

NEWS LETTER

£1 – to cover printing costs and small donation to temple

Upcoming Events

Imbolc Ritual and Celebration

Sunday 4th February from 12 noon.
Acclaim the first hints of Spring by joining our celebrations.

Spring Equinox Ritual and Celebration

Sunday 18th March from 12 noon.
Join in with celebrating Ostara – the Spring Equinox, and help mark the passing of winter.

Regular Groups

School of Magic - The Craft

Thursday afternoons 2pm-4pm (running until the end of February): an introduction to magic, witchcraft and esoteric energy work.

£2 per session.

Moon Magic Meet Up

Saturday afternoons 3.30-4.30pm.
A sharing circle and ceremony for creatives, light workers, and magical minds.

To book your place on the above events please ring the Airy Fairy shop on 0114 2492090

Imbolc



Imbolc is said to mark the first stirrings of Spring around the beginning of February. It is a time of year when thoughts turn to new life, and the start of a new agricultural year. The Celts associated it with the onset of ewes' lactation, prior to the arrival of spring lambs.

The goddess of this festival is Bride, who is Brigantia/Brighid in her maiden form. Bride is renowned as a goddess of fire, healing and fertility. The lighting of fires is celebrated as the increasing power of the Sun.

The warming fiery energies of the goddess Bride now quicken the life that lies dormant in the cold earth of winter. Snowdrops and early pre-Spring flowers dare to emerge. Frost and snow might still return, but the goddess promises lengthening days, more light, and a gradual return to new growth.

Join our Sheffield Goddess Temple Melissas between 12:30 and 1:30 pm, Monday to Saturday, to experience these seasonal energies in quiet contemplation.



Hermeticism

In Alexandria, Egypt, around the second century CE, 18 books were collected into an anthology called the Corpus Hermeticum. From these we know that:

Hermeticism maintains that ultimately all is one: One Reality, where all dichotomies, all distinctions between body and soul, spirit and matter, etc., are integrated as a part of one whole. Everything was seen as being interconnected with everything else, and such relationships rested on the principle of analogy. Reality, in the Hermetic way of thinking, is ultimately holistic and is a vital, a living web of correspondences. Thus, the famous Hermetic maxim of "As above, so below". So, the aim of Hermeticism, like Gnosticism, was the deification or rebirth of man through the knowledge (or to use a more technical term: gnosis) of the one transcendent God, the world, and humanity.

Thus, Nature Reveals the Divine.

Nature is the Divine teacher, the Revealer of the Mysteries. Thus, in order to accomplish his or her spiritual Art, the Hermetist must also serve Nature as a Priest or Priestess. The physical world is the manifestation or vessel of Divine Power and Love, and we are uniquely entrusted with caring for that vessel.

In return for our honour and our care, Nature reveals Her Divine Self as an infinitely profound symbol for the spiritual journey. In the rhythms of the Earth and the cycles of the Sun, the Moon, and the Planets, the awesome structure of the Universe, the complementary miracles of birth and death, the Hermetist finds the Divine unveiled — and celebrates.

Alexandrian Hermeticism was suppressed by Christianity in the 4th Century, but the writings of the Hermetists had been preserved in books such as the Corpus Hermeticum. The Hermetists were forced to flee Alexandria in about 390 CE.



By 391 CE, Paganism was made illegal by an edict of the Emperor Theodosius I. The temples of Alexandria were closed, the library was destroyed and as a result those wishing to continue practicing the pagan religions fled eastward where the church did not have influence.

The Alexandrian Hermetists fled to Harran, which was an ancient city of Mesopotamia, which is now in SE Asian Turkey. Harran was still pagan and practiced star worship. Over the next two centuries The Harranian Star worship was integrated with Hermetic philosophy to create a system of magic which became known as Sabian. This system was to have an immense effect on Western magic. Much of this Sabian magic was incorporated by the great Arabic universities in Baghdad.

Via Arabic philosophers, Hermetic magic spread rapidly across the Islamic world. The Arabs developed the three main practical applications of Hermeticism: Astrology, Alchemy and Magic into highly elaborate scientific systems.

The Arab empire spread all the way across North Africa into Spain, and it was in fact in Spain in the 10th Century that the Picatrix was written. Picatrix is an encyclopaedia of the Magic being practiced by the Arabs.

Picatrix was translated into Latin in 1256 for the Castilian king Alfonso the Wise and was in effect the source of the grimoire tradition of European magic.

Events in 15th century Italy were to kick off a further development which brought European magic closer to its Hermetic roots. As a result of the fall of Constantinople in the 1450s, there was a wave of migration of people bringing Hermetic texts with them. In 1460 a manuscript containing an incomplete Greek text of the Corpus Hermeticum was brought to Florence. Cosimo de' Medici ordered Marsilio Ficino to translate this into Latin.

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Hermeticism

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This had a profound impact on the many Europeans who had been practicing the magical sciences (and these included many churchmen). This was because they had been using Picatrix as a primary source and suddenly they found a massive vein of deep, ancient and coherent philosophy that accorded with the philosophical elements of the Picatrix.

They now realised that Picatrix was not just an obscure Arabic book of magic, but was representative of the much more ancient pagan Hermetic philosophies. It went back to the source.

What happened in the history of magic was that certain great minds of the period, especially Marcolino Ficino, Cornelius Agrippa and Giordano Bruno developed a body of work out of the ideas contained in Picatrix that was to be the bedrock of all magical thinking over the next 500 years. To look at this very simplistically for a moment, our magical world view today is based on the idea that there are planes of reality and that magic works because these planes can influence each other. So the history of magic... even up to the present day, has been shaped by the hermetic idea that there are layers of reality which can affect each other.

Brian Harrison

Contact Sheffield Goddess Temple Newsletter

To submit articles, news of relevant upcoming events, or to make suggestions, please email us at:

temple@lovecat.com

Temple Melissas



Our Temple Melissas are the people who hold space in the Temple between 12.30 and 1.30 pm every day, Monday to Saturday. It is a delightful job to do. If you would like to be part of the Melissa team please leave a message at Airy Fairy for Ann Staniland or Brian Harrison.

Sheffield Goddess Temple on Facebook



<https://www.facebook.com/SheffieldGoddessTemple/>

For all the most up to date information on what is going on at the temple, don't forget to check out our Facebook page which has all the latest news of events, and photos of recent happenings.

Goddesses of the Northern Wheel

The Imbolc Goddess of our Northern Wheel is Bride – see the article on page 1 of this newsletter.

Other Goddesses on our Northern Wheel include four whose names have been preserved through time in the names of rivers within our landscape, and four related to the cross quarter festivals.

In addition to Bride, other Goddesses are:

- Don; East, Spring Equinox. The Goddess Don is an extremely ancient progenitor Mother Goddess, cognate with the Irish Danu or the Gaulish Goddess Donau (as in the Danube)
- Derwena, flows South; summer Solstice / Litha. There are several rivers in Britain named Derwent, which means 'Oak river'.
- Rhibelisama, flows West, Autumn Equinox. The prefix 'Rhi' (as in Rhiannon, Mor-ri-gan, Ard-Ri etc) means royal and 'beli' refers to the sun or to brightness.
- Edene (Rivers Air/Ure and Eden), North, Winter Solstice

The Goddesses of the remaining cross quarter festivals are:

- Bride, Imbolc, February the 1st, who is Brigantia / Brigid in her maiden form.
- Nemetona - Beltane, May Day, Goddess of the Nemeton or Sacred Grove.
- Gwenith – Lammas, Lughnasadh or Yorkshire Day, August the 1st. Gwenith is the Brittonic name for wheat, meaning 'Blessed' and 'Golden'.
- Pen-Nain (Pennine), the head Grandmother or Modron (see last quarter's Samhain newsletter).



Imbolc Celebration Recipe

Returning Sun Spice Bread

- 1 1/4 cup flour
- 1/8 cup poppyseeds
- 2 tsp. baking powder
- 3/4 cup raisins, plain or golden
- 1/2 tsp. baking soda
- 1/2 cup butter/margarine
- 1/2 tsp. ground ginger
- 3/4 cup golden corn syrup
- 1/2 cup light brown sugar
- 4 tbs. milk
- 1 large egg, beaten
- 1 tsp. mixed spices**

**Equal parts of cinnamon, nutmeg, and allspice.

Sift the flour, soda, and baking powder into a non-metal bowl. Add the mixed spice and ginger. Next add the brown sugar and raisins. Mix. Make a well in the centre of the flour mixture. In a small sauce pan, melt the butter and the syrup over a low heat, then pour liquid into the well in the middle of the flour mixture. Add the beaten egg and the milk, and mix very well. Pour into a well-greased 2-lb loaf pan and bake in a preheated oven at 325 degrees for 40-50 minutes. This bread can be made the night before as it improves with age. Makes 8-10 servings.

