



Gylden Magick

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July 2024

PRACTICAL MAGICK & UNIVERSAL ENERGY FOR EVERYDAY LIFE

Editor's notes

by Gylden Fellowship

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

Dear readers of **GYLDEN MAGICK**,

This solstice is the **Deer or Buck Moon** (after the full-grown antlers of stags) – and this issue of the magazine is a little different with a new ancient crystals series. The altar colours are silver, amber and bright red.

The solstice, **Alban Hefin**, was on 20 June and Midsummer's Day fell on 24 June. Now, we look forward to **Lughnasadh** on 1 August. In Celtic mythology, the god Lugh one of the chief gods of the Tuatha De Danann.

He established the Lughnasadh festival as a funeral feast and games

to commemorate his foster-mother, Tailtiu. She died on 1 August of exhaustion after clearing the plains of Brega for farming

We'll feature an in-depth look at this festival on our website, a little nearer to 1 August, but we've put in a few blessings here too.

Other notable dates for diaries in July **are the Feast of Keridwen** on 3 July, **International Day of Friendship** on 30 July and 21 July for the **next full moon**. Don't forget 6 July for the **next new moon**.

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

We with our regular series about celestial forecasts plus history, crowd intelligence, alchemy, environment and magick. Our crystal expert,

Charlie, turns her attention to sapphire, Mark looks at global warming and we include jaspilite in a new series on ancient crystals (archaeo-gemmology).

In past years, we would be frantic with preparations for various fayres or events, but not so in 2024. We enjoyed the Wandering Witches' Fayre in April and look forward to more festivals, camps, fayres and markets in the summer.

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?

Contents: July 2024

Looking towards Lughnasadh by Gylden Fellowship	Pages 3-4
Sacred art: Ratha Yatra: 7 July collated by Gylden Fellowship	Pages 5-7
Crystal: sapphire: by Charlie Foreverdark	Pages 8-9
Celestial forecasts: July by Joanna Bristow-Watkins	Pages 10-14
Unusual crystals: jaspilite by Sergiy Shevchenko	Pages 15-16
History: Islandshire by Nic the Witch	Page 17
Ecology: Restoration Forth by WWF UK	Page 18
Global warming and heatwaves by Mark Sharpen	Pages 19-20
Crows by Mark Sharpen	Page 21
Photos: Orchids in Sussex by The Sussex Wildlife Trust	Pages 22-23
Alchemy: the philosopher's stone by Nic the Witch	Page 24
Interfaith update by IFN and Gylden Fellowship	Pages 25-26
Easy home remedies by Nic the Witch	Page 27
Seasonal: forthcoming events by Gylden Fellowship	Pages 28-29
Gylden contact info	Page 30



Looking towards Lughnasadh

By Gylden Fellowship

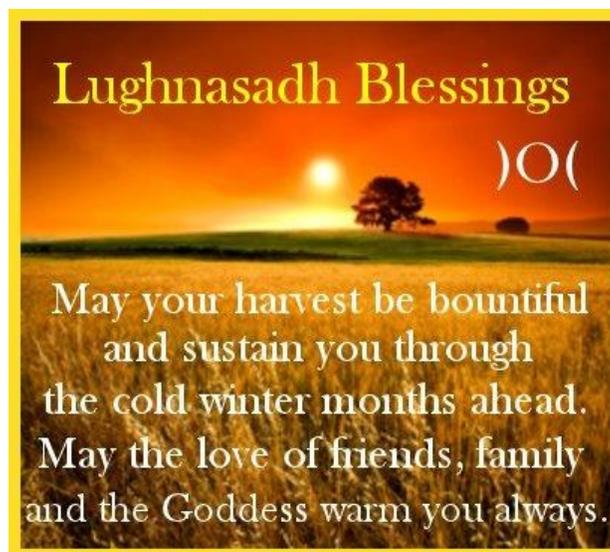
Lughnasadh/ Lammas/ Lúnasa is a Celtic fire festival, named for the Commemoration of Lugh in Irish Gaelic. As the Celtic day started with sunset, the celebration of Lughnasadh starts on the Sunday eve before Monday 1 August 2024.

Lugh was a member of the Irish pantheon, the Tuatha De Danann. His father was Cian (son of Danu) and his foster-mother was Tailtiu. Lugh was linked to skills, crafts, arts and war - his name means "many skilled" or "the shining one" and he was thought to be a sun god, recognised generally by the Celts, rather than located in a specific region. The Gaulish Lugos is connected to the Irish Lugh, who is sometimes linked with the Welsh hero, Lleu Llaw Gyffes.

Much of the early history of Ireland is recorded in the Book of Invasions, namely the times when Ireland was conquered by foreign enemies. This record says that Lugh came to be associated with grain in Celtic legends after he held a harvest fair in honour of his foster mother. So, Lugh is symbolised by corn, grains, bread and other harvest fruits. In Irish Gaelic, the word for August is lúnasa and this festival was called Lughnasadh.

Later, Christians renamed the festival as Lammas, derived from the Old English (Anglo-Saxon) word of hlaef-mass. This refers to the **loaf mass**, when the first loaf of bread from the new harvest is consecrated – in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicles, Lammas was described as the Feast of the First Fruits. Julius Caesar listed the popular deities of the Gauls and referred to them by what he saw as corresponding Roman names. Thus, references made to Lugh (or Lugos) were attributed to the Roman god, Mercury. The central city for the worship of Mercury was Lugundum, which later became Lyon in France. Mercury's festival on 1 August was chosen as the day of the Feast of Augustus by Caesar's successor, Octavian Augustus Caesar, and it became the most important holiday in Gaul. However, 1 August tied in with the first grain harvest in most rural societies in Europe.

In real terms, Lughnasadh shows the beginning of the descent of the sun into winter darkness, but it's also about celebrating the first harvest of the year. Much of the harvest is collected and stored and winter is not far away. So, both the Celts and the Saxons cut the grain for bread, but also stored some away as seeds for the next crop in the following spring.



This is Lughnasadh – a time to give thanks for the first harvest and to reflect upon our blessings. Are there any ways in which we can improve our lives and can we learn from our surroundings? In the days ahead, take a walk and look for evidence of the ripening harvest – in fields of grain, in orchards and in the hedges.

The harvest fruits include corn, forest fruits and seeds, fruits of the sea, herbs and flowers, but it is the seed that is the ancient symbol of life growing up to the point of harvest. Each of you, turn outward and consider the circle of life, take a moment to ground yourself and count the positive things in your lives that have grown from tiny seeds. And we too can reflect upon the meanings of transformation, death and rebirth at this sabbat. In practical terms, a Lughnasadh celebration might include all or any of the following.

- Using grain sheaves to create figures.
- Decorating a tree or natural feature with flowers.
- Baking something with flour.
- Holding a picnic with lots of laughter and song.
- Sharing songs, dances, stories and communal joy.
- Discussing new projects or seeds to be sown in spring.
- Collecting seed heads for sowing in the spring.

Actually, the story of harvest rituals and customs in Britain is interesting, although it is worth noting that the real decline in such traditions started in the early 19th century. Customs that had existed for centuries came under attack from the increasing use of steam-powered threshers, pulled by horses, plus mechanical harvesters that could both reap and bind the corn and straw. Such was the prototype of today's combine harvester and these machines signalled the end of customs as *Crying the Neck* (proclaiming the end of the harvest) and choosing a *King of the Mowers* (the best reaper).

Pre-1800, it was usual for the landowner to celebrate the end of the harvest on his fields by providing a *horkey* or *mell supper*, to which all of the harvesters were invited. In general, this was a large meal with plenty of ale or cider. As Victorian values started to seep into society after the 1830s, these often-drunken horkeys attracted widespread disapproval, not least from Queen Victoria herself. The inevitable result was not long in coming, namely the harvest tea, which started in the 1840s – a harvest service in church followed by a meal and tea.

By 1889, a Church of England rector was able to say that the old harvest feasts were no more and that there were harvest festivals instead. By his understanding, such events consisted of, "Tea and cake at sixpence per head in the schoolroom and a choral service and sermon in the church" – this continues to be the practice in many Church of England churches today. It's a far cry from the horkeys and giving of thanks at Lughnasadh and Alban Elfed (Mabon).



Gylden
Magick
July 2024

RATHA YATRA (Hindu): 7 July

Chariot journey: this is observed most notably at Puri in the Indian state of Orissa, where processions of thousands of devotees pull huge waggons (*rathas*) supporting images of Krishna. He is known under the name of Jagannath (Lord of the Universe), from which the English term, *juggernaut* is derived. Krishna is attended on his journey by his brother and sister. The festival is celebrated in Britain with processions through various parts of London and Cardiff.

Collated by Gylden Fellowship







July crystal: sapphire

By Charlie Foreverdark

During their history, sapphires have been amongst the most internationally venerated gemstones and various cultures have attributed an array of different mystical powers to sapphires throughout the ages. Such attributions include innocence, peace, good health/ fortune and the divine/ heavenly connection of the celestial blue crystal. Sapphires have been used historically used as talismans to protect against evil. They have ancient associations with religion and the heavens and have been used by many different cultures to symbolise chastity, purity, faithfulness and repentance. Sapphires were often worn by religious/ spiritual leaders and prophets.

1. In the 6th century, it was decreed that dignitaries of the Roman Catholic Church were to wear sapphire rings on their right *blessing* hands, as the stone was believed to promote piety and suppress sexual desires.
2. Buddhists believed that sapphires facilitated devotion to prayer and meditation.
3. The ancient Persians believed that the Earth was balanced upon a giant sapphire, which reflected the colour of the heavens.
4. The Jews also held sapphires in high veneration; the legendary Seal of King Solomon was said to have been inscribed upon sapphire. Ancient biblical lore tells that the tablet upon which Moses' Ten Commandments were written was made from sapphire; however, historians now theorise that the blue gemstone referenced in the bible was most likely lapis lazuli.
5. The Roman historian, Pliny the Elder, described sapphire thus: "*Sapphirus contains spots like gold. It is also rarely blue tinged with purple. It is never transparent.*" His description is not befitting of sapphire at all, but does sound remarkably like lapis lazuli.

The blue colour (and, by extension, blue crystal) was also particularly popular with nobility and various monarchies; hence the term, *royal blue*. The word, **sapphire**, is derived from the Latin and Greek words for the colour blue: *sapphirus* and *sapheiros*. However, it wasn't until the Middle Ages that the word was actually used to describe the sapphire we know today - as opposed to lapis lazuli. It is important to keep in mind that many historical references to sapphires, (including the sapphire in the breastplate of Aaron) probably refer to lapis lazuli.

1. There was a widely-held belief that sapphires would only retain the depth of their blue hues when worn by a person who is truly devoted to their love and, if the wearer was unfaithful, the stone would fade.
2. Early sailors believed that sapphires could control the energy of the ocean and could keep them from drowning at sea.
3. Sapphires were also said to put one at ease during social engagements and even possessed the power to assist with legal matters involving fraud.
4. According to Greek mythology, courtesy of Apollodorus of Athens, it was the mystical powers of an enormous star sapphire acting as a conduit of intense desire that ultimately sparked a decade of warfare in the 12th century BCE. The capture of King Menelaus' beautiful bride, Helen, Queen of Sparta, by Paris served as a spark igniting the flame of the Trojan War. Legend has it that Helen possessed a sapphire which acted as the vessel of her desirability, causing more than 30 suitors to contend for her affections.

The practice of **lithotherapy** (known today as crystal healing) became popular with members of the Christian clergy during 1100-1300 CE. Scepticism was dismissed as heresy and scholars who did not enthusiastically support the tenets of lithotherapy were even threatened with excommunication! Sapphires were favoured for the medicinal treatment of visual ailments and impairments. The idea that sapphires were beneficial for ocular therapy persisted through the Middle Ages, but actually originated in ancient Egypt, where holistic practitioners had used ground sapphires for eye-washes.

It is recorded at St. Paul's Church in London, that there was a famous sapphire, gifted in the year 1391, by wealthy grocer and landowner Richard de Preston (of whom I am a direct descendant!) The sapphire was intended as a cure for *infirmities in the eyes of those thus afflicted who might resort to it*. It was kept in the church and directly applied to the eyes of those who were suffering from ocular afflictions - although, there are no details of the sapphire having been sterilised after each application! Given that many diseases of the eye were and are incredibly contagious, it is entirely likely that the sapphire did more harm than good!

It wasn't just visual impairment that sapphires were believed to aid; in bygone times - the notion that sapphires provided an effective antidote to poison was quite popular. They were used to boost the immune system, increase the lifespan, treat blood disorders, provide relief from migraines, dispel nightmares, assist in the lowering of chronic fevers and were believed to lessen the severity of epileptic seizures when placed upon the forehead. Sapphires were believed to alleviate all manner of suffering, caused by anything from quite trivial issues such as hiccoughs, colic, nosebleeds and mild allergies through to serious health complaints like rheumatism and cancer.

Their application extended to the field of mental health as well. Sapphires were prescribed to reduce outbreaks of rage and malicious behaviour and had extensive application as an anti-depressant to assist with mood disorders.

Sapphires are found in many places throughout the world, including Australia, Tanzania, Thailand, Cambodia, Malawi, Madagascar, Sri Lanka, and America. Discoveries of sapphire in New South Wales in Australia led to the development of the commercial sapphire mining industry. The first sapphires were discovered here during gold mining endeavours in Australian rivers in 1851. Most of this initial sapphire production in Australia was exported into Europe via Russian miners working the Central Queensland gem fields who sold their finds on to European jewellery agents. A good number of Australian sapphires found their way into the crown jewels of the Russian nobility and the Imperial family. The famed explorer, Marco Polo, told lavish stories of deep blue-hued Ceylon sapphires which originated in the country known today as Sri Lanka. Supposedly, many of the large Ceylon sapphires in royal treasuries today can be accredited to Marco Polo's travels.

Around 1800, sapphire and ruby were both classified as independent varieties of the mineral corundum (aluminium oxide). Sapphires contain traces of iron, titanium and nickel, varying levels of which produce a diverse range of fancy colours, including green, yellow, purple, orange, black and pink, although they are most typically blue. It is iron pigment within the corundum which makes sapphire, blue. The mineral corundum also occurs in red tones, which are caused by inclusions of chromium; these are called rubies rather than sapphires. Pink-coloured corundum may be classified either as ruby or as sapphire depending upon locale.

Parti sapphires (otherwise known as bi-coloured or polychrome sapphires) boast two or even three colours. These mainly hail from Australia, but have also been found in Nigeria, Tanzania and Madagascar. Astonishing yellow tones appear frequently in typical Australian bi-coloured and tri-coloured parti sapphires. Parti sapphires differ from pleochromic (colour-changing) sapphires in that the colours of a parti sapphire don't merge. They are separated by a distinctly visible partition. This is a phenomenon known as colour zoning and the separate colours will all be visible at the same time, regardless of the viewing angle and/or light source. When it comes to the three main colours of parti sapphires, the yellow tones are imparted by iron impurities. green tones suggest higher concentrations of iron than titanium and blue tones suggest higher concentrations of titanium than iron.

Celestial notes

By Joanna Bristow-Watkins, Harmony Healing

July is still British summertime. Time for the orchids, delphiniums, dahlias, hydrangeas, irises and sunflowers to bloom, and the lingering perfumed scent of roses, honeysuckle, gardenias and jasmine on the night air. Traditionally, here in the UK, July features the Wimbledon Championship tennis finals and Henley Regatta.

The month of July was renamed to honour Julius Caesar, who was born in this month. Under Roman rule it was previous called **Quintilis**, meaning the 5th month in Latin. This was before January became the opening month of the calendar year, when the Gregorian calendar was established by Pope Gregory XIII in 1582. To the Anglo-Saxons, it was called **Æftera Līpa** (after midsummer).

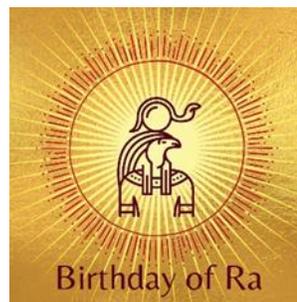
During July, as well as the intriguing Mary Magdalene Day (abandoned in 1552), we have Canada Day (1st) plus a couple of international independence celebrations – USA (4th) and France (14th). We can look forward to a sprinkling of Zoroastrian, Buddhist and Hindu Festivals as well as a Roman annual commemoration. However, the month is inundated with Egyptian Deity commemorations, initially featuring the Birthday of Ra (13th), then the month ends with the five **Epagomenal Days** - also known as the **Days out of Time** - which celebrated the birthdays of five major Egyptian Deities, culminating with the end of the Egyptian calendar year (1 August being their New Year). Egypt was formerly known as **Khem** in times of antiquity. We have our Surrey Forest Bathing event on **Sunday 21 July** at [Harry Edwards Healing Sanctuary](#) (near Shere, Surrey). The [Full Moon Guided Healing Meditation](#) is taking place on Sunday 21 July, the night of the Thunder Moon (reaches its peak at 11:17).



Monday 1 July is Canada Day: the national day of Canada. This is a federal statutory holiday celebrating the anniversary of Canadian confederation, which took place with the passing of the *Constitution Act* on 1 July 1867, where the new name of *Canada* recognised the three separate colonies of Canada, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick being united into a single dominion within the British Empire.

Monday 1 July, in Fasli tradition, is also the Zoroastrian Rain Festival of Tir Jashan, dedicated to the star deities of Tir and Teshar. Give bracelets made of the seven colours of the rainbow. At the end of the festival, go to a high place and throw them into the wind (biodegradable I hope). As the Festival is actually on the 13th of Tir, some Zoroastrian traditions convert this to 4 July.

Thursday 4 July is American Independence Day. This marks the anniversary of unanimous adoption of the Declaration of Independence, by the Second Continental Congress in 1776. The Declaration announced that the 13 colonies claimed their separation from England, which eventually led to the formation of the United States.



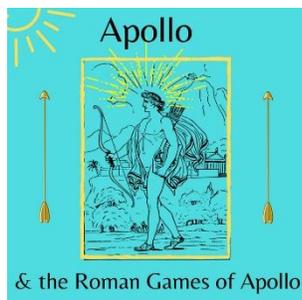
Friday 5 July @ 23:57 is New Moon. The [New Moon Abundance Ritual](#) should be carried out within 24 hours after the New Moon. It needs to be after the New Moon, because the moon should be waxing (getting bigger again) to carry the manifestation energy. There are video instructions on my [Facebook Page](#) or [YouTube Page](#). New Moon is a good time to work on your Vision Board for the rest of 2024.

Sunday 7 July is Thank You Day in the UK. The past few years have been testing for all of us. Plan a party, host a street activity, have a local ceremony or cook up some tasty treats! It doesn't matter what you arrange, just say thank you together.

Saturday 13 July, according to some sources, was the Ancient Egyptian Festival to celebrate the Birthday of Ra. Since Ra was the God of creation, this could be interpreted as the day on which man was created! Ra was also associated with the Sun and healing so, perhaps, it is no coincidence that the Romans celebrated Apollo on the same (equivalent) date.

Saturday 13 July, in Roman times, was the culmination of the Games of Apollo. As early as 212 BCE, 13 July was the celebration of Apollo as the God of Healing (especially during wars), but this later extended into an 8-day festival, ending on 13 July.

Apollo was associated with the Sun and his twin Diana (Goddess of Hunting) was associated with the moon. Apollo became significant among the Romans when Augustus Caesar, as a young man, chose Apollo as his own god, and attributed his victory over Antony and Cleopatra to Apollo's superiority over the Egyptian Deities! Augustus is said to have described Apollo as: "Governor of Roman destiny; master of the sun; archer; augur; averter of pestilence; and giver of sound morals to the young."

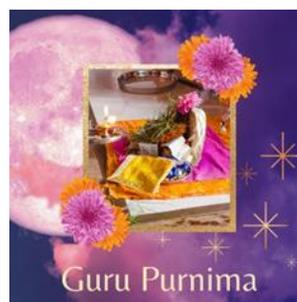


Sunday 14 July is Bastille Day: a national holiday in France. This commemorates a mob of Frenchmen, rebelling against the rule of their king, who stormed a prison to obtain weapons and free prisoners – it sparked the French Revolution in 1789.

Sunday 21 July, 11am - 2pm, our public Forest Bathing session in the grounds of Harry Edward's Foundation, £39.77. This month it's also Full Moon.

Immerse yourself in the healing elements of nature and connect deeply with all your senses. Spend three hours in the woods mindfully connecting to your surroundings and living fully in the present moment, guided in simple sensory exercises: smell the flowers, stroke the bark, listen to the birds. The session culminates with a treelaxation, our unique nature meditation under the canopy of trees. A deeply relaxing and rejuvenating experience, and which, despite the title forest bathing, does not involve any swimming! Join with your friends, family or colleagues and enjoy the glorious bluebells together.

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 high winds or electrical storms. Book via our the [Harmony shop](#). Email katieandjo@harmonyinnature.uk to go on our forest bathing mailing list.



Sunday 21 July @ 11:17 is Thunder Moon. Between Full Moon and the next New Moon is considered as a good time energetically for detoxing the body. Click here for [Angela McGerr's Full Moon Meditation with Gabriel](#). Signed copies of Angela McGerr's Harmony Angel cards are available from the [Harmony Shop](#).

Sunday 21 July, 7.30-9.30pm UK Time (GMT+1 = UT+1) is our [Full Moon Unity Consciousness Meditation](#).

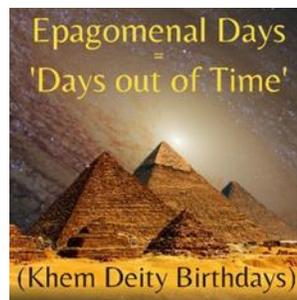
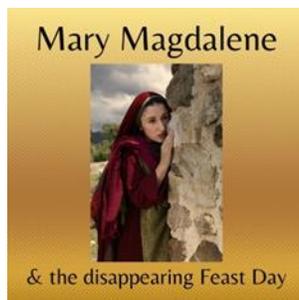
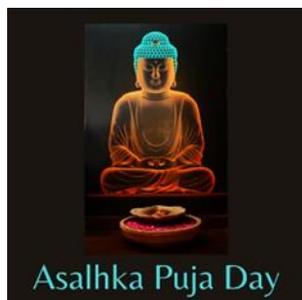
During this session, we connect with other like-minded people and together we work through a mindful chakra balancing process using colours and etheric crystals, with the aim that all participants will experience a degree of unity consciousness. Participants all receive a deeply healing experience. Cost to participate is £20 by online BACS payment (£1 admin fee added for PayPal, concessions to RSE/VFoA graduates), book at the [Harmony Shop](#).

This activity serves as a good taster of Joanna's work in general and the virtual format of our Zoom based programme. And, most importantly, it's a step towards making a difference to the global predicament. To find out how working on your own spiritual consciousness can help humanity and the planet by raising the overall human consciousness levels, see Joanna's [You Tube explanation](#).

Please email jo@harmonyhealing.co.uk or contact me via Facebook Messenger/What's App to let me know you've booked to make sure I send you the link.

Sunday 21 July, being the day of the Full Moon in July, is also Guru Purnima (the Full Moon of the Gurus) in Hindu tradition. The day of full moon, Purnima, in the month of Ashadh of the Hindu calendar is traditionally celebrated as Guru Purnima by Hindus.

On this day, devotees offer puja (worship) to their gurus. The Sanskrit root, **Gu**, means darkness or ignorance. **Ru** denotes the remover of that darkness. Therefore, one who removes the darkness of ignorance is a guru. It is a day for celebration and worship, a day on which the disciples remember and express their gratitude to the lineage of gurus. Hindus believe that a Guru is necessary to make one understand the formless Divinity.



Sunday 21 July is also Asalhka Puja Day. This is a Buddhist commemoration of the Buddha's first public speech to five ascetics. He declared the middle way, the noble eight-fold path and the four noble truths upon which Buddhism is based. This generally takes place around Full Moon in July though a few sources show this as Saturday 20 July in 2024.

Monday 22 July was celebrated in the First Book of Common Prayer in 1549, as Saint Mary Magdalene's Day in the Christian calendar. When the Second Book of Common Prayer was published 3 years later in 1552, this feast day (amongst others) was omitted.

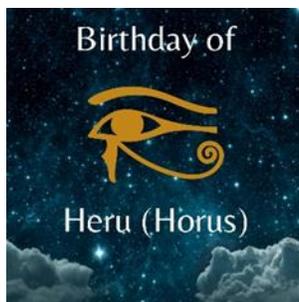
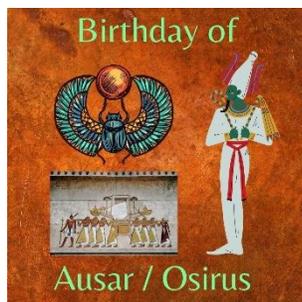
Early celebrations of Mary Magdalene's Feast Day included marriage symbolism such as creating your own healing oil blends for the marital bed, probably including oils such as rose, sandalwood, and ylang ylang. Apparently, the original feast day venerated her as a representative of the perfect wife (church liturgy recommended readings such as Proverbs 31:10-31), so it is a day to celebrate the Sacred Feminine, maybe plant something, sew something, cook something and, of course, love something.

Friday 26 July is the Egyptian Eve of the Epagomenal Days of celebration for the birthdays of their ancient major deities, also known as Days out of Time.

The exact correlation of the Egyptian New year to the modern calendar is disputed, but I favour the linking with the heliacal rising of Sirius (dawn visibility of Sirius) as this star, known to the Egyptians as Sopdet (pronounced Soppday) was closely associated with Aset. The celebrations began on the Eve of the Epagomenal Days - viewed as 26 July, although some sources equate it to 13 July). The following days marked the birthdays of the five children of the Egyptian Deity Nut.

Being dates of powerful Egyptian Energies these may prove ideal days for an Egyptian Energy Reyad Sekh Em 1-2-1 healing session.

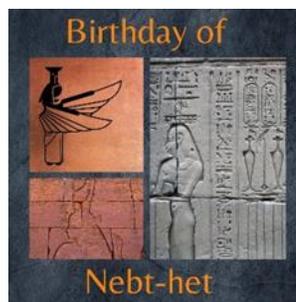
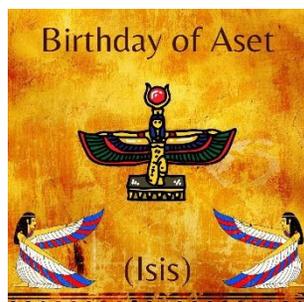
According to myth, Tehuti (Thoth) enabled Nut to give birth to her five children [Aset (Isis), Ausar (Osiris), Set, Heru (Horus the elder) and Nebt-het (Nephthys)] by using his cunning to win a game of draughts with the moon. By winning a seventy-second part of the moon's light, he managed to create five extra days (the Epagomenal Days, also known as the Days out of Time), which allowed Nut to give birth to her five children without breaking Ra's decree that her children could not be born on any existing calendar day. This myth, more than any other, is responsible for Tehuti (Thoth)'s role as a lunar deity.



Saturday 27 July, in the Egyptian Calendar, is the Birthday of Ausar (Osirus). He is also known as *Wzr, Wesir, Asar, Ausir, Usir, Usire, Osirus, Osirus*. The latter two versions being used later after the Greek occupation, but the variation is mainly due to the lack of vowels in hieroglyphic language, meaning that there are many phonetic representations.

Sunday 28 July, in the Egyptian Calendar, is the Birthday of Heru (Horus). This is *Heru-ur* [also known as *Horus the Elder (Gr)*], sibling of *Ausar* and *Aset*, not their son. Not all sources list him as a sibling, Egyptian mythology widely varies depending on the era and geographical location of the source within Egypt.

Monday 29 July, in the Egyptian Calendar, is the Birthday of Set (Seth). *Set* is also known as *Seth (Gr), Setesh, Sutekh, Setekh* or *Suty*, which probably ultimately led to the term, *Satan*.



Tuesday 30 July, in the Egyptian Calendar, is the Birthday of Aset [Aset, Iset, Isis (Gr)]. *Auset* is responsible for resurrecting her murdered husband and, being mad with grief, uses her magical powers to temporarily restore breath and life into *Ausar* in order to conceive their son, *Heru*.

Wednesday 31 July is the Egyptian Birthday of Nebt-het [Nebet-Het, Nebthet, Nephtys (Gr)]. *Nebh-het* is the sister-wife of *Set* and is typically paired with her sister, *Auset*, when undertaking funerary rites because of their protective priestess roles with mummified bodies.

Unusual crystals: jaspilite

By Sergiy Shevchenko

Editor's note: welcome to a new series on archaeo-gemmology. Most of the articles will be by guest writers – scholars, learned members of the Gemmological Association, etc. Last month, we started with jacinth – this time, we take an overview of jaspilite.

The Ukrainian jaspilites, found in the Krivoy Rog Basin, are an important raw material used in the national metallurgical industry. Some exhibit significant diversity of texture and colour and are suitable as decorative rocks. In a few, the reflective optical effects described as tiger's-eye and falcon's-eye are present. Quartz and iron-ore minerals (such as hematite, magnetite or goethite) are the main rock-forming minerals of the jaspilites. Carbonates (siderite or ankerite), amphiboles (cummingtonite or grünerite), feldspars and apatite are subordinate phases. In Ukraine, the decorative types of jaspilite are valuable for making fancy goods such as vases, clocks, artistic jewellery and for the production of stone facing - used especially for indoor design.

Ukrainian jaspilites are an important strategic raw material for the metallurgical industry in Krivoy Rog, Zaporozhe and Komsomolsk. The industrial classification of various jaspilite types was presented by Baranov (2006) and the Gemmological Centre of the National Mining University in Dnepropetrovsk (Ukraine) has promoted jaspilite as the prospective gemstone of Ukraine for some years. The aim of the latter is to show the natural beauty of these stones and their potential use in various contexts. However, the scope of this promotion has been limited since the majority of papers have been published in Ukrainian and Russian (namely Baranov, 2002, 2006; Baranov et al., 2006; Heflik et al., 2008).

Jaspilites are iron-rich and silica-rich metamorphic rocks of volcanic or sedimentary origin, occurring rarely in nature. Worldwide, they appear within Pre-Cambrian complexes, such as the Hamersley Basin in the northwest of Western Australia, Jasper Hill, Marquette Iron Range, Michigan, and Diamond Hill, Chittenden Co., Vermont, in the USA and the Krivoy Rog Basin (Dnepropetrovsk region, in Ukraine).



Of 48 iron ore deposits in Ukraine, only a few are being exploited. The Krivoy Rog iron-ore Basin is the main mining centre. It is around 100km long by 2–7 km wide and is elongated south–north. The Krivoy Rog Basin is situated between two large crustal blocks of different age: the Ingulsky block built of Lower Proterozoic granitoids and metamorphic rocks and the Srednepridneprovsky block, containing Archaean plagiogranites. The Krivoy Rog Structure contains complexes from both these blocks, which have been subjected to extensive and

strong folding and faulting. The jaspilites occur within the Proterozoic sedimentary and volcanic rocks, which have been metamorphosed at greenschist and amphibolite facies conditions. The thicknesses of Fe-bearing rocks range from 0.3-3.5 km.

Decorative Ukrainian jaspilites exhibit a wide range of textures and colours, mainly red with different tints from bright red to deep-brown, yellow, orange and blue; some are grey with a metallic lustre. Based on **colour**, several categories have been distinguished:

- red-banded
- orange-banded
- yellow-banded
- blue-banded with falcon's-eye
- grey-banded.

In addition, the rich diversity of **texture** has enabled five groups to be distinguished and these are shown below.

1. The **parallel-striated jaspilite's** main features are straight parallel stripes of different colour, mineral composition and texture. Wide- and thin- striated varieties can be distinguished, with even and uneven alternation of the layers. According to the location of the stripes, pieces can be cut to create textural pictures with bands parallel or at angles to the edges.
2. **Wavy-striated jaspilite** is defined by the presence of uneven wavy-like stripes. Here again, wide- and thin-striated varieties can also occur. The textures may be clear or more diffuse with areas of boudinage or pinched, sausage- like structures. Generally, this variety is decorated by shallow cracks filled with magnetite and hematite of secondary origin.
3. The **intensely folded or plicated** variety is a kind of parallel-striated jaspilite and/ or a wavy-striated type, which has been affected by strong deformation processes. This jaspilite contains traces of various dislocations, breaks and natural cracks filled with quartz, magnetite, hematite or iron-rich mica.
4. **Breccia jaspilite** contains broken fragments, some of different composition, later cemented by siliceous or siliceous-carbonate material. The broken fragments differ, not only in composition but also in their shape (rounded or acute-angled), size and colour (dark grey, light grey, brown red, red and bright red).
5. **Landscape jaspilites** are those types with inclusions and structures giving the appearance of scenic landscapes best seen in polished sections. The decorative appeal of this variety is determined by the contrast of various colours and healed natural cracks



History: Islandshire

By Nic the Witch

I was reading a wonderful book by the nature writer, Jim Crumley, called *The Nature of Spring*. In the book, he includes a chapter on the existence of Islandshire in England. I read further and Islandshire is an area of Northumberland, that comprises Lindisfarne or Holy Island, plus five parishes on the mainland. Northumberland was an exclave of County Durham in England. It was first mentioned in 995CE, when it formed part of the lands of the priory at Lindisfarne.

The Farne Islands are a group of islands off the coast of Northumberland, England. The group has between 15 and 20 islands depending on the level of the tide. They form an archipelago, divided into the Inner Group and the Outer Group. The main islands in the Inner Group are Inner Farne, Knoxes Reef, the East and West Wideopens (all joined on very low tides), and (somewhat separated) the Megstone; the main islands in the Outer Group are Staple Island, Brownsman, North and South Wamses, Big Harcar, and Longstone. The two groups are separated by Staple Sound. To the north of the Farne Islands lies the Holy Island of Lindisfarne. This is not a true island as it is connected to the mainland for about 12 hours a day by a causeway that is covered and uncovered by the tides.

The islands were first recorded in 651CE, when they became home to Saint Aidan and then Saint Cuthbert. Cuthbert isolated himself on the islands until he was called to the bishopric of Lindisfarne. After two years, he returned to the solitude of the Inner Farne and died there in 687CE, when Saint Aethelwold took up residence. The islands were used by hermits intermittently from the seventh century. These included Saint Bartholomew of Farne and Thomas De Melsonby, who died on the islands in 1246. A monastic cell of Benedictine monks was established on the islands around 1255. The cell depended on Durham Abbey (Durham Cathedral now) It was a very small cell of 2-6 monks and was dissolved in 1536 by Henry VIII. The Farne Islands remained as part of County Durham until 1844, when they were transferred to Northumberland. The islands are currently owned by the National Trust.

Among other acts, Cuthbert introduced special laws in 676 protecting the eider ducks and other seabirds nesting on the islands - possibly the earliest bird-protection laws anywhere in the world. The wildlife on the Farne Islands is their biggest draw. Though the islands are most famous for puffins and seals, visitors can see many other species too. Depending on the time of year, one can spot puffins, kittiwakes, razorbills, eider ducks and guillemots.



Ecology: Restoration Forth

By WWF UK

Restoration Forth is a major marine restoration programme working with communities to restore seagrass habitats and European flat oyster populations in the Firth of Forth. It will create a toolkit for marine restoration - inspiring communities to deliver further marine restoration efforts across Scotland - securing at least 42 hectares of critical coastal habitat restored in the Firth of Forth by 2030 and influencing Scottish Government policy for stronger marine protection.

In 2022, the Restoration Forth partners completed habitat suitability assessments and comprehensive stakeholder consultations to determine the restoration sites and began working with communities. By the end of 2023, the project restored 1 hectare of seagrass and deployed the first European flat oysters into the Firth of Forth in 100 years. The project also trained hundreds of local community members in restoration techniques and skills. By the close of the project in 2024, the project aim is the restoration of 4 hectares of seagrass and 30,000 European flat oysters.

Both seagrass and oysters:

- improve water quality
- store carbon
- support biodiversity
- provide nursery habitats for fish.

Seagrasses also reduce wave energy, which helps prevent coastal erosion; European flat oysters reduce excess nutrients in the water and stabilise the seabed, improving water quality and clarity. Work to bring back vital seagrass meadows that increase biodiversity help tackle climate change and improve water quality in the Firth of Forth, has begun in three key locations. The Restoration Forth project has confirmed around 25,000 seeds were successfully injected into the ground at the trial sites of Tynninghame Beach in East Lothian, Pettycur Bay in Fife and Dalmeny's Drum Sands. Seagrass meadows absorb carbon and provide food and a safe habitat for marine life to flourish.

The locations were selected due to being sheltered, and along with the discovery of remanent seagrass; it's hoped they will provide suitable growing conditions. Over the coming months, the sites will be monitored - if the seeds take successfully then large-scale planting will go ahead with the aim of restoring 4 hectares of seagrass in the Firth of Forth by 2024, the equivalent of 5.5 international football pitches. Alongside the seagrass planting, native oysters will be deployed to create reefs, which once flourished in the Forth, that will remove pollutants and provide sanctuary for a vast array of marine life.

Naomi Arnold, Restoration Forth Project Manager said: *"This is a really exciting step in the Restoration Forth project. As these trial sites have been carefully selected, we're hopeful the seagrass seeds will take, start to germinate and that we can continue with further trials this year. Seagrass is the unsung hero of our oceans and can play a major part in tackling climate change as well improving water quality and enhancing biodiversity. Involving people from the local communities gives them a sense of achievement and pride in knowing that they are helping to improve water quality, increase biodiversity and tackling CO2 issues in the years to come."*

Science: global warming and heatwaves

By Mark Sharpen

OK then, the rate that the Earth is warming peaked at a record high in 2023, with 92% of last year's heat caused by humans. A group of 57 scientists from around the world used United Nations-approved methods to examine the causes of the 2023 deadly heat. They concluded that, even with a faster warming rate, they didn't see evidence of significant acceleration in human-caused climate change beyond increased fossil fuel burning. Last year's record temperatures were so unusual that scientists have been debating what was behind the big jump and whether climate change is accelerating or if other factors were in play.

"If you look at this world accelerating or going through a big tipping point, things aren't doing that," said study lead author **Piers Forster**, a Leeds University climate scientist, "Things are increasing in temperature and getting worse in sort of exactly the way we predicted. It's pretty much explained by the build-up of carbon dioxide from rising fossil fuel use".

Last year, the rate of warming hit 0.26°C (0.47°F) per decade: up from 0.25°C (0.45°F) the year before. That's not a significant difference, though it does make this year's rate the highest ever according to Piers Forster. Still, outside scientists said this report highlights an ever more alarming situation. "Choosing to act on climate has become a political talking point, but this report should be a reminder to people that in fact it is fundamentally a choice to save human lives," said University of Wisconsin climate scientist **Andrea Dutton**, who wasn't part of the international study team.

The team of authors were formed to provide annual scientific updates between every 7-8 year major UN scientific assessments and found that last year was 1.43°C warmer than the 1850-1900 average with 1.31° of that coming from human activity. The other percentage of the warming was due mostly to El Nino, the natural and temporary warming of the central Pacific that changes weather worldwide and also a freak warming along the Atlantic and just other weather randomness.

On a larger 10-year time frame, which scientists prefer to single years, the world has warmed about 1.19°C (2.14°F) since pre-industrial times, according to a report in *Earth System Science*. The report also said that as the world keeps using coal, oil and natural gas, Earth is likely to reach the point in 4.5 years that it can no longer avoid crossing the internationally accepted threshold for warming. That fits with earlier studies projecting Earth being committed or stuck to at least 1.5°C by early 2029 if emission trajectories don't change. The actual hitting of 1.5°C could be years later, but it would be inevitable if all that carbon is used, Piers Forster said.

It's not the end of the world or humanity if temperatures go past the 1.5 limit, but it will be quite bad, scientists said. Past UN studies show massive changes to Earth's ecosystem are more likely to kick in between 1.5- 2 degrees of warming, including eventual loss of the planet's coral reefs, Arctic sea ice, species of plants and animals — along with more extreme weather events that kill people.

Last year's temperature rise was more than just a little jump. It was especially unusual in September, said study co-author **Sonia Seneviratne**, head of land-climate dynamics at ETH Zurich, a Swiss university. The year was within the range of what was predicted, albeit it was at the upper edge of the range, Seneviratne said: "Acceleration, if it were to happen, would be even worse - like hitting a global tipping point. It would be probably the worst scenario. But what is happening is already extremely bad and it is having major impacts already now. We are in the middle of a crisis."

Other potential causes for this jump were identified as the reduction of sulphur pollution from shipping (which had been providing some cooling to the atmosphere) due to carbon particles put in the air from Canadian

wildfires and the effect of an undersea volcano that injected massive amounts of heat-trapping water vapour into the atmosphere also spewed cooling particles with both forces pretty much cancelling each other out.

So, **what are the outcomes for us?** With so many countries suffering drought and blistering heat waves, several doctors, physiologists and other experts explained to happens to the human body in such heat. The body's resting core temperature is typically about 98.6°F (37°C) – this is only 7°F (4°C) away from catastrophe in the form of heatstroke, said **Ollie Jay**, a professor of heat and health at the University of Sydney in Australia, where he runs the thermo-ergonomics laboratory. He says, "Heat kills in three main ways. The usual first suspect is heatstroke — critical increases in body temperature that cause organs to fail. When inner body temperature gets too hot, the body redirects blood flow toward the skin to cool down, but that diverts blood and oxygen away from the stomach and intestines and can allow toxins normally confined to the gut area to leak into circulation. It sets off a cascade of effects, including clotting around the body and multiple organ failure and, ultimately, death."

"However, the bigger killer in heat is the strain on the heart, especially for people who have cardiovascular disease. Again it starts with blood rushing to the skin to help shed core heat. That causes blood pressure to drop. The heart responds by trying to pump more blood to keep you from passing out. You're asking the heart to do a lot more work than it usually has to do - for someone with a heart condition, it's like running for a bus with a dodgy (hamstring). Something's going to give. Another main way is dangerous dehydration. As people sweat, they lose liquids to a point that can severely stress kidneys".

Dehydration can progress into shock, causing organs to shut down from lack of blood, oxygen and nutrients, leading to seizures and death, said **Dr. Renee Salas**, a Harvard University professor of public health and an emergency room physician at Massachusetts General Hospital, "Dehydration can be very dangerous and even deadly for everyone if it gets bad enough, but it is especially dangerous for those with medical conditions and on certain medications".

Heat also affects the brain. It can cause a person to have confusion or trouble thinking, said several doctors: "One of the first symptoms you're getting into trouble with the heat is if you get confused," said University of Washington public health and climate professor, **Kris Ebi**, "That's little help as a symptom because the person suffering from the heat is unlikely to recognise it and it becomes a bigger problem as people age."

Some scientists use a complicated outside temperature measurement called **wet-bulb globe** temperature, which takes into account humidity, solar radiation and wind. In the past, it was thought that a wet-bulb reading of 95°F (35°C) was the point when the body started having trouble, but more recent tests have shown that the wet-bulb danger point for young healthy people to 87°F (30.5°C). This is a figure that has started to appear in the Middle East; for older people, the danger point is a wet-bulb temperature of 82°F (28°C) 82 (28 degrees Celsius).

Humid heatwaves also kill a lot of people, because humidity affects the ability of sweat to evaporate. As has been seen from news of Hajj pilgrims becoming very ill on the way to Mecca, heatstroke is an emergency; medical workers try to cool a victim down within 30 minutes. According to Dr. Renee Salas, the best way is cold water immersion. Alternatively, some emergency rooms pump patients with cool fluids intravenously, spray them with misters, put ice packs in armpits and groins and place them on a chilling mat with cold water running inside it. Even then it doesn't always work...about 1300 people died from the heat in Saudi Arabia whilst taking part in the annual Hajj to Mecca.

Crows

By Mark Sharpen

OK then, from heatwaves to avian intelligence and, in particular, corvid intelligence. **Corvid** is the name given to the class of birds that includes crows, ravens, rooks and so on. And this item is about crows and counting - crows know their numbers. An experiment has revealed that these birds can count their own calls, showing a numerical skill previously only seen in people.

Investigating how animals understand numbers can help scientists to explore the biological origins of humanity's numerical abilities, says **Giorgio Vallortigara**, a neuroscientist at the University of Trento in Rovereto, Italy. He described the finding thus: "Being able to produce a deliberate number of vocalisations on cue, as the birds in the experiment did, "is actually a very impressive achievement".

Andreas Nieder, an animal physiologist at the University of Tübingen in Germany and a co-author of the study published in May 2024 in *Science*, said that it was amazing to see how cognitively flexible these corvids are, "They have a reputation of being very smart and intelligent and they proved this once again."

The researchers worked with three carrion crows (*Corvus corone*) that had already been trained to caw on command. Over the next several months, the birds were taught to associate visual cues (a screen showing the digits 1, 2, 3 or 4) with the number of calls they were supposed to produce. They were later also introduced to four auditory cues that were each associated with a distinct number. During the experiment, the birds stood in front of the screen and were presented with a visual or auditory cue.

They were expected to produce the number of vocalisations associated with the cue and to peck at an enter key on the touchscreen monitor when they were done. If they got it right, an automated feeder delivered bird-seed pellets and mealworms as a reward. According to Nieder, they were correct most of the time, "Their performance was way beyond chance and highly significant".

The researchers also realised that they could predict the upcoming number of crow calls, based on the sound of the first call, suggesting that the birds planned the number of calls in advance, which indicated that it's really a cognitive controlled process. As bright as they are, the crows did make mistakes. On the basis of the sound of the calls, the authors concluded that the birds generally set out to produce the correct number of caws, but sometimes lost track along the way. "When we analyse each individual call in such a sequence, we can predict whether the animal is stuttering, producing more vocalisations than we indicated or whether the crow was skipping a specific vocalisation, producing fewer than we had cued" (Nieder).

"What the crows were doing is not what humans understand as true counting, which would require a symbolic understanding of numbers, but it could be an evolutionary precursor of that ability" (Vallortigara). He added that this type of research opens the door to understanding the neural mechanisms associated with these abilities and the unique aspects of how humans understand numbers. It even has implications for the study of cognitive disorders associated with numbers, such as dyscalculia.

Orchids in Sussex: photos

By Sussex Wildlife Trust



Early-purple Orchid (*Orchis mascula*)



Common Spotted-orchid (*Dactylorhiza fuchsia*)



Pyramidal Orchid (*Anacamptis pyramidalis*)



Burnt Orchid (*Neotinea ustulate*)



Common Fragrant-orchid (*Gymnadenia conopsea*)



Green-winged Orchid (*Anacamptis morio*)

Alchemy: the philosopher's stone

By Nic the Witch

"Only a person who wanted to find the Stone - find it, but not use it - would be able to get it" (*Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* by JK Rowling).

Alchemists believed that the magickal substance could be created by adding and mixing compounds encountered in nature, particularly sulphur and mercury. Their works were not in vain - thanks to the constant efforts of alchemists to create the philosopher's stone, the modern science of chemistry was born. The main difference between alchemy and chemistry is that alchemy was based on a mystic view of reality whereas chemistry is based on experiments, observations and facts. Also, chemistry observes the changes that take place during a reaction with other substances.



Did the philosopher's stone actually exist? The philosopher's stone is ultimately a legend. While countless alchemists have searched for the magickal elixir through the ages, it has never actually been discovered. However, French notary and bookseller, Nicolas Flamel, claimed to have discovered it in 1382.

The philosopher's stone was legendary, with the power not only to turn metals into gold, but also to produce the elixir of life, giving its drinker immortality. An unknown substance, also called **the tincture or the powder**, was sought by alchemists for its supposed ability to transform base metals into precious ones, especially gold and silver. Some ancient and medieval alchemical texts leave clues to the physical appearance of the stone of the philosophers, specifically the red stone. It is often said to be orange (saffron coloured) or red when ground to powder. Or, in a solid form, it appeared as an intermediate colour between red and purple, transparent and glass-like.

The philosopher's stone was the central symbol of the mystical terminology of hermetic alchemy, symbolising perfection at its finest, divine illumination and heavenly bliss. Efforts to discover the philosopher's stone were known as the Magnum Opus ("Great Work") due to this legendary ability of turning anything into gold, even poisonous mercury. According to Tyla, the title comes from the magickal stone's Latin name, *philosophorum*.

Interfaith update

By IFN and Gylden Fellowship

Editor's note: at Gylden Fellowship, we have always prided ourselves on our tolerance of other faiths. We have supported many Interfaith meetings and events over the years – we were honoured to be part of Surrey Faith Links and a member of Guildford Diocese. The following piece is apolitical, but we present both the side of the Interfaith Network (IFN) and the view of the Conservatives government – readers can decide for themselves.

Earlier this year, the UK Board of Trustees of the IFN announced the closure of the charity due to the withdrawal of Government funding. This decision was linked to withdrawal by Government of funding for July 2023-March 2024, offered in July 2023, subject to conditions. In a letter to IFN's Co-Chairs from Secretary of State Rt Hon Michael Gove MP of 21 February, it was confirmed that the offer of funding was being withdrawn. This was for reasons foreshadowed in an earlier letter from him to them of 19 January, to which they had responded in detail.

Mr Gove's letter of 21 February notes that: "The Government has had a policy of non-engagement with the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) since 2009. Whilst I recognise that the MCB was already a member of the Inter Faith Network when the previous offer of funding was made, I find their membership regrettable and it is deeply concerning that an MCB member could be appointed into your core governance structure. This increases the proximity between government funding and an organisation with which the Government has a long-standing policy of non-engagement. This is even more important in the case of funding for a prominent and nationally active organisation such as the IFN, which would carry too great a risk of compromising the credibility and effectiveness of that policy."

The Board of Trustees had sought with energy to diversify IFN's funding base. However, the kind of work done by infrastructure and backbone bodies - such as linking, sharing good practice and fostering dialogue - is not easy to fund and did need some financial support from Government. IFN's Board was glad to receive from Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, the offer of £155,000 fresh funding for the period, July 2023-March 2024 (approximately 50% of its budget).

It is deeply disappointing that, despite IFN having stood ready throughout the process to have dialogue with the Government, no opportunity was offered for that and that over seven months after the offer of funding (subject to conditions), withdrawal of funding appeared necessary to Mr Gove for the reasons that he outlined. As IFN's Co-Chairs had earlier explained to Mr Gove in a response of 22 January to his letter of 19 January, "It is fully understood that Government can choose not to engage with bodies for reasons that it is not required to make public. However, it would be difficult for a charity to do so where a body has not been proscribed, had legal action taken against it or unless there were to be a clear issue of reputational damage (not always, of course, a straightforward matter to judge)."

IFN's Co-Chairs also commented that: "It is not easy to see how IFN's purpose (the value of which it has always been believed the Government appreciates) could be achieved by sowing division - and division would certainly be sown if there was an attempt to expel from membership, without its having been proscribed, found guilty of illegal actions or in some way acted so as to bring reputational damage to IFN, an organisation that has among its members (and represents) over 500 national, regional and local Muslim organisations, mosques, charities and

schools. Although the Government can choose not to engage with it, that is not a sensible option open to the IFN if it is to achieve the purposes for which the Government funds it in the first place.”

One example of divergence between the Government and the IFN was over Gaza. Apparently, there was disappointment in the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities about a failure to condemn Hamas. The Board of Trustees responded, “As a UK charity whose purposes concern interfaith relations in the UK and which must comply with the Charity Commission’s guidance on political campaigning, IFN cannot make a simple statement of that kind. IFN has a longstanding policy on the making of statements which precludes direct comment on overseas events. Recent legal advice has confirmed the appropriateness of the policy.”

The matter was repeatedly raised by Parliamentarians, including through an Adjournment Debate on 10 January and an Urgent Question from Rt Hon Sir Stephen Timms MP on 22 February, with cross-party contributions about the importance of IFN’s work. There have also been letters to MPs and Ministers from across the UK, as well as articles and statements by national faith community bodies, local interfaith groups and a petition set up by a local interfaith practitioner. Neither the careful and considered response of IFN’s Board nor the widespread support and concern at the potential loss of the Interfaith Network for the UK led Mr Gove to reconsider his position. Therefore, the organisation is closed and IFN staff will be working to preserve its legacy in ways that enable others to build strongly on that in the future.

The IFN worked with its member bodies and many others to promote good interfaith relations and cooperation at every level, to highlight the importance of this work - to ensure that the importance of religious identity and of good interfaith relations is understood in wider society. Through its major Interfaith Week programme in November 2023, which saw over 1020 interfaith activities take place, it also promoted dialogue between those of religious and non-religious beliefs.

IFN’s member bodies included national faith community representative bodies from the Baha’i, Buddhist, Christian, Druid, Hindu, Jain, Jewish, Latter-day Saints, Muslim, Pagan, Sikh, Spiritualist, and Zoroastrian faith communities of the UK. These faiths were represented by national and local interfaith organisations and educational and academic bodies with an interest in multi-faith and interfaith issues. An example of our support was at the event below, where Gylden Fellowship members joined those from other faiths on the walk.

For more information about the Interfaith Walk or to register your interest email Islam.Jalil@Basingstoke.gov.uk or call 01256 845325

The Basingstoke Interfaith Walk begins at 2pm at The War Memorial Park, Basingstoke

We will gather at the Bandstand in War Memorial Park for a welcome and instructions. We will then walk through the Top of the Town to the Willis Museum where we will join in silent prayer and contemplation for peace as an act of solidarity by people of all faiths in rejecting violence around the world. From the Willis Museum we will walk towards Fairfield’s area and Council Road.

Route map 2017

The walk will end at Irish Society Centre RG21 3DH where we will have light refreshments and a presentation by the Faith Leaders Forum, Fairtrade Group and Basingstoke Multicultural Forum.

This event is open to all members of the public. Walkers are asked to dress for the weather and wear comfortable walking shoes. There is a public pay and display car park, Eastlands car park, RG21 4AW by the council offices off London Road.

Easy home remedies

By Nic the Witch

Let's start with a very traditional remedy: **boiled cinnamon and honey** has been used for those suffering cancer, arthritis, gallbladder and high cholesterol. This mix of honey and cinnamon was known centuries ago in China. The items were like meds or cures since they healed and were known as home remedies for a long time. The cinnamon is one of the oldest and best-known spices in history and it is the same with the honey. The oil of cinnamon and the enzyme of it makes hydrogen peroxide that is also in the honey – both kill microbes and also block the fungi or bacteria. To make this mix, add honey in a pan and make it boil. Add the cinnamon and let this thicken like caramel. Have 1 spoon with every meal. So what can it be used for?

1. **Heart problems:** make a paste with honey and cinnamon and eat it with bread or just plain. This unclogs arteries and lowers bad cholesterol. In a cup of tea, add 2 tbsp honey and 3 tsp cinnamon and, after few hours, the cholesterol will be lower by 10%.
2. Daily honey usage and cinnamon makes the **immunity stronger and health protection better from viruses or bacteria**. If you often have colds, mix honey 1 tbsp and cinnamon ¼ tsp, take this for 3 days to cure the cold, cough and also nose congestion
3. **Stomach pains and ulcers** are soothed with this mix of honey and cinnamon. There are many medicines around for stomach upsets. But I've always suggested that an ill person use spearmint, as it's gentler on the stomach than peppermint.
4. **Arthritis:** take a glass full of warm water and add 2 tbsp honey and 1 tsp cinnamon. Have it in mornings and at night too, to prevent chronic arthritis.

Another plant that's almost everywhere at present is **alkanet**. On the healing side, alkanet leaves and roots are all good as remedies for various ailments, including the following.

- An infusion of the leaves alleviates persistent coughs and helps cause sweating during fever.
- Such infusions also combat depression and anxiety.
- Alkanet juice as a decoction or expressed juice was a remedy for pleurisy.
- Alkanet infused oil can be used to moisturise skin, calm any skin rashes or inflammations and cleanse cuts – like a form of chamomile.
- It is sometimes used to purify the blood, because alkanet acts as a diuretic.
- Alkanet tincture is known for its antiseptic quality for ulcers or varicose veins.

And we'll finish with a **nice cup of tea**. Most herbs and flowers can be made into some type of infusion for actual ailments or just to remove stress. Again at this time of year, there's plenty of roses around. I find that a blend of rose petals with lemon balm acts very well against depression or anxiety.

Seasonal events in July

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07800 734 911

Email: newforestfayres@gmail.com

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PROG FOR PEART

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In aid of brain cancer research & in memory of Neil Peart

at The Northcourt, Abingdon Utd FC

Fri 12th July

Sat 13th July

Event by [Spriggan Mist](#): [Music at The Northcourt](#)

Open to anyone on or off Facebook

Prog For Peart is a two day music festival in Abingdon, Oxfordshire set up in memory of Neil Peart of the band Rush, which donates all profits to brain cancer research



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