

Indie Shaman

for independent spirits

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*At the Gates
of Annwfn*

*Measure of
Annwn:
Eternity of
Yew*

*Ascension,
Shamanism
& the
Otherworld*

*Orion
Foxwood
talks about
Appalachian
folk magic*

SHAMANIC LANDS: THE OTHERWORLD
The Call of the Ancestors

Indie Shaman

Environmental and Accessibility

WEBSITE

<https://indieshaman.co.uk/>

POSTAL ADDRESS

18 Bradwell Grove
Danesmoor
Chesterfield
Derbyshire
S45 9TA

EDITOR

June Kent

CONTACT

editor@indieshaman.co.uk
01246 251768

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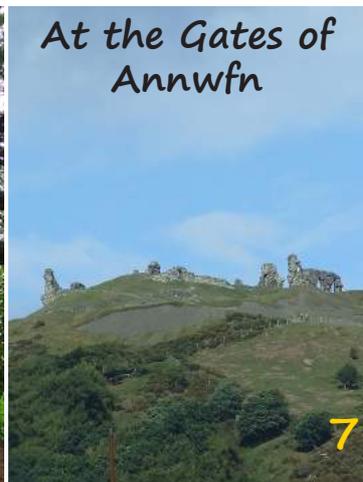
or by post to:
June Kent, Indie Shaman,
18 Bradwell Grove, Danesmoor
Chesterfield, Derbyshire, S45 9TA

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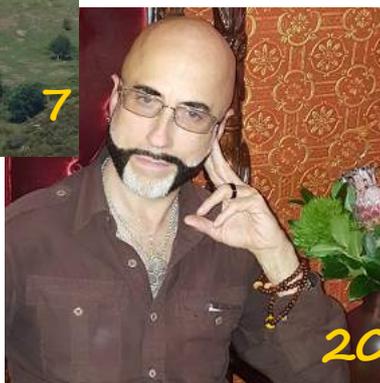
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Contributors

Articles

Brooke Medicine Eagle & Genevieve Boast
Ceri Norman
Davyd Farrell
Elen Tompkins
Eoghan Odinson
Hearth Moon Rising
Kristoffer Hughes
Michael Dunning

Columnists

Yvonne Ryves

Cover Photography

Front Cover: 'The Whittinghame Yew' © Andy McGeeney 2018
<https://www.andymcgeeney.com/>
Back Cover: Simon Harding

Interview

Courtesy of and with thanks to Orion Foxwood. Interviewer Davyd Farrell.

Reviewers

Badrunnisa Patel, Joe Caudwell, June Kent, Karon Lyne, Martin Pallot, Thea Prothero

'Shay Mann'

Simon Harding

Storyteller & Poet

Martin Pallot

Editorial and Production

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Editor's Letter & Community News

Welcome to Issue 36 of Indie Shaman magazine!

"We are in a time of great change in the world and shamanism is becoming ever more popular as a way to navigate through the turmoil. The call for us to reconnect back to our authentic selves has never been heard louder." (Davyd and Emma Farrell, The Shamanic Lands)

The fantastic Shamanic Lands is back this year with 'The Otherworld', taking place in the ancient lands of Cymru (Wales) and opening a doorway of exploration deep into the Celtic mythical traditions. I'm happy to be able to work in partnership with Davyd and Emma again for this edition of Indie Shaman to bring four great articles from speakers at this fantastic event as well as Davyd's own thoughts on The Call of the Ancestors, something that so many of us are currently hearing. Indie Shaman will be having a table at this event for the first time so I look forward to meeting some more of you in person - do pop over and say hello! (Details of speakers, booking tickets etc. can be found in the advert on page 10 or at <http://www.theshamaniclands.com/>).

I'm also happy to be working with Oak Spirit this year and hope to meet some of you at their 2018 gathering, 'The Call of the Winds', four days of inspiration, reconnection and renewal at the charming Unstone Grange in Derbyshire. More info at <http://www.oakspiritgatherings.org/> or on their Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/oakspiritgatherings/>.

2018 saw two great losses for the shamanic community – The founder of Core Shamanism, Michael Harner (27 April 1929 – 3 February 2018) and the premature passing of author and shaman, Ross Heaven. Personally I will always be grateful for the support Ross gave a fledgling shamanic organization back in 2010. Ross also noticed we had Shaman Sham (a cuddly toy hedgehog received when we donated to Secret World Wildlife Sanctuary) and kindly volunteered to accommodate Sham, first to Peru to attend the 6th Annual Amazonian Shaman Conference, then later Sham attended two of Ross' courses, earning his 'ologies'. Ross had a great sense of humour! Yvonne Ryves pays tribute to Ross in her *Shaman Moon* blog in this issue. You will also find my commemoration to Ross on Indie Shaman's website (<https://indieshaman.co.uk/ross-heaven-shaman-author-one-kind/>) which includes the magazine interview from 2010 and links to our old 'Shaman Sham' blog.

Many thanks to all of you for your subscriptions and shop purchases which allowed us to renew our support of Wolf Watch UK this year; once again being able to donate more than the minimum 'adoption fee'. Following Madadh (1999 – October 2017), Indie Shaman's previously adopted wolf, sadly passing away we held a vote on our Facebook page which led to Indie Shaman adopting Callow. Callow is a kind natured female wolf, born 2007 at the West Midlands Safari Park, who came to Wolf Watch in 2010 following a dominance fight with other members of her pack which saw her badly injured. More information about this year's donations from our Good Causes Fund and about Wolf Watch UK can be found at <https://indieshaman.co.uk/indie-shaman-good-causes-fund/>. And as she's far more photogenic than me I've swapped my photo in this issue for a picture of the very beautiful Callow!

Many blessings
June



*Callow. Image © Wolf Watch UK
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The Call Of The Ancestors

Davyd Farrell

When we think of our ancestors who do we think of exactly? I expect for most of us it probably starts pretty close to home. In a very real sense our parents are our immediate ancestors. After all it is from them we are immediately descended.

If we think back a bit further than this, that naturally leads us to our grandparents who the majority of us will most likely have met in this lifetime and so we have a very real memory of who they were and the lives they led. Further back than that though it starts to get a little foggier perhaps? How many of us were lucky enough to be able to remember sharing time with our great grandparents? I do have a few memories of my great grandmother down in St Ives, only as a small child though. She lived to a good age and passed over peacefully in a very Cornish way, in her favourite chair with a half-finished cup of tea and a pasty beside her!

Beyond that it starts to get even mistier and perhaps we start to rely on old family photos or maybe anecdotes passed down to us about Great Great Uncle Alfred who fought in the Boer war or some such tale!

The further back we go, of course, the bigger our family tree begins to become with many branches heading off in multiple directions. My Mother has put a lot of time into our family tree and the Cornish branch goes back at least as far as the first census records at the turn of the 19th Century. However with a name like Farrell it's possible to dive further back into time as we are a large and at some points prominent clan in Ireland - the O'Fearnails. Indeed the family name and lineage can be traced back to the Battle of Clontarf in 1014 when our original ancestor fought at the side of the High King of Ireland, Brian Boru, against the Viking Hordes. His name was Fergal of Conmaicne and it is from this man all Farrells (and variants of) are descended.

Even though I don't have the paperwork or the complete family tree to link me to this man I nevertheless feel the connection over a millennia to a man who has given me my name, which in Gaelic means Man of Valour. Maybe some of you can trace your family roots in a similar way through clues in your name.

However, I'd like to take us back even further in time, to ancestors from another time again.

In the Celtic traditions the ancestors are seen as living in the land from a time beyond this time. They have been given many names such as the Sidhe, the Shining Ones, in Ireland or in Wales sometimes they are called the Tylwyth Teg. There are many stories about these people, who they were and what their origins are - far more than can be covered here - but all are considered to come from what is collectively known as 'The Otherworld' or in shamanic terms sometimes The Lower World, the place of the Ancestors.

These people appear throughout the world by different names and all the indigenous cultures that I have spent time with or studied have these beings or deities, as they are often referred to, in their creation stories and are still respected deeply.

I was recently reading a fascinating account¹ about one man's journey from the Isle of Man to the Pacific island of Vanuatu, where he was recognised as being the spiritual twin of the tribal chief there! He was subsequently initiated into the tribe through a series of processes. What is especially interesting here is that the principle male deity of Vanuatu, Majikjiki, is recognised as being one and the same as the otherworld Celtic sea god Manannan, whose home was the Isle of Man! Manannan is the son of Lir who is considered to be the native Sea God of these islands and widely recognised in Wales and Ireland to this day.

So what can we make of this; that humans the world over have cultures that all recognised their ultimate descendancy from these Otherworld beings? To our modern Western minds this can perhaps seem fanciful at best or perhaps lunacy at worst. And yet somewhere in that thinking, perhaps, is the very modern root of the disconnection to our ancient heritage and our connection to our lands. Our more recent ancestors obviously believed these more ancient ancestors to be of some note - even the bible says that God made man in his image!

Were these deities or God like beings our ancestors? A highly controversial statement perhaps but when we begin to connect more deeply to our natural environment by spending time in the ancient woodlands or in the stone circles on the high moors, we can begin to get a sense of this Otherworld and the presence of these beings. Is it really such a stretch to believe that in time long ago these people walked the land?

Somewhere I believe in all myths and stories there is at least an acorn of truth! Certainly when the wind blows through our wooded valley here in Mid Wales and especially on evenings like Halloween it is possible to discern voices on the wind. Perhaps the Lord of the Underworld, Gwyn Ap Nudd, leading the Wild Hunt as the souls of Earthbound spirits, perhaps just a flight of fancy ...

And yet something is stirring deep in the land ...

At a time when our continued abuse and desecration of the land - our home - Mother Earth is leading us perhaps to the brink of ecological disaster maybe those fabled ancestors, now residing in the land, are once again stirring to remind us that we too are nature like them and that if we remember that deep connection to our environment we may just be able to avert that disaster!

Author Biography

Davyd Farrell is the Co-founder of Archetype Events - a holistic events company responsible for large scale weekend events - The Shamanic Lands and Plant Consciousness and various herbal and shamanic retreats and workshops.

The Shamanic Lands event 'The Otherworld' will take place on May 19th-20th 2018 in Llandrindod Wells, Radnorshire, Wales; a two day ceremony and waking shamanic journey uniting the ancient knowledge of the British Isles and Ireland with global shamanic wisdom. We are in a time of great change in the world and shamanism is becoming ever more popular as a way to navigate through the turmoil. The call for us to reconnect back to our authentic selves has never been heard louder. This special edition of The Shamanic Lands will take place in a brand new location, here on the ancient lands of Cymru and will open a doorway of exploration deep into the heart of the Celtic mythical traditions of The Otherworld, Annwn, to reignite the relationship our ancestors had with the lands and the spirits of place.

Remembering the ancient pathways, each teacher and healer will guide us through a unique teaching from their own traditions and from direct experience, to craft an interactive space where we will learn from our original ancestors, the light within the earth, the shining ones.

1 *The Return of The White Serpent*. David Leesley. Penwith Press

At the Gates of Annwfn

Kristoffer Hughes

"My first words were spoken concerning the cauldron; from the breath of nine maidens it is warmed. It is the cauldron of the Head of Annwfn, what is its purpose with its dark rim and edged with pearls? It will not boil the food of a coward; it is not destined to do so."

In the above verse you will note reference to the cauldron of the 'Head of Annwfn' – this verse is taken from a poem in the *Book of Taliesin* and is designated the title *Preiddeu Annwfn* - 'The Spoils of Annwfn'. It accounts the heroic journey of Arthur and his warriors, along with Taliesin on an epic journey to the Otherworld in search of the cauldron of the Head of Annwfn¹, the ultimate Celtic magical cauldron. There are as many interpretations of the poem as there are words within it – it is appropriate however in this article to give you a brief description of its meaning.

Within the Spoils of Annwfn we encounter 7 magical forts to which a specific journey is made. The vessel that is used is a ship called *Prydwen*, a typical feminine deific title in the Welsh language which contains the suffix 'wen', meaning 'pure' or 'Blessed', and denotes a creature of deific attribution. This vessel carries the hero on a tumultuous and perilous journey into the Otherworld and to 7 different island forts in search of the cauldron.

The Anglesey Druid Order devised a system of teaching from this poem which interprets it as a journey to the indigenous Celtic Otherworld and simultaneously as a journey into 'Self'. It is the descent into matter and the exploration of the nature of who we are, why we are and what we are? Almost all spiritual traditions incorporate methods of exploring the self, it is not exclusive to Celtic traditions; the temple at Delphi has the inscription "Know Thyself" carved above its door. The Celtic schools of mystery teach us a programme for living consciously, lucidly and with authenticity. They provide us with keys that teach the nature of 'self' and that human nature, our nature, is a part of the whole and worthy of celebration. When we embark on a spiritual quest we embark on a journey into the 'self'; for as the Cauldron teaches us, the self is a part of the whole – to know it is to honour it.

The system that hides within the Spoils of Annwfn is beautifully complex – yet paradoxically simple. Each of the 'Caeri', Forts, represents a vital aspect of the human condition. They define us as individuals and are facets of our personalities and experience in this world. Journeys to the forts can teach us the nature of who we are; by allowing us to 'see the wood through the trees', we step outside of our normal boundaries and venture inwards as a traveller who observes. We may note the strengths and defences of our individual forts and will also learn of their weakness and the manner by which events may have compromised them. There are times when wounds from the past can be of such force that they obliterate the walls of our forts and disconnection ensues. When this occurs there is no mechanism or reserves available for us to rebuild our defences. When our forts have been compromised we may develop self-perpetuating patterns of behaviour and inappropriate coping strategies, which indicate the damage done. The journey to knowing ourselves takes all of these into consideration but we are guided and protected through the quest by powerful and ancient archetypes; we do not embark alone, there are forces that help us.

Within the poem there is an eighth fort, which no journey is made to. It is called 'Caer Pedryfan' or the 'Four Walled Enclosure' which is simultaneously interpreted as the island of Britain and as the boundary of Annwfn; it is that which contains the experience. In a physical sense it would be your aura field. It is the serpent's egg that surrounds your boundary; it is the first point of defence. This powerful fort represents protection, control and vitality. It is the outward expression of our functionality and the manner by which we respond to the apparent world.

¹ Annwfn from the Welsh 'Annwfn' meaning 'very deep' or 'not-world'. It exists beneath the world and connected with Taliesin's inspiration. Anglicised as Annwfn, the correct modern Welsh term would be Annwfn. Marged Haycock. *Legendary Poems from the Book of Taliesin*, CMCS, 2007.

It is by this association that each of the subsequent 7 forts has corresponding endocrine organs. This provides a system of energy centres akin to the eastern Chakra tradition but grounded in applicable occidental mythology rather than the dependency on oriental teachings. This brings a subjective concept *into* the body and makes it apparent; we are able to feel the effects of them on the physical. In slight contrast to the Cauldron of Cerridwen which initiates us into the mysteries of our origination and oneness with the Universe, the cauldron of Annwfn takes us on a journey into our human selves. It provides us with the ingredients for the experience of life. Both journeys are vital for spiritual development, each compliments the other. To assist the conceptualisation of the journey to Annwfn it is necessary to engage your imagination:

Close your eyes and imagine an enormous cauldron, large enough to almost swim in! You climb a ladder that rests against its belly and peer over the edge. Within the cauldron you see an ocean, upon which float a series of islands. Cast yourself over the edge and feel yourself falling towards the sea. You seem to float momentarily and see a ship beneath you. Your feet land gently upon her deck. Seagulls fly overhead, the sky contains a glowing sun and a silver moon; both smile down upon you. At the prow of the ship, standing side by side, are the stationary figures of Taliesin and Arthur; courage shines from the eyes of the King and wisdom gleams from the forehead of the Prophet. With a bump the ship arrives at the first island.

Caer Siddi – The Fort of Necessity

This Fort is represented by the Pituitary gland, the master gland. Its Fort is a single tower, steadfast and strong; it revolves of its own volition and is surrounded by fire in which instruments are playing of their own accord. Above it is a fountain of youthful illusion and around it is the wellspring of the sea. It is a place of illusion and repetition. It is the assumed earthly state. We are imprisoned here and held by heavy grey chains until we see and acknowledge its illusory nature. It is immovable and steadfast; it is the place of influence. Its illusions can convince all other Forts of its truths and untruths. Yet, it is the place of the fire in the head; we can see through its illusion as simply a fort which strives to maintain the status quo.

Caer Feddwit – The Fort of Mead Intoxication

This Fort is represented by the Thyroid gland. It sits on a floral island, its towers rising from a sea of green, bees buzz busily about its turrets. Guard bees protect its entrance and the Queen hums from within. This is the place of communication and expression; it is the manner by which we converse with the world. It presents us with that which nourishes but also that which poisons, its intoxicating nature can convince us to believe our own illusions. Yet, all that we find pleasurable lies here and in it our ability to laugh and be joyous, to carouse and be entertained and to entertain. It can be addictive. This is the point where we express our emotions; it is the gateway from the forts to the world beyond.

Caer Rigor – The Fort of Hardness and Rigidity

This Fort is represented by the Adrenal glands. This tall mountainous island rises sharply from the sea; its flanks are decorated with wildflower meadows, woodlands and green plains. A single fort clings precariously to a cliff top, whilst ruinous buildings adorn the lowlands. This is the place of stumbling, of harshness and falling, it is the place of the ego. It is the most dangerous of all the Forts. Here we may fall into the "I'm not good enough" or "I'm right and you're wrong!" mentality. Our principles lie here, and our ability to stand and fight or take flight. We may be immovable and stubborn on this island, overly protective of the Cauldron. Our impulses are controlled here, whether they are rational or irrational. Rigor can cause us to be stuck in our ways, to become petrified. Herein lie our personal strengths and our determination, the ability to make things happen are here. We may construct from this point and also destroy. If we stumble, do we fall, if we fall do we succumb to defeatism or do we rise to our feet; dust ourselves off and start again?

Caer Wydr – The Fort of Glass

This Fort is represented by the Thymus gland. This island blinds you, it is made entirely of glass, some rounded and smoothed by the sea, others as sharp as a sickle gnarl from the islands bedrock. Its towers are made entirely of clear glass, its staircases, floors and rooms visible through its walls. Upon its walls thousands of faceless people stand watching you, you call to them but they do not answer. This is the point of being 'you'; it is the centre of the self, your point of perspective. It is the place where you believe what you see not knowing that you are looking through glass, which although transparent, alters your view. This is the place of liminality; it sets all inherited patterns, how and when we die, and what we are susceptible too. This is fate which is unknown; all uncertainty exists here but so does our potential to access its mystery. Caer Wydr affects the manner by which we perceive all the other Forts.

Caer Goludd – The Fort of Guts and Impediment

This Fort is represented by the Endocrine function of the Pancreas. The Towering Heights of Goludd rise from flames as bright as the sun which burns to the west of it; in the east is the fullness of the moon. These are the fires of your passion and anger; it is that which we feel in the pits of our stomachs. It is ruled by fire. This place represents our riches both physical and spiritual and also our material wealth and gain. However, it is also a place of frustration and may imply gloom, for it is a place that floats between light and dark. Here we reward ourselves after trials we have won. It is what defines how we learn, what we learn and what we allow to influence us. Our vanity comes from here, as does our smugness and snobbery. It is here that we encounter all our fiery emotions; sexual impulses are invoked here, our lustfulness and the primal drive of carnality rise from this place. Our passion, which in turn can lead to anger, grief, despair and the influx of energy that compels us forward, all stem from here. The song of Goludd can be sensed in the gnawing claw that we feel in our solar plexus when confronted with extreme emotions. The fires of Goludd can only be tempered by our ability to control them; they may instil fear which implies that at times we do not always like what we feel deep within ourselves.

Caer Vandwy – The Fort of Mystery

This Fort is represented by the Reproductive glands, the ovaries and the testes. The island rises brightly and magnificently from the sea, its base a single piece of pure gold, an impossibly high tower made entirely of crystal reaches into the sky. Steps hewn out of the gold lead you to the tower. The floor of the tower is adorned by a Celtic cross carved into the gold; beautifully elaborate, its knots twist and turn with glorious precision. In the centre, where the arms of the cross meet, is a brilliant beam of blue light like that from a neutron star. It arises from a pit of utter darkness. There is music here and power beyond comprehension. This is the Fort that combines all other Forts into cohesion; it is the place that sings of our origination. All the wisdom and knowledge of all the worlds are within its walls, the light is the music of magic and creation. This is the place of knowing, where we make sense of the mysteries. Its danger is inexperience, foolhardiness and arrogance; its message is that one cannot conceptualise that which one has no concept of. Yet it teaches us that we are the sum totality of all that has been before us. Does the light stream from the cauldron?

Caer Ochren – The Fort of Edges

This Fort is represented by the Pineal gland. The sky is dark here; the castle sits gloomily and silently amidst rocks of grey and black. Its towers are many and dimly lit by an unknown source. Within the Fort is a perplexing array of mirrors; seemingly every wall, each ledge, floor and ceiling are constructed of mirrors. In the centre of the vast hall sits an alien animal, its silver head holds a lantern between its horns. Once lit, the Fort shines brightly as light reflects sharply from the mirrored surfaces. Like the 3rd eye, the pineal gland, this place is activated by light. The secrets of the moon hide within this place. It is the home of mirrored observation, the ebb and flow of personality lives here; this is the place where we think we see ourselves. In actuality, we see only a reflection, which is an image in reverse. From here we reflect what we want to present to the world; we may fall into another's footsteps here, become sheep. Remember, the moon does not shine by its own light but by another's. By whose light do you shine? Is it your own? We may judge ourselves harshly in Ochren but remember that what we see in the mirror is not a true representation. Perception and effectuality live here as does the limitations of our intelligence.

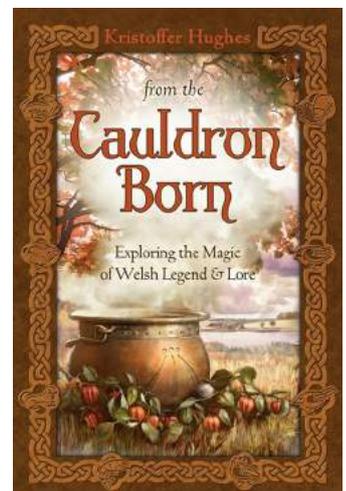
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The Islands of Annwfn provide an internal mythological landscape from which one can explore the nature of the indigenous Celtic Otherworld. However, this is only one aspect of the journey – at the gates of Annwfn lamps burn brightly, invitingly; will you step beyond the light and into the mystery?

This article is an edited extract from 'The Cauldron Born' by Kristoffer Hughes; Llewellyn Publications, U.S.; 1st edition (12 Jan. 2013), ISBN-10: 0738733490, ISBN-13: 978-0738733494.

Author Biography

Kristoffer Hughes is Head of the Anglesey Druid Order, an award winning author, teacher and speaker. He lives on the Isle of Anglesey where he co-facilitates the School of the Anglesey Druid Order. He works professionally for Her Majesty's Coroner and is an actor on Welsh language TV and stage.



SHAMANIC LANDS

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Measure of Annwn - Eternity of Yew



Michael Dunning

*"Who will measure Annwn?
Taliesin, 6th Century CE*

Dare we accept the challenge inherent in the paradoxical question posed above by Taliesin, the sixth century 'Primary Chief Bard of the Island of Britain'? I believe that we must and I'd like to propose that the 'measure' of Annwn, the name for the Otherworld in Welsh tradition, can be directly experienced as a transformative and visionary healing force through the radiant presence of a being —the yew tree— who uniquely holds the original power and intensity of that 'measure' as the sentient expression of an incarnated force of eternity on Earth.

Annwn as Origin

The 'Celtic' Otherworld acquired many names such as the Irish, *Tir -na -nog*, 'the Land of Youth', *Tir-Innambeo*, 'the Land of the Living', *Tir Tairngire*, 'the Land of Promise', *Tir N-aill*, 'the Other Land (or World)', *Mag Mor*, 'the Great Plain' and *Magh Meall*, 'the Honey Plain.' The Otherworld was generally described as a realm of peace, harmony and abundance, untouched by illness or death and often said to be located on a far-away island, across a great ocean or hidden as a subterranean realm or as a 'land beneath wave'. The heroes of myth and even the early Christian monks all went in search of it and when sailors landed in South America they thought they had finally arrived at the Celtic 'Atlantis' of O' Breasail or Hy-Brasil. This land is still named as Brazil today.

The 19th century Welsh Barddas, (Bardism) said to have been copied from the transcripts of older documents, states that, "in the beginning there was nothing but God and Annwfnn". The Welsh Otherworld of Annwn is here given in its earlier name as Annwfnn, (Anooven) and is defined as the primal beginning - the very source of Life. The Bards sought to preserve the teachings of the ancients who referred to this original abundant condition of life as a Golden Age presided over by an original sun - Saturn.

The Yew Tree

Few people encountering a yew tree for the first time will fail to appreciate its otherworldliness. It forms part of and yet doesn't seem to fully participate in the world around it. Its tendency toward hollowing in single trunks and in some rare cases the creation of vast inner chambers composed of layered branches reveals the underlying gesture of literally turning away from the Sun. Every part of the yew, if ingested, is a deadly toxin apart from the fleshy aril, (the name for the 'berry' of the yew). A yew stands between the polarities of sex, with female branches appearing on a dominantly male expressed yew or vice-versa. Some yews have been known to enact a complete reversal of sexual expression in less than a year. The yew is also very long lived with age estimates now controversial and ranging from several hundred to a thousand or more years for the same tree. The yew tree is a living mystery. It is my personal opinion, based on direct experience, that many of our ancient yews are several thousands of years old and the oldest living beings on our planet.

A series of traumatic events that began in 1987 in the far north of Scotland (see bio) led me to one of these mysterious beings - an ancient 'female' yew tree near Edinburgh that was to heal me and that was eventually to lead to the work I now refer to as the Yew Mysteries. It was clear from my first encounter with the yew that I had entered a sanctuary space entirely sealed off from the outside world. At first sight the tree was not recognizable as a tree at all but rather had the appearance of a giant bush, shaped like a blunted pyramid. A darker section at the base of this evergreen pyramid revealed a low hanging opening that led into a narrow passageway composed of a weave of living branch contortions. The sinewy passageway opened into a large, slightly elevated and darkened chamber. The trunk of the yew stood at the centre as a single mighty pillar supporting a tangle of thick boughs that arched into space to inscribe the form of a vault, creating an impression not dissimilar to the interior of a Gothic Cathedral. The arched branches of the vault then swooped to the earth some 15 feet in all directions around the trunk to form a perfectly circular and sealed interior. On contact with the soft earth the branches had taken root to grow horizontally - giving the impression of a writhing nest of serpents - to form a peripheral, impenetrable and circular fortress of yew beyond and around the central chamber and trunk. The entire circumference of this yew organism comprised a staggering 400 feet. The only way out of this enclosed chamber was through the same narrow passage that had allowed me to enter. I felt that I had been led into an entirely *other* world - and that oddly, I had come home.

Tree of Good (God) Measure

I was to spend over nine years under this yew, healing and learning from it. Much of this learning was experiential but I could not find a language through which to communicate or describe it. Gradually it became necessary to learn what had been said and written about the yew through the ages. I found many answers in comparative studies of world religions and traditions involving the presence of a World Tree or of a Tree of Life. Research into the Icelandic Voluspa, for example, indicates that the yew was very likely once known as the 'tree of good measure'¹, implying 'God' measure. The Voluspa opens with the Seeress, summoned from her 'grave' by Odin, recounting the origin of the world and of all first- created things. She then speaks of her own origin.

*"Nine worlds I remember, nine wood ogresses,
glorious tree of good measure, under the ground."*

*"Nío man ek heima, nío ívidiur,
miotvid maeran, fyr mold nedan."*²

These wood ogresses are known as the Ividiur or 'Ividia'. *Vid* means 'tree' but *Ivid* means 'yew tree' or 'yew roots'.³ *Dia* is a female guardian spirit. In Ividia we therefore have I as yew, *vid* as tree, and *dia* as female guardian spirit. These Ividia bear a remarkable similarity to the Irish Goddess

1 Hageneder 2007
2 Dronke, 1997
3 Hageneder, 2007

of the Otherworld, Danu as we shall see. *Tree of good measure* is translated from the Icelandic word *miotvid*. *Miot* refers to 'precisely measured estimates', thereby revealing *miotvid* as a tree of 'measured sufficiency, supplying the existence of the universe...' The tree's location, 'under the ground' almost certainly implies that the 'measure' of its power and vitality comes from the Netherworld or Otherworld. The 'glorious tree of good measure' is therefore in this case an otherworldly 'female' Yew Deity with the power to create Life itself! These are the attributes of a God or Goddess.

During the 19th century, the British historian J.G Cumming indicated the yew as the Tree of God. "Yew is ancient British and signifies 'existent' and enduring having the same root as Jehovah, and yew in Welsh means 'it is', being one of the forms of...(the)... verb 'bod', 'to be.'"⁴

Jehovah is a name for Yahweh, the primary God of the Hebrew Old Testament. Yahweh is one of the Elohim. The name Yahweh is said to have originated from the yew through the Hebrew Yod, the first letter of the name for Jehovah which in turn is controversially said to have come from the Irish word *Jodh* for 'yew.' (It is amusing and somehow appropriate that Yoda, the mysterious character in Star Wars was given a yew name!) The word El as the singular form of Elohim means Shining One but it was also a name for the planet Saturn. The same pattern can be found with the Babylonian Enki/Ea as names for Saturn. In the ancient world Saturn was recorded as the primordial sun and regarded as the 'Great Father God' or as the 'Firm Heart of the Sky', the 'Stationary God' said to have organized the heavens. To the ancient Egyptians, Saturn as the primordial Sun was Atum-Re, Osiris or Horus depending on the region. There were many other names for Saturn in the ancient world including, Huang-ti in China, Yama in India and Quetzalcoatl in the Americas.⁵ Today we might think of Saturn as Old Father -Time, based on the Kronos of the Greeks. Saturn was the God of Time - the God of Measure.

Paradoxically, Saturn was also said to reside on earth as a great king. How could this be so? One clue to this paradox can be found in the Gnostic Books of Yew said to have been given to Enoch in Eden beneath the Tree of Life and describing Yahweh - Elohim as a Great Angel who '...comes forth through the veil... clothed in the material world.' The Gnostic texts actually directly name this Great Angel as Yew and as the 'Overseer of the Light' who comes forth from 'the pure light of the first tree.' This divinely incarnate Yew-Deity was also known to the Gnostics as the 'First Man'. We see then that the Gnostic Yew is one with Yahweh-Elohim who incarnates the God Measure into the Earth. But why would such a God seek to enter the earth in the first place?

Measure of Annwn

The earliest known name for the god-like yew tree is the Hittite *Eya* (1750BCE) which translates as 'eternity,' and by extension, 'to be touched by eternity.' The word *taxus* for yew is likely derived from the Indo-European 'Tax' which relates to the verb 'to touch.'⁶ I was to increasingly experience and understand the 'touch' of the yew as a profound healing force. At first this experience of touch involved a web of gossamer-fine tendrils of light that seemed to originate from the dark periphery of the yew chamber to approach specific 'nodal' points on my skin through which to enter the internal environment of my sick body. I would feel a great pressure build within my body as the light fibres would surround and penetrate an organ, perhaps my liver, and where the liver would then seem to be seized and stretched by these light fibres beyond anything that could be defined anatomically as 'liver'. The light fibres would then seem to draw the liver from my body to inscribe what I have described as a visual- visceral 'language' into the space of the yew chamber that seemed to describe a new form.



4 Chetan & Breuton, 1994
5 Talbott, 1980
6 Hageneder, 2007

Over time I began to recognize that the light tendrils not only extracted the sickness from my body but they also seemed to be weaving the form of a peripheral body – a non-physical and yet perceptible body that passed beyond my skin to mirror the inner shape of the yew chamber. I began to have the odd sensation of being conscious in two bodies at once, one sick and another surging with a darkly ebbing life force on the periphery. During this phase I was approached by beings that helped me to stabilize my perception of my 'new' body. I referred to them initially as bird beings because of their bird-like faces. I also referred to them later as the bird shamans. (see drawing) With the help of these beings I was able to be conscious of this peripheral body as an incarnate experience that seemed to hold a force that could heal my physical body. It was as if my body had been turned inside-out to become merged and continuous with the chamber of the yew but that I was being challenged to turn the new form of my peripheral body outside-in again, to literally incarnate it as a form of healing.

I searched for a language for this experience of a peripheral body (what I now refer to as the Dragon Body) in books about shamanism but other than repetitive accounts of dismemberment with bones and organs being removed and replaced I found nothing that was accurate to the living dynamic of my experience. Only when I discovered the language of human embryology did I see an analog to the process of my healing. It was as if the spiritual body of the embryo achieved incarnation by progressively passing through a series of primordial, peripheral and undifferentiated tissue veils that took on the shape of its passing as specific organs such as the blood and the heart. With the revelation that my healing followed my origin, the bird beings were able to support me to gradually comprehend that what I experienced as healing beneath the yew, was actually a condition of consciousness dominant in another world that was actually our world but in an utterly different and embryonic condition, prior to its current solar condition. It has taken me well over 20 years to gain the understanding that the world these beings revealed to me was that of the earth in its former condition while it was nurtured by Saturn as its primary sun. I discovered that although the ancient traditions described or portrayed this primal sun as Saturn it had simply been assumed by historians and mythologists that the ancients must have been referring to the Sun we see in the sky today. However, even Nasa admit that the earth and the Sun had separate births!⁷

The bird beings showed me that the Otherworld referred to here as Annwn was originally the living etheric wholeness of Saturn, surrounding, permeating and nurturing the early 'embryonic' earth like a placental membrane – a great expansive and etheric veil that a daring scientist today might call a plasma membrane. The Sun made a spiraling approach to the Earth-Saturn configuration over countless eons, where it might approach and then withdraw and then approach more closely and then recede again until it came so close as to cause the 'placental membrane' of Annwn (Saturn) to withdraw – to involute. This was a startling revelation because it meant at the subtle level that what we refer to as the Otherworld of Annwn is actually the living etheric counterpart of the former placental (plasma) membrane of Saturn.

We might see this dynamic of inversion described in the Mythological Cycles of Ireland in the stories of the Tuatha de Dannan's retreat to the 'hollow hills' after their supposed defeat in battle by the Sons of Mil, the last in the series of supposedly historic invaders to Ireland. The early Christian church seeking to obscure the true nature and attributes of the Tuatha cleverly merged myth with history giving the Tuatha spurious genealogies and physical attributes they never had. The Tuatha de Dannan were and are Shining beings, the Sidhe. They are our true and original ancestors who once inhabited the etheric realm of an earth sphere while it was surrounded and permeated by the envelope of Saturn as its original Sun. This inversion of this 'outer' realm gave birth to the Otherworld of Annwn - the new 'intensive' home of the Shining Ones, the realm of the ancestors. This realm never solidified to become physical like the earth of today. Annwn therefore holds the original etheric measure of Earth – Saturn!

The goddess of the Tuatha de Dannan is Danu. She was and is both goddess of the Otherworld as well as a Yew Deity with her father, sons and brother all bearing yew names. Her father, the Dagdha was also known under the epithet *Eochaidh Ollathair* – 'Yew – All (eternal) Father.' Her two sons were named *Eogabal* meaning 'fork in the yew tree', and *Uainide* meaning 'yew foliage.' The Sidhe mounds at Cnoc Aine in Ireland are dedicated to Danu's yew family. Sadly, the links between the yew, the Tuatha de Dannan and Saturn as coupled with Annwn were obscured by the church and finally forgotten.

The Chair of Saturn

We can now return to Taliesin. As the Primary Chief Bard, Taliesin held the Presidency or Chair of Caer

⁷ Cardona, 2016

Saidi. The word *Caer* has been interpreted to refer to an island, a circle, an enclosure or a sanctuary. The word *Sidi*, or *Saidi* refers to Saturn. *Caer Saidi* therefore implies an enclosed place of Saturn or is the Sanctuary of Saturn. *Caer Saidi* is also clearly equated with *Annwn* in the Welsh literature.

From his Chair of *Caer Saidi* Taliesin proclaims the 'doctrine and the law' – basically the rule or measure of Saturn, or as we have now realized - the etheric measure of *Annwn*. Taliesin, which means 'radiant brow' was not an individual but the name for a Bardic initiate who had reached a very high level. In the poem, the Spoils of *Annwn* (or the Spoiling of *Annwn*), *Caer Saidi* is the highest of the 7 *Caers* or sanctuaries. The number 7 in the ancient mysteries represented time - the measure of the original Saturnian Time. The Bards sought to preserve the mystery of Saturn as an initiation. In the ancient world the most sacred and 7th day of the week was named after Saturn. This was by then an echo of an almost lost knowledge about the primordial sun of Saturn that could be glimpsed at the time of the Winter Solstice when the sun had reached its weakest point and where the influence of other forces might be felt. It was customary at this time to reverse and invert the normal circumstances of life in order to reveal these 'other' forces of the 'time between times' otherwise known as the Otherworld. Customs were also reversed at this time with Masters serving slaves and mock kings called the Lords of *Misrule*. The key to these customs is that the normal rule and rhythm of life is overturned. The sun stops measuring time during the Winter Solstice - its rule is suspended. A still point in time forms at the Winter Solstice. Through that point of suspension, the hidden force of the original sun – Saturn could be dimly experienced.

The Yew Mysteries

Annwn represents the inverted placental body of the etheric living forces of Saturn and its Great Angels. *Annwn* is therefore the body of a God(dess) residing within the Earth. The ancient yew trees on earth today are the Great Angels or Elohim standing incarnate 'between the worlds' – divine beings who continue to circulate the etheric forces of Otherworld, Earth and Saturn through their embodied gestures of regeneration, longevity and healing.

The memory of *Annwn* can be rekindled beneath an ancient yew tree if one knows how to take up the challenge of Taliesin - to live into and directly experience the measure of *Annwn* - where we, as modern yew-initiates might be 'touched by eternity' to thereby reclaim its memory as a force of healing and transformation. This is the constantly evolving work of the Yew Mysteries.

Author Biography

During the late 1980's Michael became extremely ill as a result of an encounter in the far north of Scotland with an otherworldly being that he calls the Sulfur Daemon. Several years later and close to death, he was led to an ancient female yew tree in the south of Scotland. Michael spent over nine years under this yew where he was healed and where he was given the template for a spiritual teaching that he refers to as the Yew Mysteries. In 2003 a series of events linked to the yew caused him to emigrate from Scotland to USA. Michael teaches the Yew Mysteries in UK and in the USA. He is currently writing a book about his experiences with the yew.



Website: www.yewmysteries.com

Photograph (page 11): 'The Whittinghame Yew' © Andy McGeeney 2018 <http://www.andymcgeeney.com/>

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Elen Tompkins

"I must tell you the ancient ways of my People. They belong to a world that is older than Atlantis, older than the Ages of flood and ice, stone and bronze. They belong to a place and a time when the stars are the Earth; all is merged in a tempest of beginnings. In this time the Elder worlds flourish. They are the roots and the leaves of the Tree of Life.

They are the oldest and the purest ways of Earth. You cannot find a truer path of Love upon this planet than to walk these Old Gold Leaves of Light.

O, let us start at the beginning. Let us pass through the Amethyst Gates and sit with the Elven Council to hear the blue light of their prayers for Earth.

*All shall be well
and All shall be well
and All shall be well*

This is a civilisation that is the soul of Earth. It is her own light, her own dream"

from 'Silver Wheel: The Lost Teachings of the Deerskin Book'

I began my shamanic quest from a very cerebral way of being, that traced the pathways of a finely felt sensitivity mostly from the mind. I began the long years of writing *Silver Wheel*, a book of remembrance gifted by the Elven Elders, as a PhD in creative writing. From an intellectual perspective, I was seeking the Faery Earth, the Shining Earth, as a primary ground and mode of being, rather than as a peripheral realm. I wanted to shift from gazing at it as the 'other', as this mysterious and elusive realm, to awakening as the 'other'; to describe this mode of existence, this subjectivity, from within. I felt that the mysterious muse as enchanting Faery and Otherworldly woman, as found in the otherworldly heroines of the Mabinogion - Rhiannon, Blodeuwedd, Arianrhod - had a wisdom that was truly of beyond, that was so deeply bound to that which we are, which called to be discovered and spoken.

My main passion was fuelled by the sense that the Otherworld was not peripheral but the very soul and

presence of the Earth herself and that it was simply the modality of human consciousness that created the illusion this existed at the 'edge' of our reality. It seemed to me that we had turned things upside-down and projected a generic and grey veil over the earth, over our physical and sensory reality, which was not intrinsic to that reality itself.

It was an act of anger as much as anything else. A quiet but determined anger against the 3D world of human creation, its supposedly necessary limitations and regulations on experience and the real, its lack of enchantment, beauty, peace and mystery. I had also this intuition; that if my attention and quest could remain steady enough, that my consciousness itself held the access and key to all that was lost. I knew that if I could overcome my own distractions, fear and avoidance, that there was a lost treasury within consciousness that longed to be opened up. Whenever I turned away from my quest, which I would occasionally try - overwhelmed by self-doubt, loneliness or a desire to enter into some other predetermined vision or reality - it would hauntingly call me back. It often felt overwhelming or endless. Not for nothing are there warnings against being lost in the Faerie realms and entering with due caution for your existence and sanity. It is perilous - and perilously beautiful - and there are great shadows as well as great illuminations. There is a great passage to be made from its halls of illusion, into the crystalline inner chambers where true wisdom and enlightenment reside.

I spent 10 years in the woods and hills of Wales, my whole being devoted to remembrance of the otherworldly realms, of re-discovering a felt sensitivity and awareness. When I discovered shamanism, I re-discovered the tools that could transform my consciousness from that of a butterfly hovering at the periphery of remembrance, from a primarily cerebral quest, to a path of true transformation. The restoration of wholeness and multi-dimensional presence, of walking the starlit trails, of feeling the canopy of the sapphire leaves overhead and feeling the brush and presence of its Wise Ones and Elders as they held the stored treasures of that realm.

For years my whole soul was bent upon remembrance not just of lost realms and dimensions but of a lost past. As I entered into the ways of the drum, of shamanic journeying, ceremonies of sweat lodge and sacred pipe, of fire ceremony and vision quest, it felt as though piece by piece a sacred tapestry of remembrance was restored. It was an incredibly beautiful process and the restoration of a great expanded timeline of the earth within my heart. In some ways it felt achingly slow and frustrating, as though so much lay just out of reach. It was not a cognitive remembrance primarily but a deep and complete inner transformation that could not be rushed. I had to vibrate back into resonance with that lost world; I had to open my heart to frequencies of Love, of Light that had a brilliance that scared my small and protected self. It was the surrender of ego over and over again and the loss of worlds, of selves, in the restoration of something more whole and true.

And the greatest surprise to me of all was that as I sought the forgotten past, it was a prophecy for the future that was gifted.

In 2012, I saw the light forms of 13 glyphs pouring down from the waterfall of Pistyll Rhoadr in Wales. I knew that they were the distillation of that which the Shining Ones had been guiding me to all this time. They were the pure energetic forms underlying the exquisite music and remembrance of that realm and the core of that which I had been seeking. I was told that this was a medicine wheel of Lemuria, one of the earliest starlight ages of the earth, created by the Shining Ones, the Elven Elders, for this time of ascension.

Guided into the otherworld, I met with Merlin and this great Elder taught me that the Silver Wheel was created for the souls destined to awaken at this time, to become the luminous beacons of a New Era. Like Swans donning their white feathered cloaks, they would choose out of exceptional love for the earth to become visible as links to the lost realities and lost dimensions and begin the work of rebuilding them and bringing them back to consciousness.

I was shown that these lost dimensions are the returning, original blueprint of the earth and that the earth's higher dimensional and otherworldly dimensions have long been separated out from her physical expression, as we have travelled through thousands of years of a cosmic cycle of separation, darkness and forgetfulness - a division between the realms and a descending of the veils. The blueprint returns on a new wave of cosmic energy and Light, as the New Earth. It is that which we have known; a cosmic, otherworldly, inter-dimensional earth, arriving as she has never been before.

Merlin showed me the blueprint of the New Earth descending, a sapphire realm arriving through space, to merge once again with the physical earth. As this happens, as the merge happens with the earth

and all her sentient beings, all her life forms, a vast awakening and vibrational shift begins to take place.

Much that has long been dormant or lost - ancient codes and memories of the earth - begin to stir and to be gifted directly to those who connect to the realms of nature. It is a time of direct remembrance and revelation. As I was told by the Elders following a ceremony danced upon Bear Butte in North Dakota, it is time for the Star Teachings to be received directly by all people. They are arising from the realms of nature, being freely gifted. That which has long been only accessible through long processes of initiation and mystery teachings, is now awakening spontaneously in consciousness.

The Star Teachings are the remembrance that earth is a sacred dream; a galactic, celestial, multi-dimensional creation, dreamt amongst the stars. We too come from the stars to co-create new realms of beauty and harmonic wisdom. The earth is not intrinsically created as a realm of suffering, struggle and separation. She holds the template for many realms to come together in harmonic co-creation and in our purity each of us arrives here as a Creator Soul. That is, with an intrinsic longing, a mission and sacred destiny to create in accordance with the Divine Plan of Light for the earth. The Elven Elders especially hold this remembrance of the sacred longing to create, to weave through the beauty of the unseen and other-dimensional, to access star templates and codes that belong to higher dimensional facets of the soul and weave them through into existence here upon this plane.

It is this sacred state of divine creativity to which the Silver Wheel guides us; restoring us to the fine filaments of silvery light creation, starlight frequencies that long to flow through the human hands and heart into creation. It holds the sacred principles, original instructions for the Creator or Elder Soul. It conveys the feeling tone, the light codes of this state of being. Its myriad rainbow dimensions that flow through the human heart. It wishes to activate this way of being, that is as old as time itself; that is the old and the oldest way of earth herself. It is not an ephemeral and unworldly state of being; it is a dance of deep attentiveness and listening to that which is - a return to the subtle music that underpins existence.

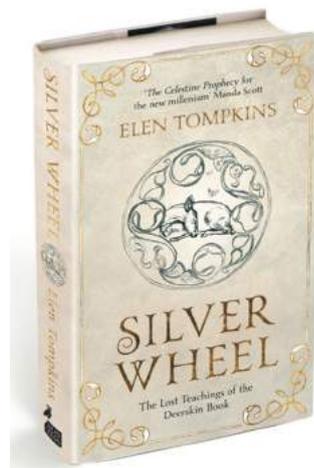
This state of being, this remembrance, is held within our bodies, is held within the earth. It is held in her rocks, stones and crystals and in her waters. It is held within the native and indigenous wisdom traditions of many lands, which have protected this knowledge through aeons of forgetfulness. We are returning to the Elders to learn that which has been forgotten, we are receiving direct initiation and revelation from the earth and the stars. The harmonic wisdom of Love and the unique gifts and Akashic record that each of us holds is being activated with accelerated Grace.

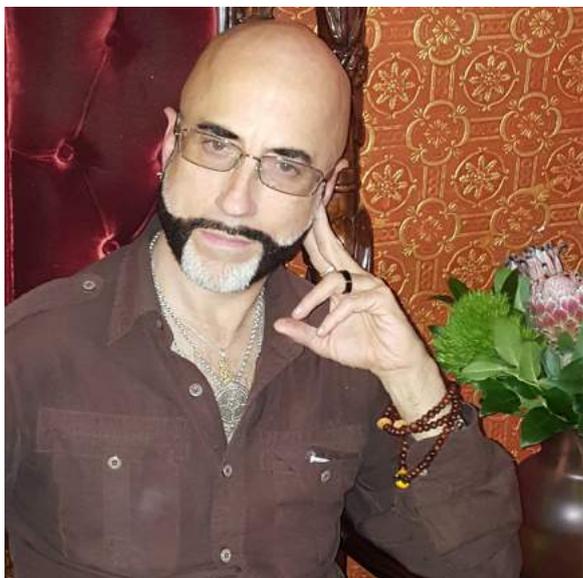
The shamanic ways of travel into the Otherworld, into the realms that so long ago vanished behind the veil, are the sacred barges that carry us to where the caches of dormant gifts are held. Here we discover that which has been stored so far out of reach, that we have completely forgotten it is who we are. It is startling to undergo this awakening and infinitely beautiful. It sears one with the deepest frequencies of Love and causes our worlds to alter, fall apart and reform into a greater pattern of wholeness that incorporates these lost aspects. It is a time of immense opportunity, vast change and potential chaos as we undergo the profound vibrational shift and remembrance of who we are, all within the vehicle of one physical human body. Such an act of remembrance and vibrational transformation can be intensely de-stabilising and the wisdom of the Shining Ones, of the Elders and Elven Ones, is flowing through to support us in this immense process we have agreed to undertake. To remember one's soul gifts and multi-dimensional self, to become the otherworldly radiance of the New Dawn, is a journey of Light yet it involves facing and releasing the deepest fears and shadows with which the self has become programmed.



Author Biography

Elen Tompkins is the author of *Silver Wheel: The Lost Teachings of the Deerskin Book*, a shamanic healer and Elven Ascension Guide. *Silver Wheel* is a record of the teachings she received from the Shining Realms of the Elven Ones during ten years of shamanic practice in the forests of Wales. Website: <http://elentompkins.com/>





Orion Foxwood

chats to Davyd Farrell

Davyd I'm really happy to be able to introduce Orion Foxwood to Indie Shaman. Orion is a traditional witch, a conjure man and author of several great books including *The Faery Teachings* and *The Tree of Enchantment*. He was born with the veil in the state of Virginia and brought up in a family of faith healers, root doctors and Southern and Appalachian folk magic.

Welcome to you Orion its lovely to be chatting to you today.

Orion Lovely to talk to you.

Davyd There's so much I'd like to talk about with you but I'm going to get to the roots, if you'll pardon the pun, of all of the work that you do. Perhaps it would be a good start if you could explain a little bit about what is Appalachian folk magic?

Orion Sure. I think the first thing to start off would be who are the Appalachian people? The Appalachian people, or the Hill Folk as we often call ourselves, are from the Appalachian chain of mountains which extends all the way from Virginia to Maine in the United States. So you have Northern Appalachia and Southern Appalachia. We can tell where a person is from by how they say it. If they say "Appa-lay-shun" they are from Northern, if they say "Appa-la-shun" they are from Southern. Appalachian folks are very much, in some ways, secluded because they are in the mountains. Also in Southern Appalachia slavery never made it up into the mountains. So it's a very different mind-set of hardworking and very religious people.

The Christianity I grew up with, which most anthropologists would call Folk Christianity, is very much Pagan at its roots. To give you a feel for Appalachian spiritual life ... the soul of the spirituality ... my momma used to say from time to time "Now kids I want you to stay inside with your daddy for about 2 hours. Mommas got to go out and touch the plants so she can hear God" (we had a big garden, it was 5 acres). Appalachian spirituality, its rich, its deep, its soulful. We don't believe we own the land, the land owns us. And we romance the land - you talk to any Appalachian and the land they live on is kin, the land they live on is holy and sacred.

We're very poor financially but deeply rich spiritually. There's a special something Appalachian people have, I believe. It's often hard to break into those communities because they are closed. The spirit workers that are there are what we would call a conjure worker. A conjure worker is more of a Southern term - you hear it more in the Carolinas and in the South - but I'll use it often because it explains what I'm talking about; the synchronistic folk spirituality of the South, specifically the Agrarian South, then later in the cities of the South after emancipation and African influences.

My Appalachian roots were interesting because they were from the Shenandoah Valley, its Southern culture, plantation culture down in the valley and then Appalachian pouring in from the mountains. So you get quite a mixture of folk magic, folk healing, folk spirituality ... the first time I ever heard of God as a little boy I heard him referred to as 'the life that runs through all things' ... isn't that beautiful 'the life that runs through all'.

Davyd When we were talking before you were explaining to me about the various types of influences in Appalachian folk which includes: First Nations, shamanic pathways, a little bit of Voodoo and also what we would call Celtic folk magic as well. Can you elaborate a little on how those different traditions have come together and what the influences are in the area you are from and in yourself? Because it's three different pathways but there is a lot of connections between the First Nations people and the Celtic people for lots of reasons?

Orion Oh yes - a sort of shared soul wisdom a certain way we relate from the soul. In fact interestingly when I've hung out with workers from the Congo they have commented; they say there's this African presence that I feel in your soul. Some of that is the influence of African American culture and of the African slave trade on the culture of that I grew up in. But it also helps that my momma was born on a plantation in slaves' quarters, a place called Hollingsworth Place, near Cedar Creek where the famous battle was during the Civil War. Mom was birthed by a freed slave. We knew her as Miss Granny which in Appalachian speak is a term of endearment for an elder woman. If you call her Granny Woman or Miss Granny that means she's a midwife but it also means she's a wise woman.

In terms of influences when you say Appalachia that's a big word - it's like Celtic. When people say Celtic there are some core attributes shared across all the variants of the Celtic tradition but that's a big word meaning a big multi-dimensional type of culture. Appalachian is the same way. The Appalachian mountain chain is a very long chain and these areas were very secluded up in the mountains and Hill Folks love their 'hollers', where there is one way in and no other way out. That way they could be secluded; they could just be them with their kin the mountains, the trees. Most Appalachians are just as happy to be just with their folk and with God as they understand God - and with Nature because Nature and God are just the same to the Appalachian.

Davyd One of the things that's just occurred to me is that all of the three groups of people we have talked about have been severely oppressed, all people who have had their land taken from them or been forcibly evicted from their lands. Maybe in all of that there is some kind of understanding about what it's like to lose your place on your land.

Orion Well I think there is something about the suffering too. You either survive or don't survive. Whether its racism or extreme poverty or whatever - it brings pain so you unearth the deep waters of the soul. We have a big wave of crystal meth going on at the moment and that's the next big thing that's destroying our culture ... but at the same time you'll see this richness of spirit this richness of music and art. I had a big 'aha' moment some years ago. I started noticing patterns in cultures that had a strong wave of magic and magical practice and what I found was magic most rears its head when freedom is most challenged. And I think magic is about the freedom of the soul to be a conscious creator; a partner of the divine. Not just a worshipper of the divine - a partner. Not equals - more like the fingers on a hand. Wherever freedom is most oppressed this volcanic eruption will happen of the ability through spiritual means to take control of our destiny and restore justice or restore the balance; our freedom.

But right now I think the thing that is most endangered is our planet. Not that I don't think our planet can't defend herself; I'm sure she could shake us off like fleas on the back of a dog. But we're causing the web of life to shake too much and I fear that if we don't come together and let these magics resurface ... so that we can see the invisible connections between visible things, so we can get back that wisdom that once knew why the water tastes bitter downstream after we've peed in the water upstream, so we can get back into an intimate relationship with life.

I have a theory that all the churches, synagogues, temple, workshops, they're filled with one thing - homesickness. We as a species are feeling the loss of connection - to each other, to the things that mean most to us, to the earth itself. And there's an abandonment, fear, fury and shame that's showing itself in the behaviours of our species. But for some of us something breaks our heart open, something cracks open the window, so we can see. Some of us weren't born with the ability to shut off seeing the intimacy of life. I think that is what this interview, what the Shamanic Lands Event is about. It's in these places where we can come together and be the agents of change. We are all in the process of remembering.

Davyd Personally I think the planet is going to be fine; Mother Earth has been through this process of regeneration and cleansing many times before. I fear more for humans; I think we are the ones most in trouble. You said previously that overspecialisation is a hallmark of a species about to go extinct. I

think that's a really pertinent point; that we have to wake up collectively and quickly to realise that the planet will survive but perhaps we won't.

Orion This profound grandmother once said to me, "Orion we need nature, we need a lot of nature – for our food for our shelter for everything – nature doesn't really need us right now". That's not a good place to be. She said that the more considerate we are of nature the more our presence in it matters – the more the other species almost want to fight for our survival. And when we're living close to the rhythms, nature in all her glory, all her wisdom and mystery, presents herself to us all the time. The different plants that bring the medicine we need – we will find ourselves growing, right outside our front door. But right now we're at a place that when a human walks into the woods, the woods recoils – things run – and that's not where we need to be. We need to be able to walk into the woods and whole plant species go, 'Yup those are those critters that give us the good fertilizer we like'. Or 'they're the ones that really take care of us'. Or 'they don't even know me and they trimmed me and I survived the disease'. We need to get into selfless acts of nature.

Davyd I guess it's a bit like turning up at a party and you're known as the person who always brings the really yummy scrumptious food. Or you're the dude that turns up and gets blind drunk and causes a big scene and a big argument. Which one are we? Are we the person that everyone is happy to see or the one that everyone dreads turning up.

Orion Oh absolutely. As the Grandmother says 'you don't write, you don't call, except when you need something'! I think we have to start calling on Nature - calling on whatever we call it, Great Spirit, Goddess, God - just to praise it; to say I love you, thank you, how may I serve. And when we serve the wellbeing of others, non-human, we'll find that we are taken care of. Like in the old religion; the focus on the fertility of the crops and on the plants, that's not for the well-being of humanity, that's for the well-being of the plants and the animals. If we take care of them we will be taken care of. And that's a mind-set we've got to get into. We're so humanocentric – when we think of a dog that's smart, for example, it's because that dog knows its name – it acts human. I don't know that that's the hallmark of intelligence because that dog put out in the wild is going to survive much better than me; it's not removed from its instincts, it's not removed from its inner knowing and it hasn't specialised and internalised its intelligence so much. We've got to go back and get intimate with ourselves and with life again. And that's when the intuition will balance with the 'extuition' and we will know how to invent in compassionate and co-creative ways. I look forward to those days - I know they are going to happen but we may have some pains on the way.

Davyd Yeah, one of the reasons that we have felt called to organise this special Otherworld edition of The Shamanic Lands is for all of the reasons you've just talked about. And we understand the imperative need for us, as humans, to reconnect to nature is possibly the key to our survival as a species on this planet right now. When we go outside into the forest and we immerse ourselves in that energy we can still feel the presence of those otherworld beings – of the tree beings, the plant beings. So when we were putting this event together it was really important for us to connect with people such as yourself. Can you elaborate on the connection to the Otherworld - the Underworld as it's sometimes called - what does it mean to you and why do you feel its important right now?

Orion The first thing I have to say is that the Underworld is the subtle world. The Underworld is not about how things appear, it's how things are; it's the realm of the arriving not the arrived. Sometimes we think of it as 'down there' but that's a sort of illusion. It seems like there is an 'up there' and a 'down there' because of the way that we are built – the way our head moves and our sight moves. But the truth is there is really an 'out there', an 'in there' and a 'right here'.

The best way we can understand this is we breathe. We have lungs that breathe; that is the surface world. We have lungs that breath out into a greater world – it's a world full of breath – that's the upper world. But we also have lungs that breathe the greater world into this deeper world (*points to own chest*) and brings life out of it. We breathe in and we oxygenate our whole internal galaxy. So if we start thinking of this concept of the three worlds as really points along the strata of life; I like the breathing concept of movement in, a mental hold and movement out. And so all things on the surface world are on their way somewhere else, they're all transition states of energetic consciousness.

When we're working with the Underworld and we want to receive its wisdoms we have to treat it likewe're walking on the edge of the ocean and we see this little shell and we really want it. We want it but if we're wise 'wanters of shells' then we know we've got to calibrate a relationship between two

things, the motion of the ocean and the velocity of our reach. The Underworld can be a challenge because you can't make it do anything and you can't reach too hard. The Underworld is the inner draw of life's breath. We've all touched it when we've been walking in the woods and suddenly we feel that sense of otherness; like we're transplanted into a 'not place not time', where things are suspended and there is just the eternal now, the eternal arriving. This place we call the Underworld or the Otherworld is the undergirding, underbelly of life and right now we've grown top heavy with outer awareness, with sciences that want to go expansive but not deep. There's a saying I grew up with 'you cannot bless the fruits and curse the roots'. The 're-sacredising' of our relationship with the underworld, the underbelly of life, the ancestral realm, the ever arriving ancestral wisdom, is a must. Trees have it down, plants have it down – they always drop their roots first and then they seed up. We kind of go the other way because we train ourselves to do that. And so right now we have a lovely brain but the human brain, as smart as it is, can be a high chair tyrant that can't get enough. There's three places of consciousness; our heart, our head and our belly. The Underworld says get into the belly and the only way you're going to get here is through the heart. You've got to get to the foundations of things and in the foundational wisdom of the Underworld I truly believe is the sound of the soul - the thing that's going to bring healing - and we're going to feel what it truly feels like to be home.

Davyd So just before we wrap up this little chat – you're going to be over here with us in the beautiful land of Cymru, the Land of the Dragons, here in this very unspoilt part of Wales where we still have very strong nature spirits, the energy of the land is still very strong. You're going to be running a special workshop for us called 'Unbinding the spell of forgetfulness; Deep Healing Through Faery/ Human Alliance'. Can you just give us a quick note about what that's about?

Orion Well ... my Queen, my spirit wife, my Brigh, the heart of everything I do ... One day we were talking about the image of the faerie and how the attack on the old ways was two part. First demonization, make it evil; this often happens with new traditions and old traditions but demonization still says that this connection, this belief, has power. It says, 'don't go there, it's wicked'. But then there's trivialisation and that's where we saw the image of the faerie grow smaller and smaller. The powerful thing Brigh shared with me was that they grew just small enough to fit back through the keyhole in human consciousness and return back to its primal strength and beauty again. I asked Brigh ultimately who saved the faerie tradition, the folklore and all this and she said that there is one type of elder that preserved it more than any and that's the children. In their innocence they saw the beauty in this little image of the faerie. But I think they saw more; they saw hope, they saw seeds of magic and where there's magic there's hope. And so here we are now - we all need to touch that original innocence, that starry-eyed childlike wonder, that look that all of life is the wonder that it is; that looks out the window and is befuddled in wonderment by the grandeur of the sky, of the musical sound of growing things. When we touch this it does something to our soul, it heals us. So touching the original innocence and the healing heart of faerie is to turn back to the original feeling of wonderment, the childlike innocence that we once had. That doesn't say it takes away from our discernment as adults. But there's a saying that was on a sign in Winchester Park - which was the closest town to where I lived in Virginia - it said 'The adults stop playing to grow old', meaning you grow old if you stop playing. So this is about returning to the innocent heart to be befuddled, be-wondered, by the deep powerful force of the ancestors of all life – the Shining Ones – that are at the origins of all life – faerie.

Davyd How can people find out more about the work you do?

Orion Well my website is still being constructed so be kind! Its <http://orionfoxwood.com/>. I'm also on Facebook but I'm slow at this IT stuff. But if you have any questions please feel free – I do respond.

Davyd Thank you for taking the time to chat to me and many blessings on all of your work.

Orion Thank you and blessings of the holy ancestors.

More information

Orion Foxwood is a traditional witch, conjure-man and faery seer. The author of *The Faery Teachings*, *The Tree of Enchantment*, *The Candle & the Crossroads* and *The Flame in the Cauldron*. Born with the veil in Shenandoah Valley, Virginia he was exposed to faith-healing, root-doctoring, faery lore and Southern and Appalachian folk magic which he teaches in workshops and other forums. He is the founder of the House of Brigh Faery Seership Institute and Foxwood Temple, co-founder of Conjure Crossroads, the annual Folk Magic Festival in New Orleans and of Conjure-Craft and the Witches in the Woods gatherings aimed at fostering education, community, co-creative magic and the healing and helping practices of the traditions he carries. Website <http://orionfoxwood.com/>.



Heart and Wholeness

The path of the Dawn Star

Brooke Medicine Eagle and Genevieve Boast

Let me tell you a story of an amazing being who walked across the water into central America a few thousand years ago, bringing a teaching of love from the heart and oneness with each other and the great Creator. He was known as Dawn Star, for he prayed to the dawn star, Venus, every morning and was himself seen as the dawning star of a whole new day on earth, where love and brother/sisterhood would create a golden time. And a radiant time ensued as people followed his way, using their resources in positive and empowering ways for the good of the people rather than in judgment and warring. Dawn Star moved among the people sharing his Flower Song teachings and eventually made his way back to his central temple in Golden Tula. There, he offered his final words before it was his time to leave the planet allowing a new cycle to begin. It's said that people from many lands gathered and formed a circle 20 miles deep and that when Dawn Star spoke, people of every culture and at the farthest distance heard and understood his powerful words.

"We have come to a critical time, a crossroads. We have created a very beautiful time and if you continue these ways of unity and love, your lives and the earth will grow in beauty into a golden time and the feats you accomplish will be even more powerful than mine." Yet, with some sadness, he continued with these words, knowing that the people were not ready and able to keep the practice and ways strong. "If you do not keep these ways of love and unity, if you separate and divide and judge and fight, you will fall so far that standing here in Golden Tula on this radiant day, it seems inconceivable." And the people could not keep those ways, so what ensued on the American continent was genocide – native tribes warred and joined with incoming foreigners to attempt domination over others and everyone lost. It was a nightmare beyond imagining.

So, here we are again in our time, facing a crossroads.

We find ourselves at a unique point in the story of life on earth. The Internet has redefined 'friendship' and 'intimacy' with vast online media platforms connecting people all across the world. The relative ease of travel has opened up experiences of new lands, cultures and wisdom traditions, ancient and modern. At no other time in history have we had such an ability to connect with each other and the world around us. At no other time have we been as able to experience the unified experience of being human.

So why is it so many people are sick and lonely, seeking healing and connection? Why is stress a mainstream dis-ease and technology addiction, social numbness and addiction prevalent in almost every society in the world? Why is it still so easy to 'go to war' personally and collectively against others? We have forgotten what true love and wholeness is and in the process we have forgotten who we really are. We have forgotten the teachings of the Dawn Star.

Genevieve

Having worked for years in mainstream media, I am more than aware that the dominant western narrative of growth and consumption keeps us stuck in a perpetual cycle of lack. When we are focused on 'more' (whatever that translates into at the time – money, food, sex, power, expertise, respect – the list is truly endless), we are by default 'not enough' in the moment. Given we are taught that this need for 'more' is endless, we are never enough by the various standards that we are socially programmed to live up to. To break the cycle of lack, we need to break the story of disconnection once and for all.

For me, 'wholeness' is always synonymous with a deep and sensual connection with life. I am whole when I am living in harmony with the Earth. When I feel my familial relationships with the creatures, plants and seasons as they pass by me and through me. When I live in closer relationship with the land beneath my feet and the sky above me, I am filled with appreciation and gratitude and rarely worry about what is perceivably 'missing' from life. My heart opens and I am reintegrated within the family of life.

Brooke

Our natural knowing is of our connectedness, our Oneness with All Our Relations; yet our modern life and this very powerful new frontal lobe of our brain has taken our attention away from that fact. Now that we have developed the immense capabilities of that human aspect of ourselves, it is time to re-integrate with the wholeness of ourselves, especially the older parts of our brain that carry information about who we are in connection with all of life - and give us living intelligence (not just the intellectual understanding of the new brain). That profound intelligence is vital as we now move into living in true harmony with all Life - our lives depend upon it!



Becoming whole again is a journey that restores our authentic human identity and power. Once we reconnect to our bodies, we start to feel our own deep wisdom and remember the ancient teachings of love as life. Our instinctive and intuitive capabilities are fully engaged; we remember how to listen to the voice of our unique story once again. Life becomes a joy-filled dance between individuality and unity. Our true story of Me, places itself in service of a greater story of We on earth and our unique thread in the human tapestry comes alive with grace and vitality.

This 'holiness' the Dawn Star originally spoke of, is the answer to our discontent and disconnect. Re-integrating ourselves requires us to surrender the old stories of separation and isolation that we have gathered and let them go so that we can let in a new sense of interconnection and belonging. We remember what it means to love and be loved by each other and the Earth.

The truth is, we have always been enough. We have always been powerful. We have always had choice and we have always been loved. We just need to remember. Remember and reconnect to our inherent wholeness. Reconnect to the holiness of living life in a human form.

Authors Biographies

Brooke Medicine Eagle is a legendary Earthkeeper, wisdom teacher, healer, visionary, singer/songwriter, shamanic practitioner, catalyst for wholeness, and ceremonial leader. She is the author of the Native American literary classic, *Buffalo Woman Comes Singing*, and of *The Last Ghost Dance*. Her music recordings, teachings, writings and wilderness spiritual retreats have touched the hearts and minds of people world-wide. Website <http://www.medicineeagle.com/>.



Genevieve's career began in mainstream media and entertainment. In 2010 she began to pursue her dream of facilitating a new modern mythology based on a story that unites. Her current business, Beyond Human Stories, reflects that passion and she currently travels the world as a speaker, facilitator and coach, working with a wide and diverse range of people helping them master the art and science of story-making. Website <http://beyondhumanstories.com/>.

Genevieve and Brooke will be teaching workshops on the wisdom of the Dawn Star in the UK in London and Avebury throughout August 2018. **Editor's Note:** See events pages in this issue or visit <https://indieshaman.co.uk/community-resources/events-and-workshops/> for more info.



All over the world shamans are linked with the likes of bones, stones and herbs; all of which are considered allies to the wanderers between worlds. Shamans can even be defined by the stones they carry - in life or in death. In some cases graves have been determined by archaeologists to be those of a shaman due to stones found within and their placement; such as the so-called Shaman's Grave in Upton Lovell Barrow, Wiltshire, in which a smoothly rounded and polished Snow Quartz stone was found on the Shaman's chest.

Just like shamans before us, modern practitioners work with stones in a myriad of ways. They can be allies on our journey through life: medicines and talismans; tools for divination such as Rune Stones or Casting Stones; or literally doorways through which we can travel to the Otherworld. They may act as messengers; even today in Costa Rica shaman blow sacred smoke across stones to pass messages to Spirits in the Otherworld. Stones can also be used for divining and scrying beyond the normal everyday; this is the purpose of the magical Crystal Ball and survives to the modern age as the Dark Scrying Mirror which the Evil Queen consults in *Snow White* - "Mirror, Mirror on the Wall, Who is the Fairest of them All?" Some shamans have used stones to diagnose and treat disorders of the mind, body and spirit and even today most pendulums used for dowsing are made from stones.

Several stones around the world are known as Shaman Stones; sometimes this is due to ancient legends and associations but sometimes it's sadly nothing more than a modern marketing ploy. That said all stones have their own power and medicine. It's all about finding what works with you; your own power stone(s) could just as easily be a simple pebble from a river bed as a semi-precious gemstone. Here are just a few of the stones out there known as Shaman Stones.

Amber

With its golden tones and the fact it is warm to the touch, Amber has long been associated with the Sun and its Deities. It is said to hold the power of the Sun itself. Amber is formed from fossilised tree resin and was therefore once part of a living being. Some say that Amber still carries the spirit of its parent pine-like tree and so connects us with the Spirits of the Trees and the Forests, past and present. As it is soft and easy to carve, beads and



amulets of Amber have been popular for millennia and amber beads are still popularly used for Pagan Prayer Beads, Catholic Rosaries and Islamic Misbahah. Chunks of amber, or its close relation copal, were burned and the smoke used for journeying or smudging. Amber is sacred to the Norse Goddess Freyja who is closely associated with the art of *Seiðr* - a kind of Shamanic Sorcery which involved journeying, dancing and singing. Amber is an ideal ally for those whose work has magical or physically demanding elements, for those who wish to work with Sun Deities and for all wounded shaman as it is inherently a stone of healing the self. Amber teaches us to tap into our own energies and the energies of the Worlds around us.

Hag Stones / Odin's Stones / Adder Stones

Famous for their alleged protective powers and supposed ability to ward off just about every disease known to man or beast; holed stones have traditionally been hung up in houses, barns and worn on the person. Hag Stones generally refer to flint nodules that have had holes worn into them by smaller stones and the actions of water. Magically such stones have also been utilised as tools through which to see and divine, such as seeing into the Otherworld, seeing Spirits in this world or seeing a person's state of health. They are sometimes known as Odin Stones, after the Norse God of Magic and War, who gave his eye in exchange for wisdom and ritually hung himself upside down from the World Tree in order to discover the Runes. As Adder Stones they were carried by Druids as a kind of badge of office and are mentioned in several ancient Welsh legends as allowing the Hero to see things that are not normally visible to mortal eyes.



Lampivaara Amethyst

Found in the Pyhä-Luosto National Park in Finnish Sápmi, this Shaman Stone is actually a mixture of amethyst, snow quartz and smoky quartz, all of which are traditionally magical stones on their own; so in combination this is a very wonderful stone indeed. It can have quite milky and dark purple tones to it, making it appear quite otherworldly. Lampivaara Amethyst is a stone of deep Spirituality and the Soul. Like other amethysts it enhances psychic abilities, opens the Crown and Third Eye Chakras and connects us to Spirit, but unlike other forms, Lampivaara Amethyst keeps us firmly rooted in our Mother Earth which makes this an ideal stone for any shaman to work with. It connects us to the Ancestral wisdom and the wisdom of the animals, plants and the land of Sápmi, home to the Sámi - Europe's only Indigenous People.

Moldavite

If you work with star beings, star deities, star energies or astrology in any way, then Moldavite is an extremely powerful stone to work with. It has, quite literally, an out of this world energy that people either love or hate. Moldavite is a deep green glassy stone that is found in parts of Bavaria and the Czech Republic; it was formed when a meteorite hit the earth. It is an ideal ally for those who channel Spirit, undertake Shamanic journeys - especially to deep within or far away to the stars - or who are undergoing changes or transformations (such as puberty, menopause, nearing the end of life, changing jobs, going back to school, getting married/divorced, etc.). Moldavite truly is a celestial stone of transformation that expands our awareness and consciousness.

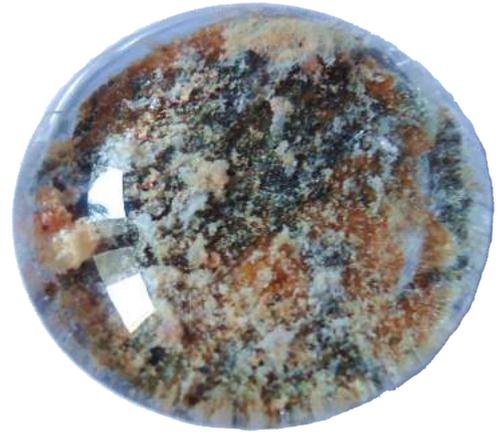


Moqui Stones / Mochi Marbles

These little cannonball-like stones are compacted sandstone with a hard iron shell. They are often found in pairs, one of which is considered male and the other female. The female marbles are smoother and rounder, while the male stones have more texture and are more disc shaped. They have been traditionally used by several Indigenous American tribes such as the Navajo and Hopi for thousands of years. In the Hopi language *Moqui* refers to the Dead Ancestors and the Ancestors are said to return to this world at dusk to play a kind of mythical marbles game with these stones through the night. Used together the paired Moqui Stones can bring harmony as they balance the female, Yin or negative energies with the male, Yang or positive energies. These stones not only link us to three worlds; the Upperworld, Middleworld and Underworld but they also link us and our present world to the world of the past and our Ancestors and the world to come and our Descendants. In journeying one stone is used to take you to the Otherworld, the Past or the Future and the other to bring you back.

Shaman Quartz / Shamanic Dream Quartz / Lodolite

Shaman Quartz is a rare form of Brazilian Quartz with inclusions of other minerals such as green chlorite or brown-orange feldspar. The inclusions make this an ideal stone for scrying or 'seeing' with and it is said to awaken or help us to develop our inner shaman and our shamanic abilities. Shaman Quartz is a stone of psychism, trance work, dream work and meditation that enhances communication with the Spirit World but also keeps us grounded. It enables us to practically apply what we learn from our ancestors into our everyday lives. Shaman Quartz is also credited with enabling us to better recall the details of our trance or dream work for a fuller experience. Its older name of *Lodolite* derives from the Greek for 'Stone of Mud', alluding to its deep connection to Mother Earth.



Snow / Milk Quartz

Quartz is one of the most abundant stones on this earth and was considered sacred by every ancient culture. Snow Quartz is an opaque white form of quartz with a very soft, gentle energy. Snow Quartz pebbles were once used to adorn the exterior of the Newgrange Mound in Ireland and they would have made the mound gleam in the light and be visible for miles around. White stones like Snow Quartz have long been linked with healing; St Columba famously had a Snow Quartz pebble that he would dip into water to bless it and create a healing elixir, while a similar stone found in Carmarthenshire, known as the Alluring Stone, was said to be able to cure Rabies. As white is traditionally a colour of Spirits, Snow Quartz is a powerful ally for anyone wishing to journey into the land of Spirit or work with Spirits, especially for healing.



Author Biography

Ceri Norman is a Priestess and a perpetual student of life and lore. Her latest book, *Faerie Stones: An Exploration of the Folklore and Faeries Associated with Stones & Crystals*, explores the Faerielore and Folklore associated with different stones and various crystal formations, from the ancient Neolithic arrows known as Elfshot to magical Faerie dusted geodes known as Fairy Cavern Quartz. It deals with the metaphysical aspects of the stones, their traditional uses and healing qualities and discusses which types of Faerie and which Deities/Faerie Monarchs are associated with each stone. It also offers practical tips and two meditations for working with Faeries and stones for spiritual development. Aimed at all those who love Faeries and Crystals, it is ideal for the beginner or the more experienced practitioner. <http://www.moon-books.net/books/fairie-stones>.

Image References: *Moldovite* By Onohej Zlatove. *Lodalite* By Mauro Cateb. *Milk Quartz* By Jarek Tuszynski. All (Own work) via Wikimedia Commons. All other images © Ceri Norman.



The Weasel Underground

Hearth Moon Rising

How often and in how many ways do you invoke the weasel? Do you ever accuse someone of trying to 'weasel their way out' of accountability? Do you call a sly devious person a weasel? Have you ever called someone out for 'weasel words', those vague mushy qualifiers that undefine what is being said? One unifying characteristic of the weasel through all her popular expressions is this: the weasel is always the other guy.

'Othering' the weasel gives us a place to pin the rejected aspects of a personality trait. These become negative or 'shadow'. While we are smart, the weasel is sly. While we are resourceful, the weasel is wily. While we are mysterious, the weasel is devious. While we are fierce, the weasel is ferocious. While we are seeing our side of the story with utmost clarity, the weasel in her sly, wily, devious, ferocious weaselly way is getting a more complete picture.

The weasel is at home in shadow, creeping in twilight, in underbrush and in the burrows of the animals she hunts. She is seldom detected, yet she sees much. The weasel is the mammal most adept at hiding, spending her time observing and collecting information.

To embrace the weasel is to gain the power of understanding. Since humans have a limited ability to see within shadow, she can become a guide. Yet rapprochement with the weasel requires patience because she is mistrustful. That mistrust may be mutual but it is not qualitatively the same because humans and weasels have different ways of dealing with what they find threatening. Humans protect themselves by cutting themselves off from certain kinds of information. Weasels protect themselves by noticing everything and acting on sure knowledge.

Approach the weasel slowly. Initiate the call for engagement but understand that it is a sign of forward movement for the weasel simply to show herself to you, in meditative journey or in the flesh. Offer the weasel a biodegradable gift within the context of a ritual or a journey. The gift doesn't have to be food and, depending on where you live, food offerings may not be a good idea. Leaves, organic flowers or pictures scrawled in the sand also work. Your early relationship with the weasel is a form of courtship. With the weasel, you don't get somethin' for nothin'

The weasel's counsel and aid is worth pursuing. Many cultures view the weasel as an ally. In a Lenape Indian legend, a woman is rescued from an evil husband by her dream-weasel, who enters the husband's throat and cuts out his heart. In an Objibwe legend, a weasel saves a man from a monster by eating the monster's heart. The Ainu of Japan and north coastal Russia have a story about a white weasel goddess who intervenes with other deities on behalf of people during a famine. In folk belief of northeast China, the weasel is one of the 'Five Animal Immortals' who bring good luck to those who respect and worship them.

In Norse legend a berserker who has injured his nephew's throat in an altercation observes two weasels fighting, with one weasel loping off to fetch an herb to heal a throat wound in the weasel injured. By observing this, the berserker is able to heal his nephew's throat. It does seem odd for

weasels to be a source of herbal lore, celebrated carnivores that they are. Omnivores such as bears, foxes and coyotes would seem on first reflection to know more about herbs – but how would most of us know what the weasel knows? There is not a huge amount of modern scientific study of weasels, including long-tailed weasels, stoats and least-weasels. They are notoriously difficult to observe, being averse to attention and highly intelligent. Some weasels have even figured out ways to discard radio collars. They are too smart for us. If you look at a weasel skeleton, the size of the cranial cavity on such a small animal is striking.

Like the example from Viking legend, Irish folklore attributes helpful knowledge of herbs to weasels but weasels are reputed to become vengeful if a weaselly relative is killed. In France there is a historical injunction against killing weasels, possibly for the same reason. People who worship the weasel as an Animal Immortal in northeast China believe that the weasel will cause mental illness if not properly propitiated. The weasel gives as good as she gets, for better or worse.

The weasel is one of the many animals appearing in the witch trials as a witch’s familiar or a form of the devil, though more commonly the witch’s familiar was a ferret, a distant domesticated cousin of the weasel. Some Balkan folklore holds that female witches are weasels, a belief with Classical antecedents where the weasel is a prophetic animal of Demeter. In ancient Greece weasels also seem to be linked with childbirth and with the woman’s task of spinning.

The habits of the weasel reveal a witchy nature. She is a creature of the shadows, making her ways occult. Her underground burrow is akin to the journeys to the underworld undertaken by the shaman. At northern latitudes, she changes color from brown to white in winter, making her a shapeshifter. In another display of shamanic power, she has what is called a “weasel war dance,” an exuberant wriggling circle that erupts spontaneously whenever the weasel is excited. Like her larger cousin, the river otter, the weasel is fond of play. Those who court shamanic insight find the shadows not to be grim, but playful.

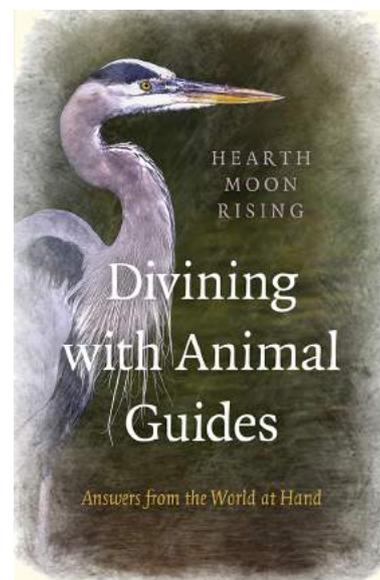
When interacting with the weasel in a meditative journey, a sign that you are entering her world can be a heightened sense of smell. While she has decent eyesight and better hearing than you, the weasel experiences the world primarily through smell. She can vocalize but she is usually silent, a characteristic of those with keen observation. The weasel may need to observe you for some time before imparting her secrets. Will you be ready for them?

Author Biography

Hearth Moon Rising is a Dianic Witch living in the Adirondacks of upstate New York. Her latest book is *Divining with Animal Guides: Answers from the World at Hand*. She blogs at hearthmoonblog.com.

Photograph: Short Tailed Weasel (stoat). Steve Hillebrand/US Fish and Wildlife Service.

Editor’s Note - Read a review of *Divining with Animal Guides* by Hearth Moon Rising on page 41!



NORTHERN PLANTLORE: HENBANE



EOGHAN ODINSSON

Quick Facts

WARNING - THIS PLANT IS POISONOUS - HENBANE IS EXTREMELY TOXIC. THE INFORMATION IN THIS ARTICLE IS FOR ENTERTAINMENT PURPOSES ONLY.

Latin/Linnaen: *Hyoscamus Niger*

Family: *Solanaceae*

Old English: *Belene*

Synonyms: Henbane, Hyoscyamus, Hog's-bean, Jupiter's-bean, Symphonica. Cassilata, Cassilago, Deus Caballinus, (Anglo-Saxon) Henbell, (French) Jusquiame.

Action: Henbane preparations produce a parasympatholytic or anticholinergic effect by competitive inhibition of acetylcholine. This inhibition affects the muscarinic action of acetylcholine but not its nicotine like effects on ganglia and motor end-plates. Henbane preparations exert peripheral actions on the autonomic nervous system and on smooth muscle, as well as the central nervous system. Because of their parasympatholytic properties, they cause relaxation of organs containing smooth muscle, particularly in the region of the gastrointestinal tract. Furthermore, they relieve muscular tremors of central nervous origin. The spectrum of actions includes a sedative effect.

Part Used: Leaf

Indicated For: Spasms of the gastrointestinal tract.

Dosage: Unless otherwise prescribed: Average single dosage: 0.5 of standardized henbane powder corresponding to 0.25-0.35mg total alkaloid. Maximum single dosage: 1g of standardized henbane powder corresponding to 0.5-0.7mg total alkaloid. Maximum daily dosage: 3g of standardized henbane powder corresponding to 1.5-2.1mg total alkaloid, calculated as hyoscyamine.

Preparation: Standardized henbane powder and galenical preparations for internal application.

Cautions: **POISONOUS**
Contraindications: Tachycardiac arrhythmias, prostatic adenoma with urine retention, narrow-angle glaucoma, acute pulmonary edema, mechanical stenosis in any part of the gastrointestinal tract, megacolon.
Side Effects: Dryness of the mouth, disturbances of optic conditions, tachycardia, difficulty in urination. Interactions: Enhancement of anticholinergic action by tricyclic antidepressants, amantadine, antihistamines, phenothiazines, procainamide and quinidine.

Other Uses: None known.

Description

Henbane, also known as stinking nightshade or black henbane, is a plant of the family *Solanaceae* that originated in Eurasia, though it is now globally distributed.

It was historically used in combination with other plants, such as mandrake, deadly nightshade and datura as an anaesthetic potion, as well as for its psychoactive properties in 'magic brews'. These psychoactive properties include visual hallucinations and a sensation of flight. Its usage was originally in continental Europe, Asia and the Arab world, though it did spread to England in the Middle Ages. The use of henbane by the ancient Greeks was documented by Pliny. The plant, recorded as *Herba Apollinaris*, was used to yield oracles by the priestesses of Apollo.

The name henbane dates at least to A.D. 1265. The origins of the word are unclear but 'hen' probably originally meant death rather than referring to chickens. Hyoscyamine, scopolamine and other tropane alkaloids have been found in the foliage and seeds of the plant. Common effects of henbane ingestion in humans include hallucinations, dilated pupils, restlessness and flushed skin. Less common symptoms such as tachycardia, convulsions, vomiting, hypertension, hyperpyrexia and ataxia have all been noted.

Henbane can be toxic, even fatal, to animals in low doses. Not all animals are susceptible, however; the larvae of some Lepidoptera species including Cabbage Moth eat henbane.

Cultivation

Hardiness Zone: 5-10

Soil pH: 6.6-8.5

Soil type: Light, moderately rich and well drained soil.

Sunlight: Full sun

Cultivation: Sow seed once the ground is warm in spring, or for fall planting in late summer, early fall.

Habitat: Native to southern Europe and across western Asia. In the wild it can be found along waste ground and in places with stony soil.

Henbane occurs as an annual and as a biennial. Henbane leaves should be collected when the plant is in full flower. Some people report irritation from handling henbane, so care is advised.

Historical Notes

Henbane is found throughout Central and Southern Europe and in Western Asia, extending to India and Siberia. As a weed of cultivation it now grows also in North America and Brazil. It is not considered truly indigenous to Great Britain but occurs fairly frequently. It has been found wild in sixty British counties, chiefly in waste, sandy places, by road-sides, on rubbish heaps and near old buildings, having probably first escaped from the old herb gardens. It is frequently found on chalky ground and particularly near the sea. It appears to have been more common in Gerard's time (Queen Elizabeth's reign) than it is now.

The medicinal uses of Henbane date from remote ages; it was well known to the Ancients, being particularly commended by Dioscorides (first century A.D.), who used it to procure sleep and allay pains. Later it fell into disuse. It was omitted from the London Pharmacopoeia of 1746 and 1788, and only restored in 1809, its re-introduction being chiefly due to experiments and recommendations by Baron Storch, who gave it in the form of an extract, in cases of epilepsy and other nervous and convulsive diseases.

It is poisonous in all its parts and neither drying nor boiling destroys the toxic principle. The leaves are the most powerful portion; even the odour of them when fresh will produce giddiness and stupor. Accidental cases of poisoning by Henbane are, however, not very common as the plant has too unpleasant a taste and smell to be readily mistaken for any esculent vegetable but its roots have sometimes been gathered and eaten. In one case recorded, a woman pulled up a quantity of Henbane roots which she found in a field, supposing them to be parsnips. She boiled them in soup, which was eaten by the family. The whole of the nine persons who had partaken of them suffered severely, being soon seized with indistinctness of vision, giddiness and sleepiness, followed by delirium and convulsions.

It is also recorded that the whole of the inmates of a monastery were once poisoned by using the roots instead of chicory. The monks partaking of the roots for supper were all more or less affected during the night and following day, being attacked with a sort of delirious frenzy, accompanied in many cases by hallucinations.

The herb was used in magic and diabolism, for its power of throwing its victims into convulsions. It was employed by witches in their midnight brews and from the leaves was prepared a famous sorcerer's ointment.

Historical Medicinal Uses - For Entertainment ONLY

Medicinal Action and Uses: Antispasmodic, hypnotic, mild diuretic. The leaves have long been employed as a narcotic medicine. It is similar in action to belladonna and stramonium, though milder in its effects.

In the form of extract or tincture, it is a valuable remedy, either as an anodyne, a hypnotic or a sedative and will take effect when other drugs fail. When used for such a purpose, it is the active principle, Hyoscine, which is employed. This is very powerful - only a very small amount is used, from 1/200 to 1/70 of a grain of the Hydrobromate of Hyoscine. This drug comes under Table I of the Poisons Schedule. In poisonous doses Henbane in any form causes dimness of sight, faintness, delirium and sometimes death

Hyoscine, in combination with other drugs, has of late come into use in the treatment known as Twilight Sleep. This is on account of its sedative action on brain and spine, causing loss of recollection and insensibility. Hyoscine is also used to a considerable extent in asylum practice, for the treatment of acute mania and delirium tremens.

Author's Bio

Canadian born Eoghan Odinson is an award winning journalist and author with a lifelong passion for the knowledge of our Northern forefathers – or “folk lore”. Literally, the knowledge of our people. Graduating from the University of Aberdeen in Scotland with his Masters of Science degree, he subsequently taught for the University and was a dissertation advisor for graduate students. In addition to his academic background, Eoghan also holds a Black Belt in Chito-Ryu Karate, and has taught Martial Arts in Canada and the USA. Eoghan is now back in his native Ottawa Valley where he lives with his wife, son and three dogs. Eoghan is a professional member of the Canadian Authors Association.

A Dream of an Ancient Briton

Martin Pallot

I have heard that our stories and legends of the Fae originate from the time when the Stone Age gave way to the Bronze.

The Stone Age people and their flint weapons were unable to compete with the new bronze weapon wielding invaders and were gradually forced from the land; the last groups of survivors finally taking refuge in the barrows and burial places of their ancestors, where they discovered their enemies would not follow them and from where they only emerged after dark to forage or travel.

It is said that they were of slighter and shorter build than the Bronze Age folk and so, as they and their time passed into memory, the 'little people' became associated with the underworld and the night. And thus became the subject of tales that were told.

Then again, in another piece of this mystical, mythical jig saw, it is also told how the Bronze Age Britons had a reputation for being small in stature yet fierce warriors and possibly adept at magic. They seemed to be able to appear and vanish at will from among the trees of the forests and along the hills. According to some early Roman accounts, the Britons would spike their hair with white lime and cover their bodies in swirling patterns of blue woad for battle, possibly to enable them to vanish into the pattern of clouds in the sky or reflected on the surface of lakes. This resulted in a belief that they could appear out of thin air and make their getaways via 'portals' in lakes and rivers and forests. Some have suggested that *this* is where the myth of the fae began. These 'fairy folk' who used 'magical' tactics were armed with bronze, which was no match for the iron blades of the Roman invaders. Therefore, iron became known as the enemy of the Fae.

But these are only two of many tales that I have heard; most of which have become strangely shaped by time and the telling and when all is said and ended the origins of the Fae are as mysterious as they and we will probably never know for sure.

However, if the lore of Lords and Ladies riding forth from hollow hills and the fables of foot tapping music that traps the feet of those who step within a toadstool ring are even partly true and presuming that their story does have a more mystical, mythical, otherworldly origin, which is something that I for one would not dream of doubting; then how might you go about seeing one of the fair folk, in the midnight moments of a midsummer's eve?

For the ways are as many and as varied as the Fae themselves. You might try peeping through a stone with a water worn hole or maybe make a whistle from an Elder twig to try and call them to you; find a moss covered stone or stump whereon the Fae might dance or bathe your eyes with Marigold balm; look into the dreaming otherworlds reflected in the depths of forest pools; listen to the misty whispers of the wood, the ghostly voices of its ancient roots; or try to see beyond the shadows shaped by moon light falling through the leaves; maybe take a sunwise spiraled staff of Ash and walk with the blossoming Hawthorn or follow the unfurling Oak across the countryside; or simply take a closer, older look at the naming of the world where you live, it's not only places like Puckeridge and Purbrook that were once land and water 'haunted by a Goblin'.

If the night or the light is right and you do one or some or all of these things or maybe something else entirely; who knows, you might just catch a glimpse of the Goodman green as he turns a corner that isn't there along the old straight tracks of Albion.

Goodman green? You know the fellow I mean!

He that is most likely to be found upon a summer solstice night; that merry wanderer, that hedgerow halfling, that scourer and sourer of the milk churn, that jack-in-the-box jack in the green man oldest of old things, the Puca; sweet Puck.

Born of a fierce hearted human maid, who lay with a cat eyed traveling man beneath a harvest moon. That Robin who dances through this and other realms to the tune of a Blackbirds piping. Feasting on the fruits of hazel tree and hive, quaffing foaming acorn cups of beer and buttermilk. Shadow hopping in a mouse skin cloak or riding through the night upon a barn owl, he watches our ways from season to season; while his antlered alter ego shape shifts between the trees in the slantwise sunlight.

Spirit of both path and hearth, he dozes away the winter safe within the cob webbed corner of the Inglenook; marking our merriment and misdemeanours with an indulgent smile, for he has the greatest love of humankind of all the folk who dwell in hallowed hills.

An ancient Briton; sworn brother to old Brock, riding on his burly back along the hollow ways He counted Aveburys' standing stones the day the builders left; helped to light the bonfires that warned of Caesars might; and saw the fatal arrow find its mark on Senlac hill. A woodland wisdom, green hearted, hooded man; he was a force to be reckoned with in those more straightforward days, when the Fae had greater influence in the affairs of us than they seem to now.

For as the cities grew, we denied him his ways; and whys and wherefores; we threw him back with all his kind out of our lives and minds into our myths and once upon a times. We gave him, in our foolishness, a foxglove dunce's cap; so that we might laugh around our urbane and urban hearth at his madcap mischief and try to pretend we gave not one care or passing thought to what mysteries might lie around the corner of our eye, within the darkling wood.

But for all our attempts at enlightened nonchalance, we still know that deep within the emerald dappled glades of oak and ash and thorn, there lives a far wilder, fiddle playing, sylvan magic; born of the chalk bones and deep red ochre blood of Albion itself, where faerie kings might well hold court beneath some ancient mound and doors may open in and onto the most unlikely places. Not to mention unseele places; those dank and eldritch realms where, if you are not careful, you may find visions from the shadow lands between the dark and light chasing you into the mundane world of everyday and taking on a more solid reality.

For beware! His indulgence of our behaviour only goes so far and those horns on his head can be used with Goatish stubbornness to jab at our consciences and other tender parts if we behave in petty or small minded ways, or try to ignore our responsibilities. We do well to remember that sweet Puck is also first cousin to old Pan and is equally capable of curdling our dreams with that unreasoning dread of the unknown or unfamiliar; mostly it's done for a very good reason but sometimes it's just Puck, being his trickster self and 'having a laugh' at our naiveté.

Someone¹ once said of Puck, " 'I am that merry wanderer of the night'? I am that giggling-dangerous-totally-bloody-psychotic-menace-to-life and limb, more like it."

So here's another piece of the jig saw. I have heard that the lands of Faerie reflect back on the traveler the light that he or she brings to them; so perhaps whether you meet Goodman green or gruesome Goblin, ultimately depends on how much magic you believe exists, truth you are prepared to give or romance you wish to find, between the dreaming moonbeams of a mid summer night.

Author's Bio

Martin lives on the drifting edge of Epping Forest in north east London. He describes what he does as 'writing pictures' and uses inspiration from nature, myth, folklore and his animist beliefs to create poetry, short fiction and 'dream tales'. He's been published both online and in print, here and in America and was recently featured in the anthology, Moon Poets (published by Moon Books). You can read more of his work at martinpallot.wordpress.com and contact him at martinpallot234@gmail.com.

1 Peaseblossom in Neil Gaimans Sandman series: Volume Three; Dream Country, DC Comics Gph edition (5 April 2005)

Shaman Moon



Yvonne Ryves

The sudden and untimely passing of author and shaman, Ross Heaven, in January 2018 led to me reflecting a lot on how much people can influence our lives, even when we have never met them in person. The books or articles they write, the bits and bobs they post on Facebook, the contributions they make to online discussions and the way they make themselves available to us in a million and one ways all has an impact on us. It's also made me realise how the way we can interact and communicate now means that even if we never meet someone in person we can still consider them a friend and feel the loss when they leave us.

I first discovered Ross when I read a review of one of his early books. At the time I had not really acknowledged or perhaps even realised that I was stepping on to my shamanic path but something about his work resonated with me and I knew that I wanted to read the book. As with so many things the Universe conspired to make this sooner rather than later by leaving a copy on the table in a book shop for me to find when I sat down with a cup tea. Needless to say the book left with me and to this day that book remains one of my all time favourites and one of the few I never lend to anyone.

When I came to write my own book and needed endorsements, emboldened by the fact I had read one of his books I cheekily sent the manuscript to Ross. He graciously took the time to read it and wrote me a great endorsement despite me being a first time author and him having no idea who I was!

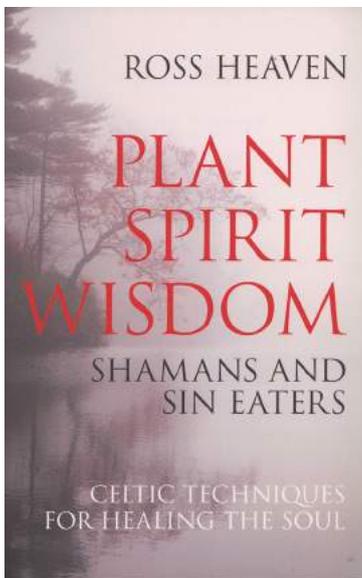
More recently when we reached out to Ross to write the foreword for a forthcoming Moon Books Community book on Deathwalking he not only said yes but wrote the foreword and had it back to the editor in record time.

As well as being a prolific author, Ross ran workshops both in Peru and Europe. I would dearly have loved to train with Ross in person but sadly nothing ever worked out. I now understand this was how it was meant to be, for although I was intrigued by working with plant spirits for me it was not by dieting

teacher plants but by connecting with the spirit of them. In the end though, when I became frustrated by gaps in the training my own guides were giving me, it was Ross that I turned to. His excellent book *Medicine for the Soul* combined with his distance diploma, gave me the chance to work away in my own time, with and without my guides but with Ross always there to give me feedback, share experiences and toss ideas around with me. I found him to be a supportive, generous and challenging teacher; never one to let me get away with anything he was just what I needed - always open minded, never saying anything was impossible. When I explained during my training that I actually had some Ayahuasca, purchased from the Witches Market in Bolivia and was wondering if I could make it into a tincture and see how it worked with me, Ross' response was "try it and see but do let me know how it goes". I made the tincture but never worked with it. Perhaps now, in memory of Ross I may do so. I am sure he will know how it goes.

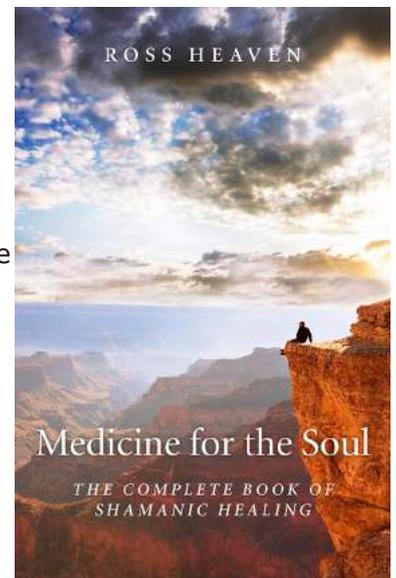
Ross became known for his interest in dieting and working with teacher plants such as ayahuasca, peyote and salvia. Perhaps this has put some of you reading this off but there is so much more in his writing, even about plants, than just the use of hallucinogenics. Ross put so much of his own journey into all of his work, meaning that in any of his books there are layers of learning to be found. In his books he often spoke of those he trained with, of ways of working or deepening learning and experience, of ways of healing including healing for the soul and of relationships.

Over the last six years many of Ross' books have been published by Moon Books; as a community we will all miss him as will the shamanic world as a whole.



The books - Author Ross Heaven

- Drinking the Four Winds
- The Hummingbird's Journey to God
- Medicine for the Soul
- Plant Spirit Wisdom
- Shamanic Plant Medicine - Ayahuasca: The Vine of the Souls
- Shamanic Plant Medicine - Magic Mushrooms: The Holy Children (in production)
- Shamanic Plant Medicine - San Pedro: The Gateway to Wisdom
- Shamanic Plant Medicine - Salvia Divinorum: The Sage of the Seers
- The Way of the Lover



Biography

Yvonne Ryves is a Shamanic Healer, Reiki Master, Chios Energy Healing Master Teacher and Past Life Regression Therapist as well as being the author of *Web of Life* published by Moon Books as part of their Shaman Pathways Series. She offers healing sessions as well as running workshops and courses from her home in West Cork, Ireland. Yvonne is currently training as an Ovate with OBOD. You can find out more about Yvonne at www.yvonneryves.com

Editor's Note:

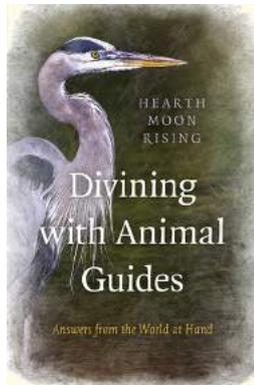
You can read my blog tribute for Ross and an interview he did for Indie Shaman magazine back in 2010 at <https://indieshaman.co.uk/ross-heaven-shaman-author-one-kind/>.

Reviews for some of Ross' books can be found at <https://shamanismbooks.co.uk/>.

The above featured books are available at <http://www.moon-books.net/authors/ross-heaven> and all usual retailers.

Reviews

Divining with Animal Guides



Divining with Animal Guides is, as the title suggests, a guide to using natural divination with animals. The book looks specifically at 9 animals: cats (big and small), crocodiles, horses, bees, scorpions, ravens, woodpeckers, deer and cranes. Each animal has 7 chapters, studying aspects of their physical and spiritual form; along with excellent observations on the author's personal experiences with these animals which cannot fail to captivate the reader. The book is brimming with wisdom and exceptionally well researched; this in turn guides the would-be diviner to access the natural world from a uniquely well-grounded and refreshing perspective. The exercises and quizzes are both thought provoking and scrutinising - and who can fail to enjoy a good story? The myths and stories are from many of the world's pantheons, which is an admirable way to see nature as global and at the same time something to be found in your own garden or yard. I enjoyed learning about the history of each animal, their interaction with humans, origins of worship and domestication (where this is the case.)

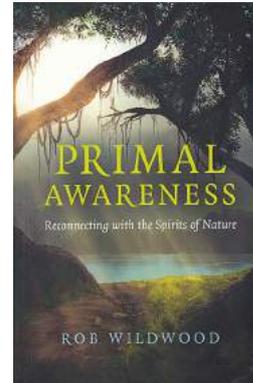
The book is filled with many illustrations and photographs, which gives weight to many of the topics covered.

This is Hearth Moon Rising's second book with Moon Books. The first, *Invoking Animal Magic*, is at the front of my bookcase and I am pleased to say that *Divining with Animal Guides* will be joining it. A highly recommended read.

Reviewed by Thea Prothero

Hearth Moon Rising. *Divining with Animal Guides: Answers from the world at hand.* Moon Books ISBN 9781785355974.

Primal Awareness



Primal Awareness is a short history of humanity's separation from Nature and the world of spirits. Each chapter details the 'evolution' of our race. This tragic history is portrayed as a decline, rather than a progression, for humankind. With great clarity, Rob explains how the plight of the modern world is a result of us severing our links with the true essence of Nature and its energies and forces. Right back into pre-history our ancestors developed language and began to name and organize mentally the world around them. This led to the communication and ownership of knowledge, usually by an elite few, who used this for the betterment of themselves and for gaining power over the rest of the populace. The birth and development of cities, industry, science and capitalism are all explained through this philosophy.

Rob confirms that when we were hunter gatherers, dependent on our senses for survival, we would have had a more heartfelt and intimate relationship with the realm of spirit. Rob writes "We were all shamans once". The creation of Gods in the human mind and the structuring of an authoritarian church onto society has meant that we have lost our true direction and purpose.

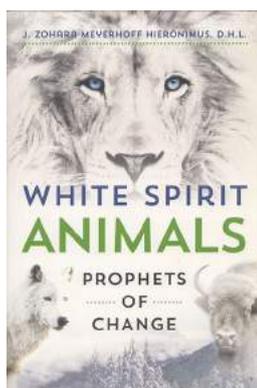
I agree with a recent review that *Primal Awareness* is 'a book that calls you home'. I found the book to be a consolation and a comfort because at the end of each chapter there are clear exercises and ways of reconnecting ourselves with our original primal awareness, enabling us to once again live with love for the great source of all that is! Recommended - an inspiring book!

For more info on Rob Wildwood visit <https://www.jelldragon.com/magicalplaces/>

Reviewed by Joe Caudwell.

Rob Wildwood. *Primal Awareness.* Moon Books (26 Jan. 2018). ISBN: 978-1785356568.

Reviews



White Spirit Animals

This book explores the author's journey and relationship with several White Spirit Animals; namely the Bear, Lion, Elephant, Wolf and Buffalo and is based on both her own Shamanic and Telepathic dreaming and

conversations, as well as numerous interviews with animal conservation enthusiasts and professionals in order to give a vibrant picture of these animal ambassadors. These shamanic animals who have been considered by many indigenous peoples to be great teachers and wisdom keepers and who, for thousands of years, have provided a sacred link between the mundane and spirit worlds.

It is the author's assertion that these animals carry a message of, to use her own phrase, Conservation, Preservation and Restoration (or C.P.R.) for the Earth and that trans-species communication can be used to learn the lessons they have to offer.

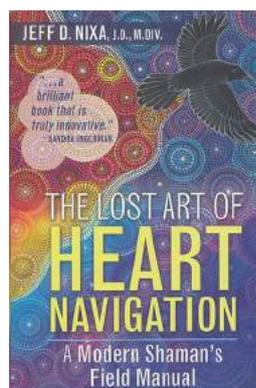
Each animal is given a chapter containing a wide ranging account of the history, mythology, biology, astronomy, cross cultural, spiritual and even nursery aspects of their relationship with humans and also of the impact our behaviour and, more importantly, our 'dissociation' of behavioural cause and effect has had on them and the species they represent.

There is a final section which explores the beings of legend and of 'hidden history' and which draws together the themes and lessons previously covered; along with examples of how we continue to harm our home planet and some of the methods, spiritual and otherwise, that may help to heal Her.

This is a fascinating and thought provoking book for anyone who wishes to walk with White Spirit Animals, find guidance and answers in the dreaming of them and explore their message of C.P.R. for the Earth.

Reviewed by Martin Pallot.
<http://martinpallot.wordpress.com/>

J. Zohara Meyerhoff Hieronimus D.H.L.
White Spirit Animals: Prophets of Change.
Bear & Company (October 2017). ISBN:
9781591432470.



The Lost Art of Heart Navigation

I found it quite challenging to fit everything I wanted to say about *The Lost Art of Heart Navigation* into a magazine review as I got so much out of this book!

Living our soul's purpose is an aspiration for many of us which usually leads us to experience many challenges and even then, discovering the elusive soul purpose may escape our awareness. In this everyday modern existence, governed by time and other external factors, it becomes quite impossible to connect authentically with your heart path long enough to awaken your power, your wildness and your soul's purpose. However, it becomes entirely possible using this blend of shamanic practices and modern depth psychology which Jeff Nixa offers; as he explains in this easy to understand and insightful guide to using the lost art of heart navigation.

Discover your spiritual core as you deactivate trauma-based emotional patterns, retrieve personal power, work with your dreams and consult with spirit guides and power animals who will assist you in realising your soul's true purpose using the exercises provided.

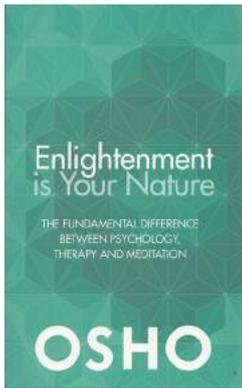
This user-friendly manual also offers guided audio journeys narrated by the author, step by step guidance for shamanic ceremonies and hands-on practices, as well as wisdom from the author's own life path and teachers he has worked with, including Sandra Ingerman, Mikkal, plant-spirit medicine shamans of the Amazon jungle and spiritual elders of the Oglala Lakota people. In this book, you will find a map with the potential of enabling you to find your soul's deepest calling.

Reviewed by Badrunnisa Patel

Jeff D. Nixa. *The Lost Art of Heart Navigation: A Modern Shaman's Field Manual.* Bear & Company, 2 edition (16 Nov. 2017). ISBN: 978-1591432852

Reviews

Enlightenment is Your Nature



When I received *Enlightenment is Your Nature* I knew nothing about Osho. A quick web search found that he was born Chandra Mohan Jain in India in 1931 and was a controversial figure, banned from visiting

certain countries for his beliefs. He died in 1990 but his views have lived on. There is an Osho retreat in India where people can learn the Osho techniques and methods of meditation.

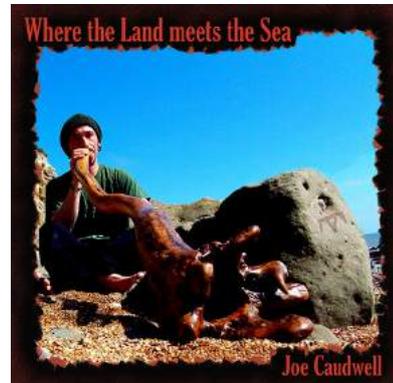
Enlightenment is Your Nature, like Osho's other books, is a collection of talks given by Osho to his followers, so it is an easy, accessible read. Most chapters end with his answer to a question from an audience member. The talks describe what Osho thinks is wrong with both Western and Eastern societies. He believes that the West focuses too much on the mind and body and offers a different perspective – a third way, achieved through meditation. This is the way that nature intended: how we are when we were born or when we die, free from Western inhibitions like competitiveness, egos etc.

I found it interesting to find out about Osho and his philosophies and think I agree with him to some extent. For Osho, the Eastern way is by no means perfect but he seems drawn to Buddhist and Hindu methods of meditation and mindfulness. This book taught me a lot about Osho's views, particularly on Western psychology, psychotherapy/analysis and religion. It also made me laugh where, at the end, he responds to an audience member who asks whether it is possible to become enlightened in an easy and relaxed way. Osho answers: "Mostly I am asleep. I just get up to talk to you in the morning then I go back to sleep. My total hours of sleep must be 18."

Reviewed by Karon Lyne

Osho. *Enlightenment is Your Nature*. Watkins Publishing Ltd. (19 Sept. 2017). ISBN: 978-1786780492.

CD - Where the Land Meets the Sea



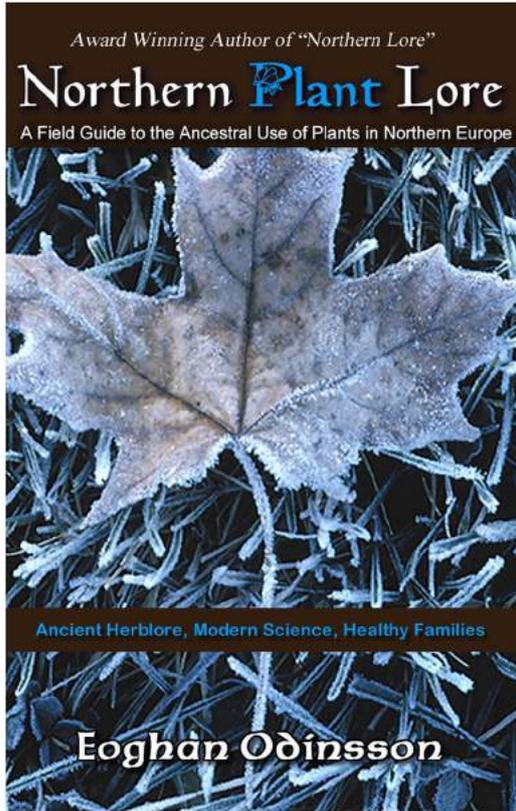
Evocative, relaxing, beautiful, *Where the Land Meets the Sea* is aimed to "create an ambience that will soothe, relax and inspire the listener" and in that musician Joe Caudwell has succeeded admirably. In fact the only problem with reviewing this album is that after I had listened to it I was far too relaxed to do anything as mundane as write!

Where the Land Meets the Sea features 7 tracks (50 minutes) of trance inducing music, including a 22 minute long journey with didgeridoo and ocean drum named, quite simply, *Didgeridoo Journey*. The album begins with *Ancestor* which opens with the haunting tones of a Native American flute. This is followed by *Mermaid Rock*, featuring eerie tones from the didgeridoo and the exquisite ethereal voice of Keri Highland. Another highlight for me was *Awakening* which featured the sitar playing of Paul Jackson; the first time I'd heard a sitar playing in accompaniment with a didgeridoo - wonderfully otherworldly. By the time the album was into the last track, *Veil of Stars*, I could picture myself listening sat under a clear, star-filled night sky (although, seeing that it was physically raining at the time, curling up on the sofa was equally rewarding).

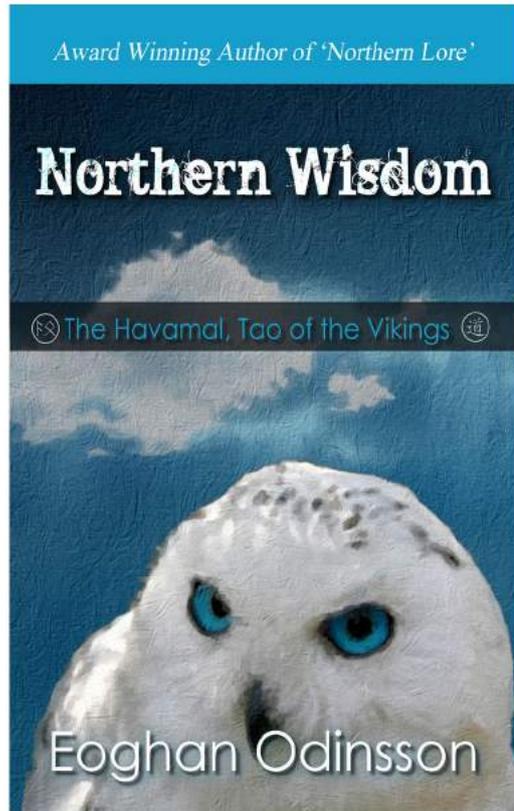
Where the Land Meets the Sea is perfect for those times when you need to lose yourself for a while. Highly recommended!

Reviewed by June Kent (editor)

Where the Land Meets the Sea. Joe Caudwell (April 2017). To find out more, listen to tracks and buy visit <http://jcaudwell.wixsite.com/joecaudwell>



Northern Plant Lore explores the plants and herbs used by the Anglo Saxons for medicinal purposes, and compares them to the list of plant and herbs proven effective by modern medical science.

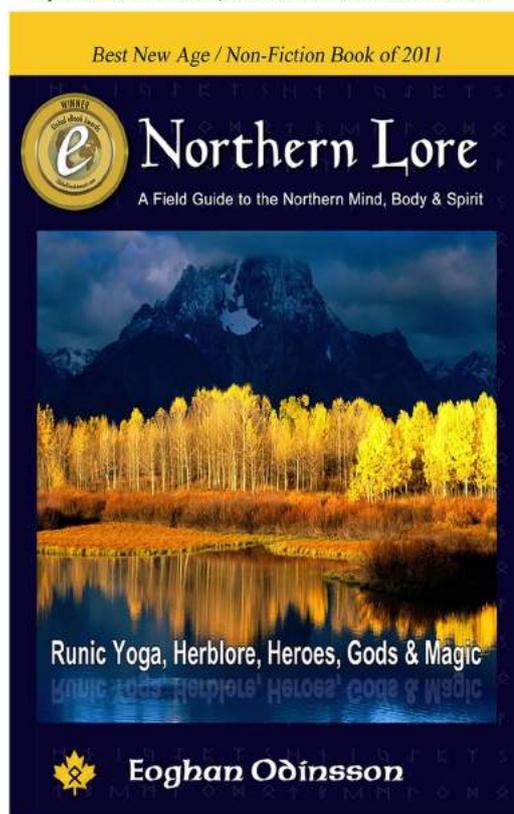


Northern Wisdom presents ancient Viking parables and knowledge in a delightfully accessible modern format. Combining Teachings on par with Buddha, Sun-Tzu, Myamoto Musashi, Nicollo Machiavelli & Lao



In 9 minutes you will be using the runes for personal development and exploration.

Of course you aren't going to master the runes in 9 minutes, but you can start!



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Events and Workshops

DRUM CIRCLES

Shamanic Quest Drum Circle BEDFORDSHIRE. Monthly on Mondays. Email melanie@shamanicquest.co.uk. <http://www.shamanicquest.co.uk/>.

Shamanic Drummers MK, MILTON KEYNES, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE. Evenings, 1st Thursday of month 7-9pm £5. <https://www.facebook.com/shamanicdrummersmk/>. Email shamanicdrummersmk@gmail.com.

Cambridgeshire Wellbeing Drumming Circle. CAMBRIDGESHIRE. 2nd Saturday afternoon each Month. www.sunflower-health.com/shamanicworkshops.htm#Workshops

'The Buzzard Circles', Wilmslow Clan. 1st Monday of the month, Friends Meeting House, 1a Bourne Street, WILMSLOW, CHESHIRE, SK9 5HD. Contact Nicola and Jason Smalley contact@thewayofthebuzzard.co.uk. <http://thewayofthebuzzard.co.uk/about-our-circles/>

'The Shamans Drum' Monthly Drumming circle The Arkwright Hall, Moorside Lane, HOLBROOK, Nr Belper, DERBYSHIRE, DE56 0TW, UK. E-mail: dunnwooddrums@live.com. Phone: 01332880984. <http://dunnwooddrums.com/#/drumming-groups/4533077917>

Monthly Shamanic Drumming Circle. TOTNES NATURAL HEALTH CENTRE, TOTNES, DEVON. <http://www.southdevonshamanism.co.uk/workshops/>

The Buzzard Circles, Stockport Clan 3rd Thursday of the month at The Friends Meeting House, Cooper Street, STOCKPORT, GREATER MANCHESTER SK1 3QL. Contact Nicola and Jason Smalley contact@thewayofthebuzzard.co.uk. <http://thewayofthebuzzard.co.uk/>

Kki Sounds - Inspiring Inner Stillness. 1st Friday monthly, The Kingsley Centre GU35 9DN (HANTS, UK) from 7.15 - 9pm. £15, £12 concessions. Contact: Nikki Marianna Hope, E nikki@kkisounds.net, T 0791 871 5011. <http://kkinaturally.net/sounds.html/>

Shamanic Drum Circle Gathering, INVERNESS. We meet at full moon / dark moon around Inverness. Outdoors £3.00 indoor £5.99. Email - SpiritKraft@mail.com. <http://www.spanglefish.com/SacredVisionsSanctuaryServices/index.asp>.

WhiteBuffalo Sacred Drum/Dance/ Circle . Monthly Near MAIDSTONE, KENT. Contact: theresamatthew@gmail.com for full information.

'Call of the Drums' Addington Village Hall, Park Road, Addington, nr West Malling, KENT. 4th Thursday of every month. 7.30pm - 10.30pm, £6 per person. <http://www.woodspirit.org.uk/>. Email rob@woodspirit.org.uk.

The Buzzard Circles, Chorley Clan 2nd Tuesday of the month in the stable block behind The Bay Horse pub, Heath Charnock, CHORLEY, LANCASHIRE, PR6 9ER, 7.30pm. Contact Nicola and Jason Smalley contact@thewayofthebuzzard.co.uk, 01257 233909. <http://thewayofthebuzzard.co.uk/buzzardcircles/>

The Buzzard Circles, Lancaster Clan 1st Thursday of the month in Halton Mill, Mill Lane, Halton, LANCASTER, LANCASHIRE, LA2 6ND, 7.30pm. Contact Nicola and Jason Smalley contact@thewayofthebuzzard.co.uk, 01257 233909 <http://thewayofthebuzzard.co.uk/buzzardcircles/>

Open Shamanic Journeying Circle with Tom Henfrey. The Well-Being Hub, Harper's Mill, White Cross Business Park, LANCASTER LA1 4XF. Saturday afternoons arrival from 2.15 for 2.30 start, 5pm finish. £7-10. Contact caldershamanics@gmail.com. <http://www.caldershamanics.net/>

'The Buzzard Circles', Cuerdan Clan 2nd Monday of the month at The Barn, Berkeley Drive, Bamber Bridge, PRESTON, LANCASHIRE, PR5 6BY. Contact Nicola and Jason Smalley contact@thewayofthebuzzard.co.uk. <http://thewayofthebuzzard.co.uk/about-our-circles/>

Walks with Horses Drumming Group meets monthly at Core Music, HEXHAM, NORTHUMBERLAND, NE46 3NT on Saturday afternoons 2-4pm. Cost £5. For dates contact Gwen at gwen.a.brown@btinternet.com

Hummingbird Gatherings Drumming and Journey Circle at The Sound Lodge, HEXHAM, NORTHUMBERLAND, Saturday afternoons 2 - 4.30, starting 9th September. Cost £15. Enquiries: johanna@soundtouchforlife.com Tel:01434 606159 or visit soundtouchforlife.com

Kki Sounds - Inspiring Inner Stillness. MIDHURST, WEST SUSSEX, UK, 1st in month from 8 - 9.30pm at The Old Town Hall, Market Square GU29 9DN. £15 or £12 concessions. Contact: Nikki Marianna Hope, E nikki@kkisounds.net, T 0791 871 5011. <http://kkinaturally.net/sounds.html/>

Evening Shamanic Drumming Circle 1st Wed in month. £15, 7.30 - 9pm Baby Moon Camp, DUNSDALE, NORTH YORKSHIRE, TS14 6RH. Contact Elaine McKeown phone 07933 718368 or via <http://www.innerpeacehealing.org/>

Open Shamanic Journeying Circle, Hebden Bridge. Weekly, Thursday evenings, arrival from 7.15pm for a 7.30pm start. The Energy Centre, Burlees House, Hangingroyd Lane, HEBDEN BRIDGE, WEST YORKSHIRE, HX7 7DD. £5. Contact: caldershamanics@gmail.com. <http://www.caldershamanics.net/>

Events and Workshops

Open Shamanic Journeying Circle. Carlton Hill Friends Meeting House, Woodhouse Lane, LEEDS, WEST YORKSHIRE LS2 9DX. Wednesday evenings, 7.30-9.30pm. £5-£10. For current dates see Shamanic Leeds Facebook Page or mail leeds.shamanic@gmail.com. <http://www.caldershamanics.net/>

ONGOING EVENTS

Introduction to Shamanism days, with Paul Francis, Therapeutic Shamanism. Experiential and covers the basics of shamanic practice. For more information or if you would be interested in organising an Introductory Day in your area email paulfran@gmail.com. <http://www.therapeutic-shamanism.co.uk>

Shamanic Quest Moon Lodge with Melanie Tomsett BEDFORDSHIRE. Once monthly lodge, held on a Thursday for women. Email melanie@shamanicquest.co.uk. <http://www.sunflower-health.com/shamanicworkshops.htm#Workshops>.

Shamanic Quest Introductory Workshops in Shamanics with Melanie Tomsett, BEDFORDSHIRE. Dates throughout the year. Email melanie@shamanicquest.co.uk. <http://www.sunflower-health.com/shamanicworkshops.htm#Workshops>

Shamanic Quest Foundation Course in Shamanics with Melanie Tomsett, BEDFORDSHIRE. Learn about shamanic practice, implement that knowledge, experience beneficial discoveries. Email melanie@shamanicquest.co.uk. <http://www.sunflower-health.com/shamanicworkshops.htm#Workshops>.

Sacred Circle Dance and Drumming with Michael Meredith, Keith Barrett & Barbara Moorby in CAMBRIDGESHIRE. Tantric Circle Dance every 3rd Saturday afternoon in the month plus "Wheel of the Year" Drumming Days every 3 months. <http://www.sunflower-health.com/shamanicworkshops.htm#Workshops>

Shamanic Sundays, with Mandy Pullen. FOREST OF DEAN, GLOUCESTERSHIRE. Monthly journeying circle. Regular Introduction to Shamanism workshops. Contact details: Mandy Pullen Tel:01594 541850 or Email: info@mandypullen.co.uk. http://www.mandypullen.co.uk/Workshops_Groups.html

Drum Birthing Days with Nicola & Jason Smalley, The Way of the Buzzard, near Chorley, LANCASHIRE. Cost from £190. Contact Nicola or Jason on 01257 233909, contact@thewayofthebuzzard.co.uk. <http://thewayofthebuzzard.co.uk/drum-birthing-day/>

Shamanic day workshops & weekend retreats in the PEAK DISTRICT, YORKSHIRE DALES, LAKE DISTRICT, FOREST OF BOWLAND and the WEST PENNINE MOORS with **Nicola & Jason Smalley, The Way of the Buzzard.** contact@thewayofthebuzzard.co.uk, 01257 233909. <http://thewayofthebuzzard.co.uk/workshops/>

Monthly Open 'Warrior' Soul Rescue Circle with Shirley Flint and Kieron Morgan. St Michael's Church The Sanctuary, EWELL VILLAGE, SURREY, ENGLAND. 7.00 pm. An evening for those who have died as a result of war. Contact Shirley Flint on 07889 018713, shirley.flint789@gmail.com. <http://www.ravens-wing.uk/events-warriors-soul-rescue-circle.html>

Crystal Space Events. Meet up at 'Our Space'. Plus events including drum making. SILSDEN, WEST YORKSHIRE. <http://www.crystalspace.co.uk/>

Munay Ki Network. YORKSHIRE <http://crystalspaceally.wix.com/munay-ki-network>

Ayahuasca Apprenticeship Retreats ongoing Ayahuasca and shamanic plant diet apprenticeship retreats with **Shipibo Maestra Rosa**, in SACHA HUARMI, PERUVIAN AMAZON. 1-26 weeks. Certificate from 13 weeks onwards. <http://www.elmundomagico.org/>

EVENTS DIARY 2018

Space to Emerge. Space to Emerge woodland community retreat, Friday 4th – Monday 7th May 2018, Lake Windermere, CUMBRIA, UK with **Nicola & Jason Smalley from The Way of the Buzzard.** Weekend tickets from £105 adults, £25 children. Day tickets £60. <https://www.spacetoemerge.com>.

Guayusa Dream Tea Ceremony, Friday, May 4th 2018 (7-10pm). Shamanic Diagnostic and Bodywork: Intensive hands-on training, Saturday, Sunday & Monday May-5th -7th 2018 (9.30am to 5.30pm). With **Itzhak Beery**, Barnes Green Centre, The Green, Church Road, Barnes, LONDON, SW13 9HE. Contact Christian Thurow. Email: ct_reiki@icloud.com, phone 0777 5010880. <http://www.itzhakbeery.com/london-uk-may-2018.html/>

Shamanic Lands: The Otherworld. 19th and 20th May, LLANDRINDOD WELLS, WALES.

The Shamanic Lands is a two day ceremony and waking shamanic journey uniting the ancient knowledge of the British Isles and Ireland with global shamanic wisdom. Hosted by **Emma & Davyd Farrell** and featuring **Michael Dunning, Kristoffer Hughes, Carolyn Hillyer, Danu Forest, Elen Tompkins, Orion Foxwood** and **David Leesley.** <http://www.theshamaniclands.com/>.

Events and Workshops

Oak Spirit 2018. Shamanic event 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th of June 2018. The gathering, with guest presenters, will take place in the heart of DERBYSHIRE at Unstone Grange. £310 for accommodation and £250 camping, includes all meals and workshops. <http://www.oakspiritgatherings.org/>

Introduction to Shamanism with Chris Holt. 16th June, LIVERPOOL, UK. Email chrisholt01@hotmail.com. www.shamanic-practitioners.co.uk/Christine_Holt.html.

The Andes Summit. Make a Shamanic Pilgrimage and Meet the Master Yachaks HOSTERIA CHORLAVI, IBARRA, ECUADOR 16 – 21 June. With **Itzhak Beery**. Contact: Lisa Osina. Tel: 415-601-2572. Email: lofer@comcast.net. <https://www.theandessummit.com/>.

Celebrating Life and Being Alive – Retreat Between the Worlds. 29th June – 1st July 2018, DORSET, UK, with **Christa MacKinnon**. Immerse yourself into shamanic journeying, ceremony, gong baths, drumming circles, crafting, dance and more. <http://www.christamackinnon.com/>.

Introduction to Shamanism with Rachell Surtees. 1st July, LEEDS, UK. <http://appletreeholistics.co.uk/shamanic-workshops/>.

Plant Spirit Medicine and the Shamanic Realms: Healing with the Plant People. July 7-8, Oct 13-14, Dec 15-16, LLANDUDNO, NORTH WALES. Tutors: **Paul Francis, Tracy Owens, Rachel Surtees** and **Jayne Birkett**. Email paulfran@gmail.com. <http://www.therapeutic-shamanism.co.uk/page21.html>.

Introduction to Shamanism with Paul Francis. 21st July, LLANDUDNO, NORTH WALES. Course fee between £40 – £55, depending on the venue. Email paulfran@gmail.com. <http://www.therapeutic-shamanism.co.uk/Introduction%20to%20Shamanism%20Workshops.html>

Smudge Stick Workshop with Lindsey McNaughton, FOYERS, LOCH NESS, SCOTLAND, 1 – 4 pm, 28 July. Refreshments provided. Cost £25. <https://www.facebook.com/events/1238547956246423/>

Exploring the Shamanic Realms: the lower-world and upper-world, with **Tracy Owens, Rachel Surtees** and **Jayne Birkett**. August 4-5, September 1-2, November 3-4, and December 1-2. LEEDS, UK. Email tracyowens.shamanic@gmail.com. <http://www.therapeutic-shamanism.co.uk/Introduction%20to%20Shamanism%20Workshops.html>

Wholeness and Holiness: Restorying Love, 10th – 12th August 2018, LONDON, UK with **Genevieve Boast** and **Brooke Medicine Eagle**. Over 3 days we will immerse ourselves in mythology, wisdom teachings, new paradigm science and experiential indigenous practices. Price £399. <http://beyondhumanstories.com/portfolio/wholeness-and-holiness-a-quest-in-london/>

The Path of the Heart, 17th – 19th August 2018. AVEBURY, UK, with **Genevieve Boast** and **Brooke Medicine Eagle**. The retreat will be held at Elements of Avebury, situated in the heart of the stone circle. Price £399. <http://beyondhumanstories.com/portfolio/restorying-life-a-quest-in-avebury-uk/>

Song of the Ancestors: 3 days of workshops for women, with **Brooke Medicine-Eagle**, 25th – 27th August 2018, ANGLESEY, NORTH WALES. Cost for all three days, including lunches: £279. Bookings via Claire on 07970 409 724, info@northwalesretreats.com or via <https://northwalesretreats.com/brooke/>

The Shamanic Experience Festival. 8th September, DORSET, UK. Information courtesy of **Christa MacKinnon**. <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/shamanic-experience-festival-tickets-42681006038>

Introduction to Shamanism. with **Paul Connery and Dan Khan**. 22nd September, MANCHESTER, UK. Course fee between £40 – £55, depending on the venue. Email Paul Connery pjconnery@hotmail.com. www.shamanic-practitioners.co.uk/Paul_Connery.html

Introduction to Shamanism with Paul Francis. 5th October, LLANDUDNO, NORTH WALES. Course fee for the day is usually between £40 – £55, depending on the venue. Email paulfran@gmail.com. <http://www.therapeutic-shamanism.co.uk/Introduction%20to%20Shamanism%20Workshops.html>

Introduction to Shamanism with Chris Holt. 27th October, LIVERPOOL, UK. Course fee usually between £40 – £55, depending on the venue. Email chrisholt01@hotmail.com. http://www.shamanic-practitioners.co.uk/Christine_Holt.html

The Visual Journey – Entering the Dark, GLASTONBURY with **Sharyn Turner** Saturday 3rd and Sunday 4th November (the weekend after Samhain). Workshop includes a trip to a sacred Neolithic site where we will conduct an Utiseteta ritual. This will be a weekend of deep exploration and artistic creation. No artistic or shamanic experience is necessary. Cost £170. E-mail info@sharynturner.com. <http://www.sharynturner.com/>

Introduction to Shamanism with Paul Connery and Dan Khan. 10th November, MANCHESTER, UK. Course fee for the day usually between £40 – £55, depending on the venue. Email Paul Connery pjconnery@hotmail.com. http://www.shamanic-practitioners.co.uk/Paul_Connery.html

For full details plus more events please visit

<https://indieshaman.co.uk/community-resources/events-and-workshops/>

shamanismshop.co.uk

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Indie Shaman's Home Study Course

In relation to shamanism the ultimate teachers and knowledge providers are the guides a person meets and works with in the Otherworld. The Indie Shaman shamanism home study course is designed to give people 'tools' to develop their skills for shamanic work. Whether or not a person becomes a shaman or shamanic practitioner is ultimately a matter of their personal calling or path in life. However, if someone has the calling we can support them in developing this. If a student's path lays elsewhere this course can still be used for personal development work and frequently leads to the discovery of what their personal calling may be.

Taught via email with a one to one tutor.

Course fee only £200 with a discount of 50% (total course fee £100) available to Indie Shaman members.

For more information visit
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The Harper

Harken to the harpers voice
That drifts across the hall,
So sweet and soft, like Apple smoke,
To hold us in its thrall.

Memories of old romance,
The Harpers' song is calling,
Lovers won and lovers lost,
And maids' tears softly falling.

He bids ancestral war bands,
Steeped in blood and fame,
To raging, run the gauntlet
Of the shield wall, once again.

He tells of hoarded treasures,
Of Wyrd and Dragon's might.
A Selkies' shapely shifting,
And the Spectre shrouded night.

Entwining Elfin wisdom
With an Ash-hearts song of strife,
And a Queen of Faeries' toying
With an ancient poets life.

The Harper has a knowledge
Of an alphabet of trees.
A Rowan's whispered secrets,
And a Willow's Moon writ leaves.

He weaves this magic gently
Around the smoke wreathed hall.
So softly, singing dream tales,
To hold us in his thrall.

