



Gylden Magick

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June 2020

PRACTICAL MAGICK & UNIVERSAL ENERGY FOR EVERYDAY LIFE

Editor's notes

by Gylden Fellowship

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

The **Gylden Community** is one of the most extensive pagan libraries in southern England. Its website, www.gyldenfellowship.co.uk, is growing too. Our meetup group membership has almost 200 people and we welcome new members constantly.

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

Gylden Fellowship continues as a pagan support mechanism, albeit less so at the moment, in the light of the COVID-19 travel restrictions. So,

this time, we're very grateful to our friends for their contributions too.

Our **Strawberry Moon** issue stays with the 20-page format with ever more guidance on spiritual issues, Gaia and magick. This edition has a definite emphasis on summer - the altar colours for this period are gold, green and yellow. But no ads – after all, we're like a pagan public library and all the information is free.

Dates for your diaries – not least **World Environment Day** on 5 June, the **Feast of Epona** on 13 June (hence the horse picture above) and **Vidar's Day** on 14 June. There's a **lunar eclipse** on 5 June and a **solar eclipse** on 21 June. And we have the **Summer Solstice** around 20 June.

What else is there? Well, we continue our series about animal

spirit guides with the crow, a folklore tale about possession, poetry, artwork, Litha magick, the start of astrology from 3000 BCE, healthy summer drinks, several pieces on Gaia and cosmic energies, environmental news from the Sussex Wildlife Trust, herbal healing with mint and our crystal of the month is onyx.

Anything else? Oh yes, the title – we never forget that our faith is based upon Nature and that our strength comes from earth magick. Many of our sabbats are based upon the light, eg solstices and equinoxes, as vital to us now as to our ancestors.

For more info, why not join [Gylden River LRC](#) or [Gylden Fellowship](#) groups on Facebook today and see our stories, reports, updates or briefings for June?

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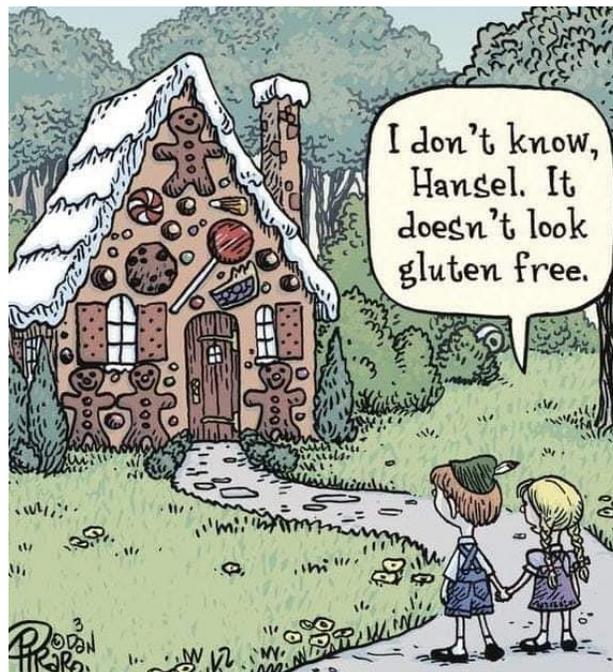
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Animal spirit guides: crow

Not all animal spirit guides take the form of primary mammals like wolves, bears or birds. It is common to have a reptile guide or an insect one. Last month, we looked at the bat as a spirit guide – now we think about a more common guide, namely the crow. 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 crow – what does it symbolise?



OK then, a crow is one of the more mystical guides and is often linked with those who follow a shamanic path. This spirit helps you to work with the energy of your aura and to improve divination. Actually, those with a crow spirit guide tend to have a psychic ability of some sort that is aware of portents and signs.

Along with the mystical element is a tendency for those with crow guides to have deep personas. Such people are not shallow, but think about spiritual matters in depth and follow their souls. A crow guide helps you to increase your awareness of magick, universal energy and alchemy.

In nature, crows work together to protect other crows. So, those with crow guides tend to protect those around them, fight common enemies, be dogged in the pursuit of justice and speak the truth. One caveat here is that crows are very intelligent in real life and complacency can creep in – in many cultures, crows are seen as tricksters – with good reason. Just be aware that your crow spirit guide may advise a course of action that goes beyond what you feel ready to perform.

A crow spirit guide has, traditionally, been portrayed as a messenger of death, perhaps because of its black plumage and diet of carrion. This is not true in spiritual terms, but a crow spirit guide can be a symbol of change. The crow guide helps to teach us not to be afraid of change, but to evaluate each change in terms of things that may be purged or discarded safely from our lives and the guide will support you through the transition process.

Crystals: onyx

Onyx is a type of chalcedony, i.e. a variety of quartz crystal. It comes in all colours, including green, red, yellow, brown and black. The best stones come from Russia, Mexico, Italy, the USA and Brazil.

More about this below, but onyx is all about personal strength and change. If you suffer from any sort of phobia, self-doubt or anxiety, an onyx crystal amplifies your own resilience and personal power to face fears.

And what of its **healing or magickal** properties?

- Onyx is really good against sadness and helps to accentuate happiness. Not only joy, but it boosts self-confidence and self-control.
- It is a brilliant protective stone, particularly against dispelling inner fears.
- Onyx is good for peacefulness and releasing stress, as it puts an emphasis on self-awareness, inner truth and spirit awakening.
- Onyx provides strong and intuitive guidance on a shamanic journey.
- Further, it's good for meditation and mental health issues involving insomnia, phobias and depression, due to its grounding properties.
- It could be described a crystal of wisdom as it allows you to keep your own secrets, helps with clear decision-making and aids with psychometry.
- Black onyx is most effective with the base chakra and green onyx with the heart chakra.
- Onyx is good for the feet and blood dis-eases.
- Also, it helps cure bone disorders, cleanses the bone marrow and strengthens the teeth.
- Use a darker onyx crystal, to combine with a clear crystal to produce a healing process that results in spiritual peace with protection.
- Actually, onyx is a good stone for crystal therapy as it can pinpoint the location of past injuries and be used to release any underlying damage.



Herb of the month: mint

Mint comes in so many different forms, that it's hard to know where to start – peppermint, spearmint, garden mint, field mint, etc. It's part of the *lamiaceae* family and the main parts used for healing are the leaves.

Mint leaves are edible and mint is a vital part of many recipes, including roast lamb, ice cream, sweets and with potatoes, although it is a strong flavour. Menthol or mint essential oil is used in cosmetic products, eg toothpaste, perfume, shampoo and in tobacco alternatives.

On the **healing side**, mint is good for as a remedy for various ailments, including the following.

- An infusion of the leaves relieves stomach ache and indigestion. Mint turns up in many branded goods in this regard, but mint tea is a diuretic if drunk too much.
- Mint tea helps to combat depression and anxiety and to boost the immune system. For those with anxiety, I make yarrow and peppermint teabags that help to soothe worries. Mint tea is also good for meditation or for rituals.
- Mint (all varieties) is good for oily skin problems, as a lotion or cream.
- As a steam inhalation, mint helps against colds, due to its decongestant properties.
- It is sometimes used to treat insect bites and mint plants deter ants from buildings. Mint oil is a non-chemical way of killing wasps or hornets.
- As with lemon balm, it's worth thinking about using mint leaves in a warm bath. Put some fresh leaves or dried peppermint in a teabag and let the hot tap run through it – for a relaxing aroma.



Recipe: orange & garden leaf salad

This recipe is a good one for summer, particularly as oranges are a correspondence food for June. The choice of lettuce is for you, but it could be iceberg or romaine. Again, you could serve this with warm bread or ciabatta – my choice would be a warm flatbread.

We've been featuring a lot of herbs in **GYLDEN MAGICK** in past issues and most of them fall into the category of edible plants. So, this recipe includes common plants, all from my garden and you can just use the leaves to make up the salad. I guess the salad makes about 3-4 servings.

Ingredients

- 1200g shredded lettuce
- 130g sliced strawberries
- 130g drained mandarin oranges
- 100g sliced red onion
- 2tbsp fresh lemon juice (add at end)
- Fresh orange segments
- Mixed garden leaves or flowers, washed:
 - Borage
 - Alkanet
 - Dandelions
 - Plantains
 - Chickweed
 - Lemon verbena
 - Calendula
 - Rose petals
 - Nasturtiums
 - Daisies
 - Chervil
 - Sweet violets
 - Pansies

Note: try to remember to avoid any plants that have been treated with pesticides.



Cosmic energies: The New Earth

By Vali Trinity

Dear Friends - I felt moved, well nudged really, to share these thoughts. So, unlike many times over the past 40 years where I've forwarded thoughts from others, I now really need to share from my heart. I have been following a variety of informative channels, eg Michael Love (Into the Light), NESARA (News), Agenda 21 and the Great White Brotherhood (or Great Brotherhood of Light) for 35-40 years. I would truly appreciate any comments or shared resonance with anything I write.

Now, we move deeper into the Love that we are experiencing in these times, to varying degrees and levels. As an expansion of our sense of the multi-dimensional beings that we are, now we know how thoughts and words we choose to use have power.

Some may know that 15 years ago, I painted a vision I had of *Mother Earth Giving Birth*; so, I feel strongly some words coming through. In a way, I feel like a midwife, privy to the growing pains for some years and birthing pangs of Lady Gaia. Gaia who, in her wondrous, gorgeous, flowing gowns of pink spring petals, revealed the new-born Gaia on the 8 April (a symbol of eternity) – a pink full supermoon in Libra. This was all for Peace, Harmony, Unity and Beauty, revealing some glimpses of the mysterious 5th Dimension, to those with eyes to see this divine level of heart and soul.

As I see it, there are many paths, but they all lead home eventually. Some are circuitous, some arduous and some just slow or dense. Simply, two main ones appear for us to choose: the red or the blue paths.

The Blue path is that where it's all familiar and comfortable, like old slippers. We're all told how to live, how to behave, what programmes to watch and how or when to be tested and vaccinated against what is the disease of the moment – or, indeed, what issue at any given time is deemed by government to be something we all must do "for the good of all".

The Red path is the divine matrix of Love, where the wonder of heavenly life unfolds more of its divine glory for us in Peace, Love and Harmony. It's a place where animals are all loved, everyone has clean water, fresh food and there's dancing, laughter and a deep joy and gratitude as we're all now free.

Choices, as you all know, have often been in various guises throughout our lives. I sense that the two paths are happening as parallel paradigms, if you will. I'm reminded of last year, as I often felt I was riding two horses at the same time, vying in opposite directions, sometimes quite disturbing to navigate!

This time is a quantum leap now, dear souls, we've no idea what lies ahead. Frankly, I do feel very excited at the vast amount of possibilities! I'm reaching out to communicate and, as I am alone a lot, I would very much like to have any comments you would care to give, this feels the next thing to speak up about Now.

So, we could raise our consciousness and take off the masks/ blindfolds of patterns, conditioning and set behaviours. Maybe, now, is the time to choose which path to focus on. If, with wide open hearts, we could begin to REAL EYES (*sic*) that this actually IS, Heaven on Earth – now, we are free, sovereign beings of Love and Light.

My understanding is that we are One Love and co-creators, as we create our own reality – mainly by our thoughts. As we think, so it is...with our Love we can change the world. This is just sharing how I see the show in these times. As I type this, there's a clip on the tablet of a herd of horses, galloping freely in the sun, across a wide expanse of grassland.

No more fears, darkness, deception, destruction, cruelty and anger, let's go forward - knowing how much we are loved, knowing Lady Gaia, our Mother, has our backs...with a hundred thousand angels by our side.

This is the Golden Age of Aquarius.

Gylden
Magick
June 2020

Art showcase by Tara B Studios

Contact: @TaraBernadetteEgan





Poetry: Watermelon Sunsets

By Bernadette Flynn

I long for green and growing things
their humid, verdant scent,
When Summer wears her lilac crown
and gentle Spring is spent.

That honeyed locust blossom smell
which teases and delights,
As watermelon sunsets drench
the still and balmy nights.

I lie awake just breathing in
the fragrant, salty air,
And listen to the soothing waves,
their song beyond compare.

Those dreamy, aquaholic days
spent barefoot in the grass,
I sip the ripe and sun-kissed land
like liquor from my glass.



Ancient peoples: the start of astrology

By Gylden Fellowship

In the **GYLDEN MAGICK** edition for *March 2020*, we included a feature on the links between Christianity and the Zodiac and, in particular, the astrological designs and symbols in the **Abbey Church of Waltham Holy Cross and St Lawrence** in Waltham Abbey in Essex. The abbey itself is quite ancient, dating from the 7th century, although the current building dates from 1177. And if you visit the abbey, the main roof is decorated with the signs of the Zodiac. The present Abbey ceiling was painted in 1860, but the style was based on the 13th century design from the nave in Peterborough Cathedral.

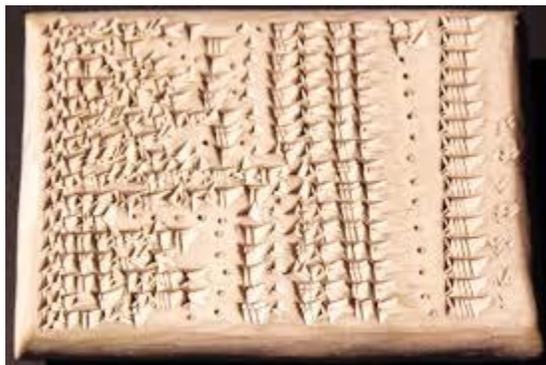
Many people might guess that our astrological signs can be traced back to the Middle Ages, the Romans or Ancient Greeks – they would be right, but only half-right, because the idea of astrology is much older than that, all the way back to the development of writing itself. One point to note at the start, though, is that there is a difference between Western astrology and Vedic astrology and we're going further back than that too.

In the 13th century, most people believed that our planet was at the centre of the universe with planets and the sun revolving around us. The stars in the night sky formed pictures and the constellations had been named accordingly by Graeco-Roman and Middle Eastern cultures – to represent gods, goddesses, animals and legends. Early astronomers noted that 12 constellations seemed to form a band or zodiac around the sky and that the sunrise followed that band during the year, rising each month in different constellations in turn. This was the start of naming each zodiac sign as a symbol for that month, starting with the sign of Aries for the spring equinox.

An intro to the Sumerians

However, neither Graeco-Roman nor Middle Eastern cultures invented the zodiac or astrology, although the Middle East is closer, geographically speaking. The real invention of astrology comes from the Sumerian people from 3300 BCE, namely pre-Ancient Egypt. The Sumerians lived in an area that later became known as Mesopotamia, later still as Persia and, today, as Iraq. And they were one of the most advanced cultures at that time. To put that comment in perspective, the Sumerians were inventing such concepts as the wheel, the chariot, the first schools and the first library – at the same time as the Celts in the UK were building henge monuments and stone circles – this was the Neolithic period.

The Sumerians also invented our concept of measuring time with 60 seconds in a minute and 60 minutes in an hour, as well as months measured by lunar cycles and years too, according to the position of the sun. That's why Sumerian counting systems relied upon bases 12 and 60 (rather than our base 10) – they devised 12 lunar cycles in a year and 360 days in a year. Each Sumerian day and night were divided into 12 equal periods and this counting system was adopted by later cultures, including those in Persia, India, Egypt and China.



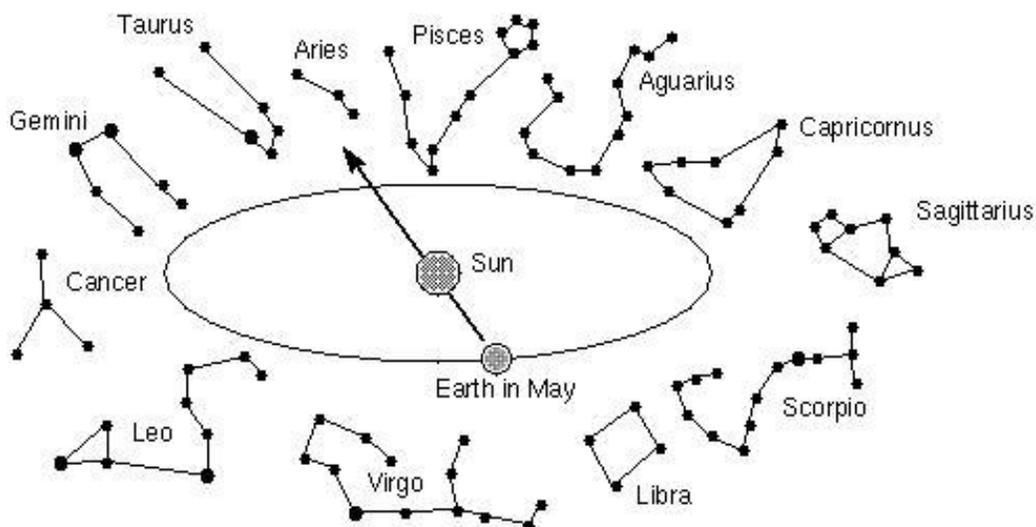
Where did astrology really begin?

The Sumerians wrote down their observations about the stars and planets on cuneiform (clay) tablets – that is how we know that they had identified Venus, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter and Saturn from about 3000 BCE. The Ancient Greeks may have renamed the major constellations in the sky, but the Sumerians had already done all the spadework by locating the patterns in the night sky and naming them. Here's a list of our zodiac signs and the Sumerian equivalents.

Aries	Ku.Mal – Field dweller
Taurus	Gu.An.Na – Heavenly bull
Gemini	Mash.Tab.Ba - Twins
Cancer	Dub – Pincers or tongs
Leo	Ur.Gula - Lion
Virgo	Ab.Sin – Her father was Sin
Libra	Zi.Ba.An.Na – Heavenly fate
Scorpio	Gir.Tab – Claws
Sagittarius	Pa.Bil – Archer or defender
Capricorn	Suhur.Mash – Goat-fish
Aquarius	Gu – Lord of the waters
Pisces	Sim.Mah - Fishes

Babylon

Later on, after the Sumerian civilisation had been superseded by the Akkadians and the Assyrians, the culture that was Babylon developed astrology further by using the locations of the sun, moon and planets to measure time according to periods of 60 days each. This detailed observation allowed the astronomers to calculate the actual movement of a planet in space. Archaeologists have found over 500 cuneiform tablets from 1800 BCE (early Bronze Age) from Babylon that described astronomy and astrology. It was the Babylonians who linked the star patterns and planets with gods and goddesses, eg Venus was Ishtar and Jupiter was Marduk. And it was the Babylonians who produced astrological art with all the familiar signs of the zodiac that we still use today.



Seasonal magick for Litha

By Nick the Witch

The name for the Summer Solstice in Druidry is **Alban Hefin**, which means *The Light of the Shore*, but here, we're going to stick with the more common pagan name of Litha, which also means a ray of light. Litha is the height of summer, the longest day and the shortest night of the earth's solar year. At this time, we celebrate the completion of the cycle that began at the winter solstice. *Solstice* means *the standing of the sun* and we can connect to the great turning point in the earth's annual cycle to stop, be still and reflect on our progress since Yule. It is a time to count our blessings, celebrate our achievements and pass on the spirit of goodwill to all we encounter.

From now until Yule, everything will be drawing in and we can use this time to develop ourselves during the time of darkness. Past summer solstices meant that people stayed up all night to greet the dawn and many stone circles in the northern hemisphere have been aligned to the solstice sunrise. Actually, if I cast my mind back to [Litha 2015](#), this is how I described the event in another online site.

"OK, I know that it's common for many pagans in my part of the UK (South) to rush off to Avebury Stone Circle or Stonehenge to celebrate Litha, but I'd like to share an alternative. I go to a local moot, which has no more than 5-6 people at best and none of us wanted to join the cast of thousands in Wiltshire.

So, we did what many small settlements might have done thousands of years ago: we used a local field, miles from anywhere (with the owner's permission) and used a portable fire pit to set up an all-night blaze. We had drums, guitars, food, mead and beer and held a short Litha ritual + prayers to the Goddess + all-night vigil, before greeting the dawn. Everyone joined in, there was much fellowship and I felt that this was the right way: a solitary or small-group act of worship, rather than the media circus that surrounds mass solstice celebrations. After all, if you visit Stonehenge now, you'll be able to buy more fuel or a cup of tea at the Solstice service station nearby."

Now is the time to express our own growth through art, dance, stories, poetry and songs, remembering ancestral wisdom and preparing for future changes. This is also a time for grounding yourself and placing your spirit in alignment with the energy of Gaia. Be open to inner wishes, beliefs and feelings and follow your heart. Here are some ideas for celebrating Litha, whilst at home or in a family.

- Going out for as a family group (or with a friend) for a walk and a picnic.
- Accentuating kindness: make someone happy and try to be kind to strangers.
- Doing some performance activities, eg singing or storytelling, within social distancing rules.
- Drying herbs and storing them in jars...I've been using up my stocks to make massage oils and herbal teabags.
- Making a local map of trees in your area.
- Writing down lists of wildflowers you've seen on your walks.
- Listing the animals and birds that visit your garden, eg owls, bats, hedgehogs, etc.
- Taking a day out to do a solitary vision quest – take water to drink, fruits or basic foods to eat and seek solitude to evaluate your pathway.
- Making some incense for Litha – here's just one example:
 - 2 parts sandalwood
 - 1 part mugwort
 - 1 part chamomile
 - 1 part gardenia flowers
 - a few drops rose, lavender or yarrow essential oil.

On the subject of **kindness**, here's a little spell to send to anyone you know who is ill or depressed atm. Without mentioning any names, I run this spell (or a variation of it) every night for a close friend who needs my healing energies. Normally, I focus on that person beforehand and hold a piece of rough amethyst or citrine crystal.

I see you with my mind,
 And keep you in my heart –
 Healing circles of magick,
 From me to you depart.
 This energy it soothes,
 And eases all your pain –
 Bringing only blessed relief,
 And freedom from stress again.
 So, mote it be – from me to you <Name> forever.



Sunset prayer for Litha

The longest day is over,
 As the sun sinks slowly away.
 At dawn, we greeted and honoured you,
 Celebrating your light over the land.
 You make crops grow and bloom,
 And your heat warms the earth -
 You are the bringer of life for us all.
 Now the darkness starts once again,
 A minute more of night each day,
 Until we celebrate your rebirth at Yule.
 Radiant Aine*, we ask for your blessings
 At your festival of Midsummer –
 Help us to experience true joy and divinity.
 May the goddess of love and light,
 Bring us the sun's power during every day and,
 Throughout the remainder of our lives.
 So, mote it be.

* Aine = Aw-neh

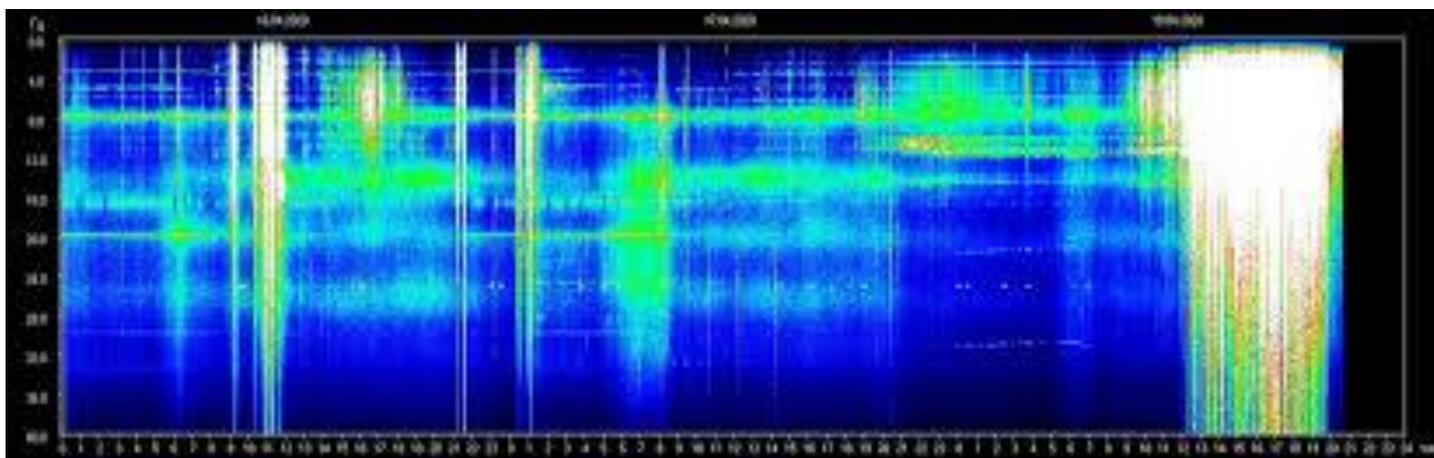
Cosmic energies: Schumann Resonances

By Mark Sharpen

OK, this text is a brief introduction to the Schumann Resonances – the topic will be explored in more detail in a future issue of **GYLDEN MAGICK**, when we look at other aspects of Gaia. In short, the Schumann Resonances are all about sets of electromagnetic waves that oscillate at different frequencies within the Earth's ionosphere. The pioneer of this theory was called Winfried Otto Schumann, a professor at Munich University in 1953.

Let's start with energy, which comprises everything in the universe, including us. And energy is constantly in motion, vibrating at different frequencies with distinct patterns. Without going into too much detail about quantum physics, it would be fair to say that the patterns of vibrations match those patterns found in geometric planes of existence, eg spirals can be found in ferns, shells and galaxies – the patterns are identical. Our planet is made of energy and can be viewed as a living organism that we'll describe as Gaia. This is a topic for another time, in a lot more detail, but it's probably OK to say that our planet organizes its energy to breathe, evolve and react to certain stimuli. Is it a sentient being? That is another fascinating subject under research at present.

What is known is that our Earth has its own energy fields and vibrations that are responsible for atmosphere, ecosystems, etc. The measurement of the Earth's vibrational frequency is the Schumann Resonance. It exists at a very low frequency part of the planet's electromagnetic field range. It can be measured daily and the results compared as quantitative data, eg by looking at spikes and the effect of atmospheric events, such as lightning in the ionosphere. If we can say that there is an average Schumann Resonance, it equates to 7.83Hz, but events like solar storms also affect the frequency.



What is really interesting is that there appears to be a link between our mental health and Schumann Resonances – the measurement of our own EEG readings shows that the frequency of our brain waves is not so far away from the vibrational patterns of Schumann Resonances. The picture above shows a daily measurement of the Schumann Resonances - the blue areas with green represent the normal vibration pattern expected of Earth. If there are any spikes or disturbances that change the pattern, these are the white areas.

The \$64,000 question then is whether these disturbances have an effect on our brainwaves or behaviour. There have been numerous experiments on human vibrational frequencies. We fall into the general range of 5Hz-10Hz, but the consensus appears to be that the closer one is to the Schumann Resonance at 7.83Hz, so the better one's health will be. In the next issue of **GYLDEN MAGICK**, we'll look at methods of living in harmony with Gaia and other Schumann Resonance topics like entrainment and coherence.

The Screaming Skull

By the Storyteller

Some stories lend themselves to performance rather than reading from a book. I recall telling this one at a Spriggan Mist Ghostly Tales gig in 2017 at a pub in Sandhurst. 'Twas a Samhain gig and the pub owners had festooned the inn with model spiders and cobwebs everywhere! For an extreme arachnophobe like me, the telling of all the tales that night meant keeping a watchful eye on the decorations too!

Bettiscombe Manor, near Lyme Regis, contains a human skull and the legend runs that if the skull is ever removed from the house, disaster follows. The story starts in 1685 when Azariah Pinney was tried and convicted of taking part in a rebellion against the Crown. He was not executed, but deported to the West Indies as a slave on a sugar plantation, but Bettiscombe Manor remained as part of the Pinney family estates.

We jump forward to the early nineteenth-century. Azariah had finally been freed before death and his children had built a large sugar plantation with their own slaves. The latest descendant, John Frederick Pinney, sold his lands and came home to Bettiscombe with a faithful servant.

After a while, the servant fell ill with TB and, as he lay dying, swore that he could never rest unless his body was returned for burial in the West Indies. The servant died, but John Pinney refused to pay for such an expensive burial, despite all the servant's years of loyalty – the body was buried in the local cemetery of St Stephen's Church. Almost at once, a wave of bad luck hit the village (crops failed and cattle died and people fell ill) and continuous screams could be heard at night, coming from the cemetery. At the manor house, even when there was no wind, doors kept slamming and windows rattling of their own accord.



Soon the servant's body was exhumed and taken to the manor house and the disturbances stopped, but the skeleton has vanished now and only the skull remains to date. The tradition says that if the skull is removed from the house, ill fortune will fall on the family. For example, one of the Pinney family threw the skull into a nearby pond, in the late nineteenth-century, and all the residents of the house were kept awake for the next few nights by the screams and groans from the pond, until a servant was sent to retrieve the skull.

Interestingly, a famous writer (and doubter) spent a night at the manor in the 1960s, in the same room as the skull. Eric Marple said that he heard no screams, but he did have the worst nightmares of his life and he refused to spend a second night there.

Poetry: The Ascension Journey

By Vali Trinity

To manifest the Beauty,
To go beyond any doubt,
To Be the Love,
Receive the Joy
Is what it's all about.

A double spiral up and down,
In and out abound,
Balanced and in Harmony,
We weave a Heaven around.

Everything is interwoven,
All is re-aligning,
Wondrous colours swirl and furl,
It's so beguiling.

Into the light we're flying,
To a gorgeous Paradigm.

All is One, Love is Here
Now is Our Time to Shine.

Taken from the book, **Poetry in the Vali** – for more details, contact hapivali7@gmail.com



Environmental update

By Sussex Wildlife Trust and Gylden Fellowship

This text was sourced from Sussex Wildlife Trust – regular updates can be obtained from sussexwildlifetrust.org.uk.

It is noticeable that, under the current lockdown regime, nature and wildlife has become more important to many people, particularly in terms of mental health and welfare. Exercising in fresh air and enjoying the sunshine helps to strengthen our immune systems. In fact, it has been shown that being outside (rather than isolating inside) has the following pluses:

- ✚ Lower stress levels
- ✚ Improved concentration
- ✚ Increased sense of well-being
- ✚ Reduced blood pressure
- ✚ Boosted recovery times for patients.

In May, there was Mental Health Awareness Week and the theme for 2020 was kindness. It is likely that, if you consider your local community, you will find many examples of kindness there. To be honest, kindness helps to mitigate the negative effects of isolation by decreasing stress, improving optimism and increasing friendship. That's not just kindness to each other, but kindness to local wildlife – here's a list of things that you, yes you, could do for local wildlife.

- ✚ Birdie feeders are always good and there's lots of choice – I've also put out a feeder full of moulted alpaca fur, because the alpaca fur is such a good lining for nests
- ✚ Ensure that there's water available for birds
- ✚ Plant bee-friendly flowers, eg calendula, dahlias, poppies, geraniums, lemon balm and hebe
- ✚ Don't mow the grass too often, for insects to flourish
- ✚ Make or put up a bee hotel.

Another major campaign concerns beavers - Sussex Wildlife Trust, along with The Wildlife Trusts, are calling for a Beaver Strategy for England which would provide a roadmap for a more secure future for beavers. There is an online petition for people to sign that calls upon the government to implement such a strategy.

Beavers are vital to a green recovery for the British countryside. A healthy beaver population supports farmers, landowners and river users. Slowly, more beavers are returning to British rivers and canals after an absence of some 400 years. Many environmental studies have shown beavers make our streams, rivers and wetland habitats better for both wildlife and people. They provide new homes for all sorts of native wildlife like dragonflies, otters, and water voles. They also make positive changes to the landscape, help improve water quality, reduce flooding and lock up carbon – in turn, helping to tackle climate change. A national strategy would allow for the rewilding of beavers in parts of England that are prone to flood damage.



Self-help: healthy summer drinks

By Gylden Fellowship

We've seen more than few warm days recently and we thought that it would be good to have some ideas on how to make our meals a little healthier in the hot weather. If you're re-reading this in the wet and cold of November, I apologise, but just think back to the warm days of May/June.

Although a drink is full of fruit, that doesn't mean it is low in sugar. Many fruits are full of natural sugars and someone who wants a low-fat and a low-sugar drink should **beware** of:

- ✚ Bananas – 3ozs of bananas contains 10.1g of sugar
- ✚ Cherries
- ✚ Pomegranates or figs
- ✚ Grapes

Fruits that are **low in natural sugars** include:

- ✚ Olives
- ✚ Avocados
- ✚ Limes
- ✚ Starfruit
- ✚ Cranberries
- ✚ Raspberries
- ✚ Blackberries
- ✚ Strawberries

Note: rhubarb is also very low in natural sugars

Fresh cucumber and lime drink

1 lime
2 cucumbers
1 big orange
Honey, to sweeten if required
Fresh mint leaves, according to taste
1 litre sparkling water

- Puree one cucumber in a blender and slice the other one into circles
- Squeeze the juice out of the orange and lime
- Mix together the cucumbers, juice and honey in a large jug
- Add the sparkling water and garnish with fresh mint leaves.

Fruit-infused water

If you're tired of drinking water, why not try fruit-infused water? It tastes good and is made with only healthy ingredients - it's both vegan and gluten-free.

1 sliced orange
6 sliced strawberries
10 mint leaves
1 litre water

- Place the sliced fruits and the mint leaves in a glass jar
- Pour in the water and refrigerate for at least 1-2 hours (or even overnight).

Tip: a longer time in the refrigerator means more flavour for the water.

Detox green juices

Another vegan and gluten-free drink - a green juice is good to clean out and detox your system. Organic produce is better, but if you can't afford it, don't worry. All fruit and veg should be washed and peeled first. You can make big batches of juice and drink it throughout the day (although fresh juice tastes better and has more vitamins) or even freeze it.

2 red apples (peeled, if non-organic)

Half a pineapple and 2 lemons

70g spinach (on your first time, it's recommended that 30g is plenty)

- Peel the pineapple and the lemons
- Chop all the fruit
- Put everything through a juicer or blender
- Strain the juice for a better texture (optional) and run pulp through the blender again.

Strawberry and fresh mint drink

1 lemon and 1 lime

10 fresh mint leaves

8 strawberries, halved

1 litre sparkling water

100ml hot water

Ice

- Juice half the lime and half the lemon in a jar and drop in the peels
- Add the strawberries and herbs to the jar
- Pour in hot water
- Let the fruit and herbs infuse for a while to give extra flavour
- Remove the peels and let the drink cool
- Slice the remaining lemon and lime halves into thin circles
- Add the sparkling water and ice
- Garnish the jar with the lemon and lime circles.

Pear and sage drink

10 fresh sage leaves

1 lime and 1 pear

250ml pear juice (fresh or tinned)

250ml sparkling water

Ice

- Wash all the ingredients
- Slice the lime into circles, cut the pear into cubes and mash the sage with a fork
- Place them in a jug and crush the ice
- Add the crushed ice, pear juice and sparkling water
- Mix well and refrigerate, if required.

Lemon energy fizz

5 lemons
1 litre sparkling water
10 mint leaves
Ice

- Squeeze the juice from 4 lemons
- Slice the last lemon into thin circles
- Mix the lemon juice and sparkling water in a jar
- Add ice and mint leaves
- Leave to infuse for a short while.

Summer apple and lemon drink

1 litre apple juice (fresh or packaged)
10 mint leaves
100ml lemon juice
1 lemon
Ice

- Slice the lemon into thin circles
- Mix the apple and lemon juices in a jug
- Add the mint leaves
- Add ice and garnish with the lemon circles
- Leave to infuse for a short while

Slimmer's cucumber elixir

1 cucumber and 1 lemon
A bunch of parsley
1 tbsp grated ginger root
1 tbsp aloe vera juice
Half a glass of water

- Wash and juice all the ingredients
- Drink before going to bed
- Continue this routine for a month and then take a break of one week
- If needed, then start the cycle again.



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