

# PAGAN VOICE



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Northern Ireland's FREE Pagan Newsletter

Issue 3 : October 2010

Merry Greet and welcome to Issue 3 of Pagan Voice, a **free** newsletter produced by local pagans. In this issue we have Part II on the origins of Paganism, the first part of Chiron: the wounded healer and a new glossary section, plus our regular features. Wishing all of our readers a Happy Samhain!



A Midnight ritual is commonly held to mark the Samhain celebration

## Related Info

### ★ Traditional Samhain

#### Foods:

Apples, nuts, pumpkin, turnip, grains

### ★ Herbs and Flowers:

Mugwort, Sage, Poppy, Rosemary, Basil, Cinnamon

### ★ Samhain Incense/oils:

Orange, Dragon's blood, Sage, Clove, Cinnamon, Frankincense

### ★ Colours:

Orange, black

### ★ Sacred Gemstone:

Obsidian

## Samhain – the year's end/the final harvest



by Shirley McMichael and Jonathan Martin

Samhain (pronounced Sow-en) is probably the only Pagan holiday that is still celebrated by the masses today, albeit in disguise!

The word comes from Old Irish and roughly translates as "summer's end". This is because the old Celtic calendar had two predominant seasons, summer and winter and thus Samhain signaled the end of the brighter half of the year and the beginning of the dark time. It is the third and final harvest festival, one of the four Celtic fire festivals, which mark the quarter points in the calendar and also the last Sabbat in the Wheel of the Year cycle.

In Western Christianity, All Saint's Day, or perhaps All Soul's Day, falls on November 1<sup>st</sup> hence the night before became known as *All Hallows Eve*. And so today many people continue the traditions of Samhain with Halloween.

In the past, feasts were held and bonfires were lit throughout the countryside at Samhain. These bonfires were to warm friendly spirits and to ward off evil ones. They

also served to represent the Sun, which our ancestors hoped would return, bringing heat and growth for the new cycle.

As Samhain represents the final harvest, it is customary to set a place at a feast for those who have passed and to remember the ancestors. The Gaels believed that the veil between the worlds - our human plain and the spirit plain, or Otherworld, was very thin at Samhain. Therefore it is commonly associated with ghosts and divination, contacting souls who have passed over or glimpsing the near future. Another custom of the Gaels was to wear costumes and masks, usually frightening ones, in order to scare away negative spirits. In Scotland, for instance, young men often dressed as the dead with blackened faces and white clothes. Turnips were usually hollowed out and carved to make lanterns to scare off harmful spirits, which we continue today with our pumpkins.

Samhain is of course a time to pay

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## A Samhain Ritual – ideas for celebrating

by Jonathan Martin

- ★ Decorate a table or altar with apples and nuts. Light a black candle for the God and a white or orange one for the Goddess. Use a mini cauldron and besom/broom and other objects or items coloured black and orange.
- ★ Carve a pumpkin on Halloween night.
- ★ Try some divination. Use a black obsidian ball or mirror to scry; gaze into a fire to see images; use tarot, oracle cards, runes, a pendulum or other tools to make predictions for the new cycle; hold a séance.
- ★ Go trick-or-treating, or alternatively share food with family and friends, donate food to a charity, leave food outside on Samhain for the souls who have passed over or host a bake sale or similar event.
- ★ Reflect on the last twelve months, as the Wheel comes to a close, making note of your most significant achievements over the year and what you have gained and learned. More importantly, take a note of what you are now ready to release or banish.
- ★ Remember loved ones who have passed over to Spirit. You can light a small fire or candles and take time alone to think about those who have died, especially this year, or you may wish to share fond memories and stories with others.

**Samhain bonfire**

You may wish to mark the festival with any of the following ideas:

- ★ Light a small bonfire or failing that a circle of candles to surround you. Evoke the memory in your soul of what has gone before and imagine the fire burning up that which you no longer need or desire. You can also light a bonfire or candles to commemorate loved ones who have passed over to Spirit.
- ★ With the connection to the Spirit realm strong, it is a perfect time for divination; try a tarot reading, runes or a pendulum to ask important questions about your near future, or for guidance in your life and personal development. A common method of divination at Samhain is using a fire to scry (see images by gazing into the flames) that bring you messages.
- ★ Set some time aside to reflect on your year and recent past, such as achievements, those who have played an important part in your life and those who have passed on. You may wish to write down what you have gained and why you are grateful and what you are ready to let go of now.

**\*Please remember to take precautions if lighting a fire and to seek proper permission if you decide to hold an open fire somewhere**

## Samhain – the year's end/the final harvest (continued from page 1)

respect and give thanks to the God/Goddess and to those spirits who have guided us over the year.

By Samhain, the Goddess has entered her incarnation of Crone. She is the Old One, the earth mother, the wise one we turn to when we need advice. She teaches us that sometimes we must let go in order to move on. The Crone is perhaps better known today as the witch, hence the reason so many associate witches with this time of year. With the advent of early male-dominated Christianity, any woman who exhibited power or status was often demonized as a witch - an agent of the devil. Witch, in fact, means 'wise woman' and refers to one who is skilled in magical lore and healing arts.

The God, at Samhain, is the Horned One, the stag of great antlers, the god of the wild hunt. He is the animal that dies so that we may eat the grains and corn that once lived in the field before our harvest. Therefore the Goddess and the God are typically honoured by Pagans in ritual at this time of year.

Samhain teaches us about our shadow self; all the fears, blind spots, negativity and unresolved issues about ourselves and life in general that must be recognised, accepted and reclaimed before we can become whole. Much of the power of Celtic spirituality lies in this willingness to embrace our dark side. Religions today always talk about "turning to

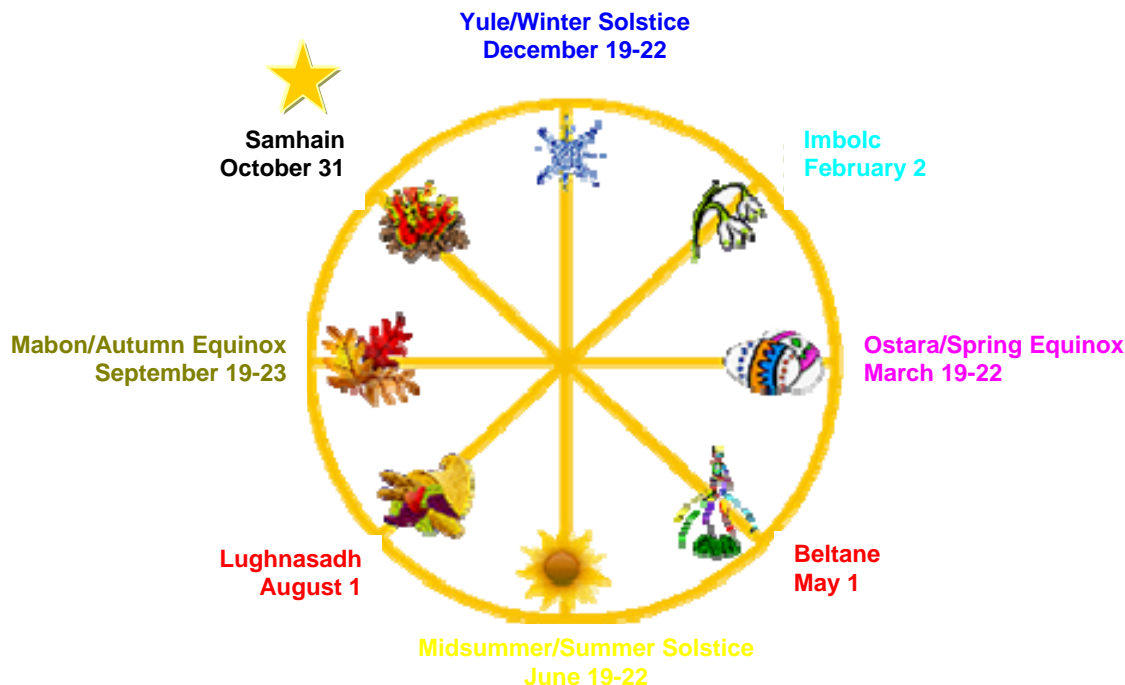
the light". While pagans embrace the light, we also recognise the dark Goddess and work to achieve a balance in our lives. It is therefore a good time now to ask the Goddess for help in sacrificing that which holds us back.

You may like to ask yourself the following questions:

- ★ What old habits, life patterns no longer serve me?
- ★ What things from the past are adversely affecting my life and relationships today?
- ★ What do I need to do to progress spiritually?
- ★ What can I do to help our planet and wildlife?

Between Samhain and Yule, on December 21<sup>st</sup>, the days will continue to shorten and darken and we can often feel more lethargic and sometimes somber. But this can be accepted as part of the great cycle, for we know that the seasons will turn again and the light will return. Use this period to continue working on your 'winter projects', make a list of any banishings, i.e. things you wish to be rid of now and focus on releasing these to make way for the coming new cycle.

*Happy Samhain/Halloween!*





## Astro Forecasts

by Jonathan Martin

### Aries: March 21<sup>st</sup>-April 20<sup>th</sup>

At this time of year, Aries, you can usually feel under par. Confidence may be challenged or you may need to face up to ongoing health concerns. Prioritise relaxation and rejuvenation. Your ideas or beliefs may clash with others' now but try to avoid arguments. Saturn may be exposing the weaker aspects of your life now; work on self-improvement but don't expect immediate results.

### Taurus: April 21<sup>st</sup>-May 20<sup>th</sup>

Time to review your love life and priorities, Taurus, as ruler Venus turns backwards. Her consort Mars is in tow so face up to harsh realities and make compromises or sacrifices to get what you want. Those born later in May could make big and surprising changes, but you're still at the deciding stage. Those born in April are undergoing a slow transformation. The New Moon, 7<sup>th</sup>, can be challenging but the Full Moon, 23<sup>rd</sup>, emotionally rewarding.

### Gemini: May 21<sup>st</sup>-June 20<sup>th</sup>

Annoying little problems, breakdowns and misunderstandings may have plagued you lately, Gemini, but October will soon resolve things. Make progress with plans and projects. Your health will be robust this month and there are opportunities to continue restructuring and reordering your life. Set important changes in motion now. Reviewing old beliefs or sudden changes you made recently can be difficult, but look to forgotten dreams and aspirations for guidance.

### Cancer: June 21<sup>st</sup>-July 21<sup>st</sup>

Vitality may be low this month, Cancer; take extra care of yourself. Worrisome thoughts or petty arguments are best resolved with empathy. Some may still be frustrated by workloads, high demands or other restrictions. Reconsider old beliefs or new and alternative solutions that you may have dismissed. Mars brings plenty of passion and energy and Venus can help resolve issues in your relationships and love life, while your ruler the Moon provides wonderful emotional support.

### Leo: July 22<sup>nd</sup>-August 23<sup>rd</sup> August

Make the most of October Leo, with improved health and communication. Those solidifying long-term plans or working hard now will eventually succeed. The month's end might lower vitality and prove confusing so aim for relaxation and pace things. Passion could be stifled most of the month and backwards Venus may ask you to review your love life or address old issues. The New Moon, 7<sup>th</sup>, is challenging and the Full Moon, 23<sup>rd</sup>, may bring out your drama queen!

### Virgo: August 24<sup>th</sup>-September 22<sup>nd</sup>

Ruler Mercury leaves you now but you've made the most by organising, studying and conversing. He'll whiz through Libra and bring you more support at month's end. Health and confidence are enhanced then too. Energy, passion and creativity prevail now but there are reconsideration's in love and old relationship issues to face. The New Moon, 7<sup>th</sup>, is perfect for starting over and the Full Moon, 23<sup>rd</sup>, will bring a high.

### Libra: September 23<sup>rd</sup>-October 22<sup>nd</sup>

Happy birthday Libra! Mercury, Saturn and the Sun are all attending your party so you'll be buzzing with great ideas, feeling invigorated and buoyant. Indulge in favourite pastimes and pleasures now. If you were born in September or early October, particularly from 1977-1983, Saturn is really testing you now. It's time to face up to reality and what you're going to do with your adult life. Pluto supports the transformation by removing the outworn and Neptune is helping you rediscover your life's purpose.

### Scorpio: October 23<sup>rd</sup>-November 21<sup>st</sup>

Mars and Venus continue to add passion, energy and love, or envy, indulgence and possessiveness. Venus turns backwards asking for a review of spending habits and relationship issues. Start over on the Scorpio New Moon, 7<sup>th</sup>. Ruler Pluto is helping those born in October to transform on deeper levels. Those born late in November may be feeling disillusioned. Look to forgotten beliefs or radical solutions. The Full Moon, 23<sup>rd</sup>, could bring an emotional confrontation while the Sun brings birthday celebrations for some.

### Sagittarius: November 22<sup>nd</sup>-December 20<sup>th</sup>

The Sun and Mercury bring increased optimism and vitality now. It's a good time to communicate and share with others, or to study and work. Those planning to restructure their lives, establish new foundations or make long-term commitments are supported. If you were born later in November, pursue your dreams and aspirations but be prepared to revisit old beliefs, lessons and few surprises from the past.

### Capricorn: December 21<sup>st</sup>-January 20<sup>th</sup>

Health problems and mental frustration need attention now. Things will improve in October's final week. Ruler Saturn is continuing to challenge some with long-term commitments and creating better foundations. Passion and creativity abounds now and relationships are positive. Prepare to review recent decisions in love. The New Moon, 7<sup>th</sup>, supports fresh beginnings and a positive climax occurs on the Full Moon, 23<sup>rd</sup>.

### Aquarius: January 21<sup>st</sup>-February 19<sup>th</sup>

Creativity is stifled and energy low and relationships may be challenging now. Revisit old hurts or confront neglected friendships, as well as your bank balance. You'll have bright ideas and solutions to help. Avoid new starts around the 7<sup>th</sup> and be prepared for emotional challenges on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. Pay attention to your health at month's end.

### Pisces: February 20<sup>th</sup>-March 20<sup>th</sup>

Confusion lifts this month and your creativity and passion is flourishing. Reconsider your options in love or simply enjoy pleasant times with friends or a partner. Those born late in March must reconsider beliefs or a return to studies but with new and exciting twists. Start something new on the 7<sup>th</sup> and you'll be supported. The Full Moon, 23<sup>rd</sup>, brings a happy occasion.

## Astro Highlights

*Important dates for your astro diary this month!*

### Next New Moon:

Thurs. 7<sup>th</sup> October

(in Scorpio)

*A good time to start new projects that require passion and research; dig deep into emotional depths*

### Next Full Moon:

\*Sat. 23<sup>rd</sup> October

(in Taurus)

*Projects begun at the New Moon can bear practical results now; may be difficult to express more profound feelings*

### Sun enters Scorpio:

\*Sat. 23<sup>rd</sup> October

*Attention turns to the exploration of hidden feelings, secrets and mysteries now; use this time to investigate and make inquiries*

### Samhain:

\*\*Sunday. 31<sup>st</sup> October

*The end of the Wheel of the Year; remember those who have passed over to Spirit and leave offerings, give thanks to all who have helped you this year, reflect on your endeavours and use divination to see your coming opportunities*

**\*The Full Moon occurs on the same day as the Sun enters Scorpio**

**\*\*Clocks go back (GMT)**





- ★ **Polytheism** - essentially means 'many gods' and refers to someone who believes in multiple deities, gods and goddesses, typically a pantheon or family of gods from a specific culture(s), eg Egyptian, Norse, Celtic. It was common during the Bronze-Iron Ages and today amongst neo-pagans.
- ★ **Pantheism** - means 'all is god' and basically implies that everything in existence is an expression of god/the divine/great spirit. Followers normally revere the Earth and Universe/cosmos as divinity and thus everything within it as sacred. Many ancient cultures held this all-encompassing belief and even some polytheistic cultures believed in one greater, unifying spirit.
- ★ **Monotheism** - concerns the common Abrahamic religions of today, namely Christianity, Judaism, Islam, etc. In effect it means 'one god' and so followers believe only in one creator masculine deity who presides over humanity.
- ★ **Atheism** - is a rejection of religious belief and more precisely the belief in god or any other form of deity. Atheists usually believe that humans evolved on Earth naturally and have no soul/spirit or afterlife.

## Paganism – an introduction {part II}

by Jonathan Martin and Horus

In our previous issue, *Part I* discussed the roots of Paganism and its demise with the advent of Christianity. In this second half we will look at the return of Pagan beliefs and its relevance in our modern, rapidly changing society.

### Paganism today

Pagans today recognize a divine creative force that is present in everything and has two aspects – Male, which we call God(s) and Female, which we call Goddess(s). Both the God(s) and Goddess(s), or a combination depending on the individuals' particular path or tradition, are recognized. It is important to remember that this Divine Creative Force is known by many different names throughout the world's religions. But within the different religions comes specific ways to worship divinity based on local and cultural beliefs and customs, as well as other factors. Religion has changed slightly with the passing of the centuries, as science has developed.

This divinity could be the equivalent of Quantum Physics in the scientific world, where all matter is linked together at a sub-atomic level and where the substance of the universe appears to be made up of tiny hoops of energy. The study of this energy is known as String Theory. The Gaia Hypothesis is another scientific theory to emerge in the last 50 years. It basically states that the Earth is a living organism, though probably without consciousness, in the same way as individual cells within the human body do not have consciousness but they all add up and work together to create a living organism – you and me.

As such, most pagans place a great deal of value in conservation and protecting the environment. This could be practiced by being ethical with rituals, at sacred sites, such as not burning careless fires and leaving the site in the same or better condition than it was found. We could buy local produce, using public transport and generally being energy efficient and therefore reducing our carbon

footprint. These are just some examples but there are many more.

Paganism is not dogmatic, such as with common mainstream religions. There is no specific text from which we all get our beliefs and rituals. However, there is one universal rule/guideline to which we can all ascribe, "and ye harm none, do what ye will". This means that as long as our actions harm nothing or no-one then we are free to use our own judgment on what to do. There are debates about the extent of this law because if we never harmed any living entity then we would starve to death because we need to eat animals and or plants (vegetarianism) to survive.

### The Re-emerging Feminine

There are now a growing number of Pagans today, as the old beliefs take on a new form and one that is perhaps much needed in our modern world. In fact the 'old' and 'new' faiths share much in common. Perhaps this is all in good time, for a return to nature-based beliefs and practices may be just what our Earth needs. For centuries the Feminine has been suppressed – evident even in our society, with women largely deemed 'second-class citizens' until as recently as the 20th Century. But the Feminine cannot lay buried forever. Her resurgence is seeking to bring balance and accord back to our planet.

Perhaps the re-emergence of the primarily Feminine-based Pagan faiths will help humanity revive the qualities that are greatly lacking in our present time...nurture, respect, compassion, harmony, intuition, unconditional love and most importantly unity.

Many Pagans, sometimes known today by the fresh term Neo-pagan (Neo meaning New), are concerned with Nature, or at least have greater respect for the Earth. There is typically a fervent interest in reconnecting with the Earth and the Cosmos, with Spirit, uncovering psychic and intuitive abilities and developing the mind, body and soul

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## Birds of Omen

by Jonathan Martin



Greetings! In this section I present a different Bird of Omen for each issue, providing some magical tidbits about birds and their metaphysical meanings. This month...

### The Crow

#### Divination with the Crow:

Admittedly the crow does not fare well in traditional omens, regarded as rather fierce and a sign of death. However as we have progressed from the gloom and doom of the Middle Ages, the crow has a more well-rounded meaning in divination today. Certainly it has its dark side, as with everything, when it can point to difficulties in life, particularly financial problems that need resolved urgently. It can also indicate conflict and bickering or a period of depression. If the crow appears regarding a person, it may point to someone ominous or reticent but with a bad reputation or it may indicate melancholy. Furthermore it can suggest a person who is spiteful and will take advantage of others, creating trouble through dishonesty. But if we consider the other face of the crow, as a positive omen, it appears when an important realization is made or when a situation is resolved through sudden clarity and insight. It shows that a clear and precise solution is available, or will be discovered, allowing a problem to be resolved. When in relation to a person, the crow can indicate a clever, content and considerate being but one who prefers his or her own company, or solitude and meditation. This person usually has reliable instincts, even a sixth sense, or a lot of experience in life but will not usually share this knowledge. He or she is normally quite reserved and even secretive, creating an air of mystery that keeps everyone guessing. Great learning is also a possibility when the crow appears

#### Crow Facts:

The crow belongs to the Passerine family of birds and most likely evolved in

central Asia or descended from the Corvidae family in Australia. It is a very close relative of the jay, jackdaw, rook and raven. In fact it can be very difficult for the average person to tell them all apart. The crow is prominently black, with a dark beak and eyes as well as its plumage. The neck is short and the head rounded and it's infamous for its unnerving cry. Of its four toes, one points backwards allowing easy clasp of branches. The wingspan is noticeably bigger than with its cousins, around one meter. A group of crows is called a 'murder'. It commonly feeds on the carrion of other birds or small mammals and even humans but is also very fond of cereals. They can be trained to mimic human voices, like parrots.

#### Crow in myths & legends:

The negative omens of the crow perhaps stem from some of its mythological associations. From China to America they are regarded as eaters of corpses hence their connection to despair, discord and death, an omen that was heavily adopted during the Middle Ages. In Celtic mythology it is the symbol of the goddess Morrigan, who resided over battles and strife. Their piercing cry and odd wheeling flight has perhaps linked them with deceit, trickery and fear. In Greek legends, a hero would refuse to continue a journey if a crow flew across his path from the left. Indeed, other legends warn of the risks involved when signs from a crow are ignored. It is said that if you dream of a crow, it signals the successful completion of a business project yet conversely to dream of a flock implies misery, rage or defeat. However there are also positive myths, for instance, in the biblical story of the Flood Noah was said to have sent out a crow in search of land before the dove and therefore it may be a symbol of rebirth. The Greek Sun god Apollo was often accompanied by a crow with prophetic gifts and it is commonly a friend to seers and mystics in ancient cultures. Therefore it may suggest psychic powers and intuition.

## Birds of Omen

### Crow interpretations

#### Positive

##### Interpretations:

Intuition, wisdom, realisation, discernment, elucidate, good portent, reflect on news received, step back, time to self

#### Negative

##### Interpretations:

Resentment, malice, anxiety, discord, dilemma, unfortunate news, problem to resolve, troublesome people

#### ★ How can I divine with bird omens?

Another way to divine with birds is with the art of numerology, adding depth to each bird's omen through the meaning of each number:

One – Beginnings, self, potential, individuality, newness, initiative, action, vitality, impulse, independence, masculine

Two – Opposites, relationship, choice, division, diversity, duality, balance, union, support, separation, partner, feminine

Three – Creativity, expression, natural growth, birth, trinity, communication, mind, mentality, neighbours, relatives

Four – Stability, security, material world, limitation, home, parents, reliability, rut, inflexibility, foundation, roots, past, tradition, safety

Five – Transition, challenge, crisis, obstacle, disruption, chaos, trauma, senses, pleasure, gambling, risks, games, childhood

*Discover further numerology divinations in our next issue.*



Chiron and Achilles in a fresco from Herculaneum (Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Naples)

- ★ In astrology, Chiron has come to represent healing, teaching, bravery and strength and of course our primary weakness or vulnerability.
- ★ From 2005 he was in the sign of Aquarius, which concerned our 'wounded community' and individual issues of how our thoughts create and control our feelings.
- ★ Chiron recently teamed up with the Sun and Neptune, which many speculated was a sign for the beginning of great healing times on Mother Earth.
- ★ Chiron's move into Pisces could herald a period of healing on a collective, universal level, confronting our own Achilles Heel and in turn helping others to heal their vulnerabilities.



## Chiron: the wounded healer {part I}

By Jonathan Martin



In these times of great change and transition on our little planet many of us are seeking ways to improve our beings, heal our past hurts and strengthen our souls. Of course there are countless methods and practices from which to choose, all offering something a little different. Astrology is one such means, used for centuries in various forms and at best to offer guidance, solace and hope. In today's society it has transformed into a powerful metaphysical tool that can assist with our psychological development.

Most of us are perhaps rather savvy with the lingo now, rhyming off such conversational pieces as 'What sign is your Moon?' or 'What house is your Sun in?', or even 'Not another Mercury retrograde!' But of course there are greater depths to astrology and somewhere down near the bottom you will find a little, seemingly insignificant, body lurking called Chiron.

### Introducing Chiron...

In astrological circles the big news with Chiron is his step into Pisces, which occurred briefly between the 20<sup>th</sup> April and 19<sup>th</sup> July 2010, giving us a taste of what is to come when he settles in Pisces after February 9<sup>th</sup> 2011. But before we get to that you're probably wondering right about now, what *is* Chiron? Well get yourself cozy, for his story goes a little something like this...

In Greek mythology Chiron was a half-man/half-horse, more commonly known as a centaur. They were infamous for their revelry, lust, indulgence and unintelligence and were also quite aggressive when under the influence. But unlike all the other centaur Chiron was caring, cultured and smart not to mention a dab hand at medicine, healing, teaching and astrology (of all things).

Unfortunately, Chiron did not experience the most pleasant of upbringings; the god Cronos (Saturn) took a liking to a beautiful nymph called

Philyra, daughter of the sea gods. But Philyra was not interested and turned herself into a horse to avoid Cronos' advances. The god cleverly disguised himself as a mare and successfully mated with her. However when Chiron was born, Philyra was so repulsed by his appearance that she abandoned him.

Despite his tragedy, Chiron was blessed with immortality (being the son of a god) and grew to become a great tutor with many famous students of the times, including Jason, Hercules and Achilles. Most of us have perhaps heard of the term *Achilles heel*, which means a principal weakness. This is because Achilles had been immersed in the river Styx, by his mother Thetis, hoping that he would become immortal. But because he was dipped in by his foot, this part of his body remained vulnerable. And so it came to pass that he was later wounded by an arrow that struck his heel.

Chiron suffered a similar fate to his student, after he was also wounded by an arrow in the leg that had been coated in the blood of the Hydra (a vicious water beast with several heads). Anyone unfortunate enough to be struck by such a tainted weapon would suffer a wound that never heals. Even though Chiron was a master of the healing arts he could not heal his own wound and so, being an immortal, he was doomed to live an eternity with the injury.

He later sacrificed his immortality in a noble act to save Prometheus, who was being punished by the god Zeus for revealing the secret of fire to mankind. This allowed Chiron to escape his eternal wound and he was commemorated through the constellation Centaurus.

Like the mythological counterpart, the planetoid Chiron shares similarities. He is a slightly battered half-planet/half-asteroid that nevertheless defiantly orbits between Saturn (Cronos) and Uranus. It has been in Aquarius for

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## Paganism – an introduction {part II}

by Jonathan Martin and Horus

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together. Many Pagans today wish to heal, not just themselves but their fellow humans and indeed the Earth, which can be seen in the growing popularity of Eastern spiritual practices, including Reiki and Yoga.

Modern pagans are usually sympathetic with nature and so wish to live in unison with Mother Earth and Spirit, drawn to support activities like animal rights, environmentalism, organic produce and recycling. Others may prefer to follow solitary, magic-centered paths that concern developing the Self, a notion often described as the only true way to find 'God' (or the Divine/Spirit).

However it is vital that the scales are not tipped again in favour of any one faith (or gender) and so it becomes our responsibility to successfully integrate the Masculine/God and Feminine/Goddess now.

There is no need for one to replace the other but maybe for an amalgamation of beliefs, co-existing and serving to restore stability and harmony to our sacred planet once again.

Conceivably, humanity is now ready to move forward, by looking backwards to our past and our ancestors, re-integrating their beliefs and traditions into our modern world where we can make the most of ancient wisdom and our present thinking to better the existence of All. For whether Christian or Pagan, Muslim or Atheist, we are all on journeys of self-discovery, where all paths, no matter how different, ultimately lead to the One.

Namaste.

*(The Divine in me greets the Divine in you)*



## Chiron: the wounded healer {part I}

By Jonathan Martin

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some time but when it moves into Pisces, we can expect our attitudes towards healing to change on a collective and universal level.

Because Pisces favours alternative and complimentary medicines, we may find ourselves increasingly seeking such therapies to mend our wounds with Chiron residing here, which is of course ideal. New spiritual teachers may come forth too and offer us greater insights, deeper wisdom and profound healing. Empathy and kindness are paramount when Chiron swims with the Fishes; both planetoid and Sign are well known for their benevolence, gentleness and charity and so together it becomes clear that we are entering a time of offering a healing shoulder to lean on.

With Chiron's shift into Pisces, his bravery will come through our learning to release the ego and its judgments and to show empathy to all humans and causes (not an easy task). This will ultimately allow us to promote healing over hatred for every soul. The Centaur and the Fishes together can pave the way for harmony, bringing many or perhaps all of us closer and thereby refreshing the true spirit of humanity – our underlying unity. From next year onwards, we will begin to experience these opportunities to bring unconditional love and healing to our planet and to one another, if we simply choose to embrace it.

*In our next issue, discover how you might best mend your own Achilles Heel.*

### ★ Spellcraft

#### Releasing/Banishing Spell

Here is a simple candle spell you can try on the Lunar Samhain (6<sup>th</sup> Nov.) which will help you to release what you no longer need in your life.

#### Tools you'll need:

A black candle  
Black thread or ribbon  
Paper and black pen  
Cauldron or container for burning  
\*Eucalyptus, Vetivert or Pine essential oils  
\*Dragon's blood, mugwort, sage, pine needles  
\*Black obsidian, selenite

*\* these are optional*

#### The spell:

Wait for the night before the New Moon. Prepare your space and centre yourself in the moment. Keep your mind gently focused on your Third Eye (centre of forehead).

If you are using herbs/oils add them to your container and place the crystals beside it. Light your black candle. Write down what you wish to banish or release, or if you have negative thoughts or worries, write them out. If you have guardians or guides or deities, call them in now to assist you. You can add this to the end of your note:

"Name of guardian/guide" or "Great Spirit", etc. - I call upon you and open myself to receiving your wisdom and guidance; I willingly release the past with ease, I open myself to receiving your guidance and help now. With thanks, so mote it be!

Fold the paper tightly and tie it with the thread/ribbon. Light it in the candle flame and drop it into your container or small fire to burn. Retain your positive thoughts and believe it is already done. Afterwards, empty the ashes into the Earth. If you wish, leave a small offering (gemstone, honey, fruit) with thanks.



## Flower Oracles

by Jonathan Martin

There are more to flowers than just their beauty. These natural gifts from Mother Earth have a rich history in folklore, including natural healing benefits and magickal uses. In each issue I introduce you to different flowers and their metaphysical properties.

### Broom

A group of evergreen and semi-evergreen deciduous shrub, broom is common in Europe, North Africa, parts of Asia and New Zealand. It is typified by its large, yellow flowers that grow in prickly clusters with small leaves. Some varieties also display white, orange, red, pink or purple flowers.

Its wood is actually used to make brooms, hence the modern name and so if you ever wish to make your own broomstick it is an ideal choice. Broom has been used for its medicinal properties since ancient times, even recorded by Pliny the Elder (1<sup>st</sup> century BCE), for instance the ashes of the plant are purported to cure edema (fluid under the skin). The strong scent is also believed to help calm wild horses and dogs. Boughs of broom are usually hung from the ceiling in a house to symbolise protection and health, as was the tradition in England and France. It is also thought to represent faithfulness in relationships. Bunches of broom were once traditionally included at wedding ceremonies, perhaps for this reason. In Welsh mythology the character Blodeuwedd was apparently made from the broom flowers, as well as meadowsweet and oak.

In spellcraft the flowers can be used for defense and healing charms, to lift depression or to promote loyalty in relationships. It can be given to a lover for this purpose or to a loved one who is ill. It is especially powerful when given in early October.

### Petunia

Originating in South America, it can be found in many colours and forms. Its name stems from the French word *petun* which originally meant tobacco, derived from a dialect used by a tribe of Amazonian Indians who cultivated the tobacco plant. It is popularly recognised as a tubular flower, in fact similar to the tobacco plant. The Grandiflora petunia can grow up to 4 inches in diameter and is the most delicate of the petunia family. The Hedgiflora are very low in height but spread over large areas (up to four feet), provided they have sufficient water and fertilization. Multiflora petunias are also small but very resilient and quick to grow, again featuring many colours and the Milliflora is the smallest and perhaps prettiest of the petunias, just 1 inch across. It is also quite tolerant to harsh weather and grows well in pots and containers in many colours.

The petunia symbolizes relaxation, sleep, dreams, fantasies and 'trips'. This perhaps comes from the association with the tobacco plant, used by Shamans for inducing meditations and trances, but it is not the same as the toxic tobacco used in today's cigarettes. You can offer petunias to someone who is suffering from anxiety, stress or troubling thoughts, to act as a mild sedative. Offering petunias between October 22<sup>nd</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> is thought to bring luck, while adding them to a herbal bath or making a perfume from their subtle sweet scents can promote a sense of calm and inner peace. Use the gentle petals and various colours of petunias in spells to promote peace, or add them to your altar or bed for astral projection and divination through vivid dreams.

## Tarot Card of the month

### The Empress

This card is numbered 3 in the traditional tarot deck and is closely linked to the planet Venus. If you reveal the Empress in a spread, here are some common interpretations:

#### Upright meaning:

Strong female character, mother, goddess, Earth, love of nature, nurture, feminine power, abundance, marriage, motherhood, pregnancy, comfort, provider, fertility, fruitfulness, pleasure, happiness

#### Inverted meaning:

Smothering love, overindulgence, withholding, rampant growth, clinging, power to destroy, problems with children, greed, sterility, emotional dependence, misuse of power

### Did you know...?

- ★ Cartomancy is the art of divination using playing cards. It originated in Europe in the 14<sup>th</sup> Century, although some believe its roots lie in ancient Egypt.
- ★ The Empress card is likened to the Roman goddess of love and beauty, Venus, as well as the Greek Demeter, goddess of the grain and giver of earthly gifts, however when angered she can hastily withhold her abundance.





Fit these words into the grid to reveal the jumbled keyword:

GRAVE  
ENDING  
SCRYING  
OBSIDIAN  
SAMHAIN  
SPIRIT  
WITCH  
GHOSTS  
PUMPKIN PIE  
ALL HALLOWS



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## Pagan Puzzle

Try our fun Samhain word puzzle! Fit the words from the left-hand column into the grey squares to reveal a hidden word in the central column. Then rearrange its letters to reveal the keyword. Some letters are already in place to help you.

									T							
									O							
									L							
									W							

Keyword: \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ {Clue: a different place}

## Notices

### ★ Mind, Myth & Magic

A local store for all your magickal needs! Candles, crystals, incense, books, silver jewellery, spells, ethnic clothing, herbs & more! Mind, Myth & Magic has **moved** to new premises: 66C Main Street, Moira Mews (beside the tattoo parlour!)

### ★ Monthly Moot

Are you interested in exploring Paganism or meeting other local Pagans? Then come along to one of our social moots; dates and times will be posted online at our Twitter and Facebook pages, where you can also meet kindred souls.

### ★ Useful websites

This month's websites of potential interest:

[www.witchvox.co.uk](http://www.witchvox.co.uk)

A great site to network with local Pagans, list events, search for groups, moots and Pagan related services.

[www.starchild.co.uk](http://www.starchild.co.uk)

A wide variety of herbs, incense, candles, oils, herbal smokes, teas, perfumes, ceramics and jewellery; based in Glastonbury, England, mail order available.

[www.cafeastrology.com](http://www.cafeastrology.com)

Ever wanted to delve deeper beyond your horoscopes? Have a browse through this fantastic website and discover much more.



## Glossary ~A~

by Horus

Here is a selection of words from the complete Glossary of Pagan and Wiccan definitions, compiled by myself from: *A Practical Guide to Witchcraft and Magic Spells* by Cassandra Eason, *Sacred Texts: The Internet Book of Shadows* and by Pete Jennings: *A Pagan Path*. A different letter will be featured in each issue and you can find a link to the full version on our Facebook page.

**Aboriginal:** Pagan tradition of the native Australian people.

**Adept:** An individual who through serious study and accomplishments is considered highly proficient in a particular magickal system.

**Akasha:** The fifth and greatest element, formed by the combination of the ancient elements of Earth, Air, Fire and Water that were considered in classical times and by alchemists to be the components of all life and matter. Also sometimes called Spirit or Ether.

**Akashic records:** The collective memory bank on the spirit plane said to hold the experiences of all people, past, present and future.

**Alchemy:** A branch of High Magick developed in the Middle Ages which sought to magickally and/or chemically turn base metals into gold.

**Alexandrian:** Witchcraft tradition started by Alex Anders.

**Alpha waves:** Brain waves, cultivated in psychic work, that are associated with a very

relaxed state of mind in which it is possible for intuitive faculties to find expression.

**Altar:** A special, flat surface set aside exclusively for magickal workings or religious acknowledgment.

**Amulet:** A charm carried on a person or placed in a house to offer protection against danger and illness. When charged with healing energies, it becomes a talisman and can attract health and good fortune.

**Animism:** A belief that every natural thing has a Devine spark of life

**Ankh:** An Egyptian hieroglyphic widely used as a symbol of life, love, and reincarnation. It is a cross with a looped top.

**Arcana:** The two halves of a tarot deck. The Major Arcana consists of 22 trumps, the Minor Arcana consists of 56 suit cards (sometimes called the lesser or lower Arcana).

**Archangels:** Higher orders of angels, celestial beings featuring in the cosmologies of the three major religions of the Western world,

Christianity, Judaism, and Islam, as well as many other world religions.

**Asatru:** A faith in the Norse deities (see also **Northern Tradition**)

**Aspects-** Forms, facets, or personas of Deity: for example, Brighid, Iseult, Eos and Kore are all aspects of the Maiden, and the Maiden is an aspect of the Goddess.

**Asperger:** A bundle of fresh herbs or a perforated object used to sprinkle water during or preceding ritual, for purification purposes.

**Astral Plane:** A place which is generally conceptualized as an invisible parallel world, which remains unseen from our own solid world of form.

**Astral Travel/Projection:** The process of separating your astral body from your physical one to accomplish travel in the astral plane or dream time.

**Astrology:** The study of and belief in the effects the movements and placements of planets and other heavenly bodies have on the lives

and behavior of human beings.

**Athame:** A cleansed and consecrated ritual blade. Usually double-edged and black handled. It is never used to cut anything on the physical plane. Pronounced several ways: Ah-THAM-ee, ATH-ah-may, ah-THAW-may.(2)Black handled, double edged dagger. Principally used to cast and dissolve the circle, for which purposes it is interchangeable with the magic sword. A tool of the "Element" of Fire in the Georgian Tradition and some others.

**Aura:** The life-energy field which surrounds all living things.

**Auric field/aura:** The personal energy field around all animate life, visible to clairvoyants.

**Automatic Writing:** Form of divination where the channeler uses a pen, paper and an altered state of consciousness to receive messages.

Issue 4:

In our next issue...

- ★ Give and Receive – a personal account of mastering the art
- ★ Part II of *Chiron: the wounded healer* – how to heal your karmic self
- ★ Pagan Misconceptions – the truth revealed!
- ★ And much more!

Blessings & Poems

By Truthseeker

*The Blinking of an Eye*

*Gazing on a winter sky*

*I see a shooting star go by*

*A shooting star go by, as I*

*In the twinkling of an eye*

*A story to tell have I*

*Of deeds and people passing by*

*Of friendships and twinklings of an eye*

*Which pass as quick as time goes by*

*The great Orion catches my*

*Imagination in the sky*

*He sees the shooting star go by*

*And my twinkling passing by*

*Cherish all, laugh and cry*

*For we are merely passing by*

*Not long we're here you and I*

*Only the twinkling of an eye*

Blessings & Poems

Pet Blessing

At this time of year we acknowledge the ancestors and those who have gone before us. Sometimes we forget those animal companions - our beloved pets who have passed. Here is a blessing in their honour:

*"May our memories of (insert name of pet) stay true and do not alter with the passing of time.*

*May we remember our beloved pet as he/she was in life and keep that in our hearts.*

*May the love that (name) brought into our life stays with us for ever.*

*I acknowledge that (name)'s spirit will always be among us, and what he/she left behind, is honoured in death as it was in life.*

*(Name), our beloved pet, we send you on your journey from this world with our memories, with our cherished thoughts and our love."*

(At this point you can add your own thoughts, poems, blessings.....what ever seems right to you, etc.)

End blessing by saying:

*"(Name), may the sweet birds of Rhiannon guide you on your journey, may your spirit fly straight as an arrow to the heart of the Sun, may your spirit be still and know rest. Blessed Be."*

*This blessing mentions Rhiannon who is the Celtic Goddess of horses and natural justice; she is seen as the deity who carries the dying to the other side of death. At her command, birdsong guides the spirit of the dead to help make their passage easier. She is associated with animals.*

Pagan Voice

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**Merry Part!**

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