him three wishes if he would do so. The old man agreed to her plea, but said "I will not wish for riches or gold, but for the power to help others. I would like to be able to break the curses of demons, cure disease and recover the things stolen by thieves."

The mermaid agreed to his wishes and the man carried her on his back to the sea. Once in the water, she gave him her comb, and told him to come to a rock near the ocean in a few days and use it to comb the water and call her. She would appear immediately whenever he called; then she dived into the water and disappeared.

Some days later, the old man combed the waters as the mermaid had said. She appeared and began to show him how to achieve his wishes – he learned charms to cure diseases, to find stolen goods and to break curses. He did many good things with this knowledge and his family prospered. He passed the secrets down to his children, along with the mermaid's comb, which they have to this day.

Environment: the Maelor Oaks

By Fellowship of the Trees

One of the groups that Gylden Fellowship follows and supports is Fellowship of the Trees. Last year, this group ran a campaign to rehome 1000 oak trees from Maelor Forest Nurseries. The campaign was organised following a report in the *Times* that thousands of two-year old native oak trees, if not bought, would be burned or mulched into the ground by Maelor Forest Nurseries. **Luciana Lippi and Andy Egan** from Fellowship of the Trees set about stopping this act and starting an immediate fundraiser. In their words...

We felt compelled to try and raise funds to (at least) become a guardian of a thousand trees until next planting season, which started in November 2020, as the oaks are two years old. We felt that it would be a waste of the time, effort and also their offering to our environment for them to be mulched. Aware that buying the oaks was the easy part, finding somewhere and who especially during lockdown was able to help with potting each sapling and nurturing the 1000 trees until they are to become part of a new woodland planting ceremony next season.

*As part of the Fellowship of the Trees organisation, we came together to raise funds to reach the monetary target to save some of the oaks and give them the opportunity to grow into beautiful old oaks which will benefit future generations and our planet. To be fair, **Maelor Forest Nurseries** said on their Facebook page : "We are extremely keen to see them be planted rather than mulched into the ground. These trees were grown in all good faith based on Government tree planting promises that never materialised".*

Putting feelers out for land and guardians to tend the 1000 oaks, a community based in Somerset stepped forward to:

- *welcome the young oaks.*
- *pot them as they were bare-rooted .*
- *tend and nurture the saplings until November.*

These sapling were part of a planting scheme at the start of next season which wil continue the increase in tree coverage within the UK. Maelor Forest Nurseries required £300 to pay for the 1000 saplings, VAT and delivery - the other costs include biodegradable pots/bags and compost for each sapling including to help pay for the water consumption they required during the summer and autumn months.

In early 2021, the first 1000 saplings have been rehomed throughout the UK. Another 1000 saplings will be delivered to their new homes in February 2021. These new homes include:

- *Families planting within their own lands.*
- *Heritage woodlands being regenerated.*
- *Groups coming together to extend existing woodlands.*
- *Local schools planted the saplings in an area where ash die back has reduced tree coverage to 4%.*

Each tree planted will be tended & cared for, including being watered when needed especially in the next 3-5 years. Knowing that these native oaks which support a larger diverse number of other species, in years to come they will mature and produce acorns (can take circa 40 years), themselves in turn to grow into their own saplings. These beautiful majestic oaks in our landscape will guide and support for many generations to come.

Witchcraft history: Matthew Hopkins

By Gylden Fellowship

In 1590, the *Malleus Maleficarum* (see also *GYLDEN MAGICK for November 2020*) was reinforced by a work written by James I of England - *Dæmonologie*, which set out ways of identifying witches by physical marks of demonic origin. The king used parts of the *Malleus Maleficarum* for his work, also a quote from Exodus 22 and his own dreams or advice from courtiers – loads of good quantitative facts – but he was the king and people believed in the divine right of kings.

What happened next, as they say, was the introduction of the **Witchcraft Act 1604**, i.e. a year on from James I becoming king in England. The strap-line (if you like) to the 1604 Act was to forbid, “*Conjuration, Witchcraft and dealing with evil and wicked spirits*”

It was this law that gave the mandate to the so-called Witchfinder-General, Matthew Hopkins (see below), but it is important to note that the two acts (1563 and 1604) made witchcraft into a crime. One legacy, then, was that accused witches could be tried in normal courts rather than ecclesiastical courts and burning at the stake was not a usual sentence here – though you could still be burned at the stake if you were convicted of witchcraft and treason. However, most convicted witches were put to death by hanging after 1604. Minor witchcraft sentences involved a short time in prison for a first offence and hanging for a repeat offence.

So now, we move onto the infamous period of 1645-46 and the activities of Matthew Hopkins. Much of his activities took place in East Anglia, where people were anti-Catholic and strongly Puritan. Hopkins was a failed lawyer who appointed himself as Witchfinder-General and investigated all accusations of witchcraft in the region. Starting in Essex and Suffolk, he was responsible for 68 trials ending in death for the accused witches in Bury St Edmunds and 19 deaths in Chelmsford. Then, he moved his operations north – his MO was to:

- Listen to gossip about possible witches.
- Arrest the accused.
- Use torture for confessions.
- Have rigged show trials.
- Ensure death sentences ensued.

Much of his evidence depended upon the discovery of the demonic marks and a series of tests to determine witchcraft. An example included a jabbing needle to see if a wart or mole was insensitive to pain (the needle could be retracted into the handle during the torture, so no pain was inflicted) – guilty as charged! Another test was to tie up the accused and throw the victim into a river – drowning proved innocence and floating proved guilt.

Think on this fact – in 1646, the average daily pay was nine pence. The local authority in Aldeburgh paid Hopkins £6 for clearing the town of witches. In Kings Lynn, he received £15 for the same job and £23 from Stowmarket. In Great Yarmouth, Hopkins brought 16 suspected witches to trial and 5 of them were sentenced to death.

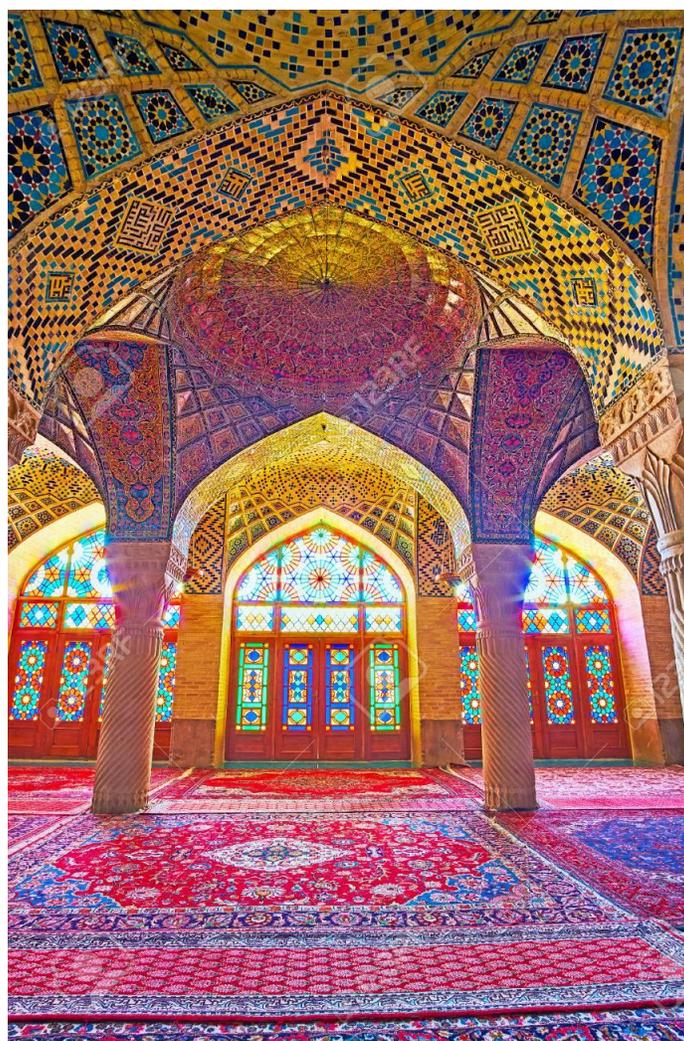
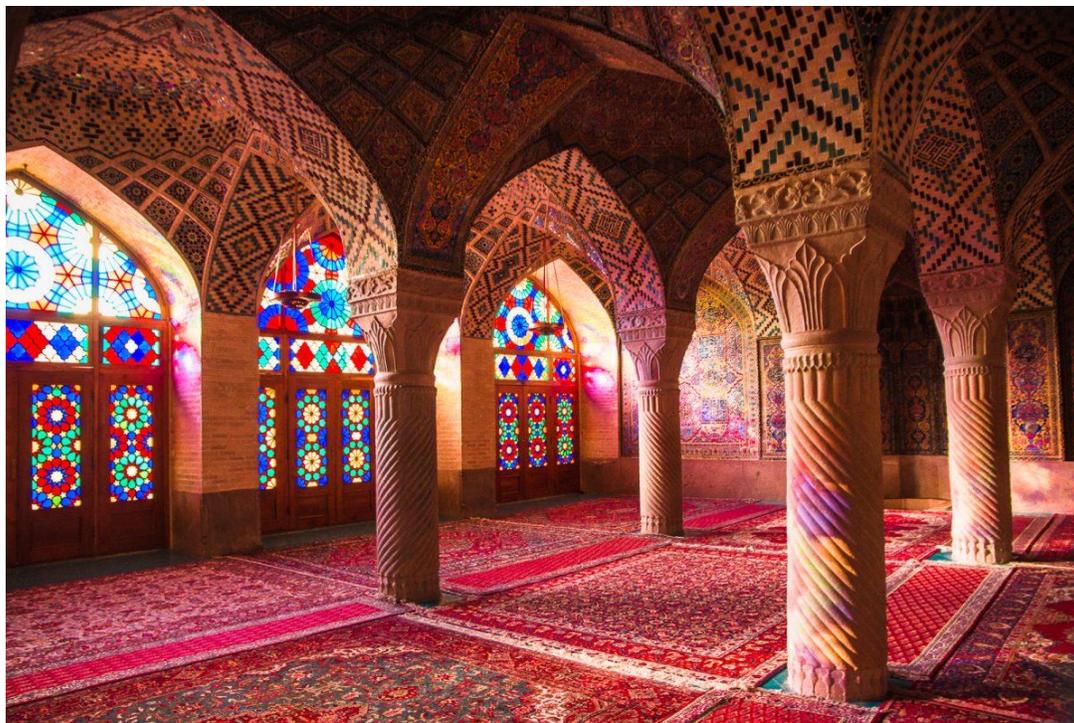
Hopkins died in 1647, having made a good living from witch-finding and after bringing some 300 witch trials that had led to the deaths of 100 or so victims. In fact, estimates of the number of witches put to death in England are about 400 – 90% of them were women – and Hopkins was responsible for over a quarter of the total.

Sacred art: Iran's Pink Mosque

Pictures collated from mixed sources by the Fellowship & Fairydust Community. Gylden Fellowship is grateful to Avellina Balestri for granting us permission to use these pictures.

So, here's a new series for **GYLDEN MAGICK** for 2021, which is to look at different faiths and cultures, both past and present. We'll cover Celtic druidic art, but also many others and we're starting in Iran with the **Nasir al-Mulk Mosque**, also known as the Pink Mosque. It was built between 1876-1888 and is located near Shiraz. That's probably enough, but we'd like to draw your attention to the wonderful Orsi stained glass.





A Witch's Herbal - women's health

By Nick the Witch

We did promise some new features and series in **GYLDEN MAGICK**, as we continue our third year of publication and here's one – we continue with our regular herb of the month, but this feature looks at common ailments and suggests some easy herbal remedies, both for internal and external applications. Last month, we looked at first aid and emergency remedies – this month, it's all about helping the ladies with period pains, menopausal issues and vaginal dis-ease.

I've also added a few notes for herbs that are dangerous for the pregnant, but we'll look at pregnancy in more detail in next month's issue. Many herbs that help with PMS or painful periods have the opposing effect on pregnant women – namely, they'll bring a pregnancy to an abrupt stop. For example, black cohosh can be mixed with sage as a tincture to relax the uterus during the menopause, but that's not so good during a pregnancy. Here's a short list of key herbs – a lot of these are best used as antidotes to painful periods...if you consult our **GYLDEN MAGICK** indexes in the August 2020 issue, you'll be able to see which issue has more detail on specific herbs.

- **Vervain:** any part of the plant can be used above the soil, but the roots should be avoided. Vervain has been used for many centuries for different ailments – it was used in Ancient Greece, also by the Aztecs and by First Nation tribes too. Most commonly, vervain is taken as an infusion or as a tincture, but **it should be avoided by those who are lactating or pregnant.**
- **Rose petals:** these are best used as an infusion and have a calming effect. I keep a large jar of rose petals in my herb locker, to mix with chamomile for a soothing tea...it's good for headaches. Rose essential or macerated oil is used quite a lot for vaginal problems or dryness.
- **Lady's mantle:** well, as the name suggests, this one is for those who have painful or heavy periods. It's best as an infusion several times daily, but can be mixed with raspberry leaves, for example. Incidentally, if you make a macerated oil from lady's mantle and let it cool – you can bathe your vagina with it against thrush or other such dis-eases
- **Chamomile:** this has an antiseptic property for lots of health issues. Chamomile tincture or infusion is well-known for its calming effect, particularly for those who have bad periods or stress. It has a similar effect to lady's mantle when made into a macerated oil.
- **Yarrow and calendula:** an infusion for calming PMS. You can mix in vervain, lady's mantle and raspberry leaves too, as all help with abdominal or period pains. **Note:** do not use yarrow if you're pregnant.
- **Raspberry leaves and hibiscus:** OK then, those of you who have come along to one of my herbal workshops will know that this mix is great for heavy or painful periods. Raspberry leaves contain a lot of nutrients (magnesium, potassium, iron and loads of vitamins) – raspberry is really good for all women at all ages and stages of life, eg help with PMS and any uterine problems. If you don't like the raspberry flavour, a similar effect can be achieved via a peppermint and calendula infusion. **Note:** I'd suggest consulting a specialist if you're pregnant, before drinking any such infusions.
- **Chaste berry:** this herb is less well-known, but it's good against any menstrual problems or irregular periods. As a tincture, chaste berry relieves PMS pain, menopausal pain or for polycystic ovary syndrome. **Note:** do not use chaste berry if you're pregnant
- **Bark-based remedies:** two herbal solutions come to mind here. First is **white willow bark**, which is simply one of the best natural solutions to migraines/headaches – I'd suggest an infusion, but I make teabags for easy access, as I have tension headaches – this one is very calming, but may make you feel tired. Another well-known remedy is **crampbark**. As the name suggests, it's really good as a tincture against menstrual cramps, bloating or period pains. **Note:** both bark-based remedies here should be avoided by those who are pregnant.

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