



NEWSLETTER

On Line Events

During Lockdown we are providing events and our newsletters for free but if you would like to make a donation please [CLICK HERE](#) to go to our website

- **Crochet Club**
Tuesdays 10-11am
- **Virtual Coffee Shop**
Tuesday to Friday
11am-12.30pm
- **Sunday Meditations Noon**
- **Every Other Tuesday, 8pm**
Pagan Pathways Online
- **For details about our next Ritual Event please keep your eyes on our facebook page...**

ALL ONLINE COURSES AND EVENTS NEED TO BE BOOKED - See our Facebook pages for details...



On Facebook, visit

['Sheffield Goddess Temple'](#)
for events

['Sheffield Goddess Temple \(member's circle\)'](#)
for community news

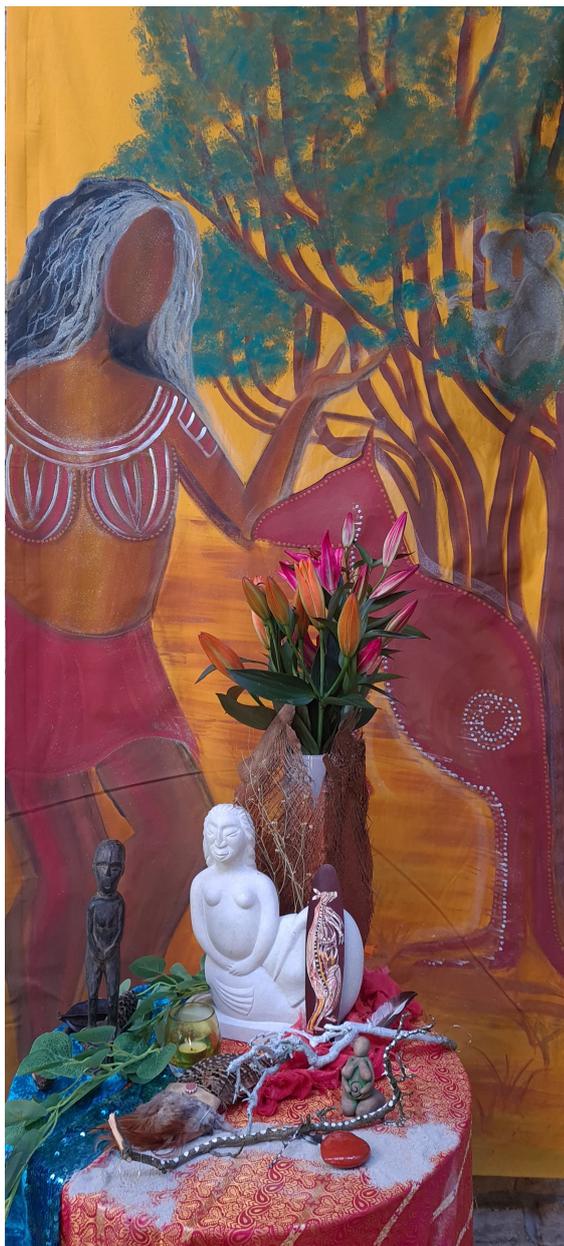


We light the Goddess Temple candle for Derwenna - our Northern Goddess of the Summer Solstice. She has been bestowing upon us her blessings of the heat, light and fire of the full midsummer sun. This year her gifts have felt particularly intense as temperatures have soared.

Maybe you have stretched out beneath her bright blue skies, bathing in the clarity of her light and the bone warming comfort of her heat or maybe her gifts have felt a bit too much and you have sought the comfort and coolness of the shade!

Derwenna's blessings upon you all!

Ali writes about Goddess Conference 2020



These pictures are a sneak preview of the 'Earth Mother Temple' set up last week in preparation for the 2020 Earth Mother Goddess conference in Glastonbury. I am part of the ceremonial group that have been working together since August last year to co-create the ceremonies. We had almost completed the process, when lock down was announced and it became increasingly unlikely that this year's conference would happen in Glastonbury.

This is the 25th anniversary of the first conference in Glastonbury and calling in Earth Mother Goddess is so pertinent given what is happening on the planet at this time. In the midst of a global pandemic, devastating evidence of climate change on every continent, oceans choked with plastic, and social and cultural movements challenging historical and current oppressions, 2020 is not a year we would want to cancel the conference.

It was with some trepidation that we chose to proceed, but we have been working flat out to convert the beauty and inspiration of Goddess Conference onto an online platform. This required that we prerecord some aspects of the ceremonies, although

other parts will be live streamed between July 30th and August 2nd, the combined effect creating a wonderful and completely immersive participatory experience.

So for two days in June we raised the Temple to the Earth Mother, building an altar to each of the Mothers of the continental plates, and in the centre the altar to Heartlandia, those places in the world where you feel you belong, where you have a heart connection with the Land. The Temple was extraordinarily beautiful and when each priestess called in the energy of the continental plate they had been working with, the sense of Her presence was palpable. The steep learning curve involved in bringing something like the conference on line has taken some adapting to, but also presents some unforeseen benefits. Ticket price has been

lowered for single parents and those in receipt of benefits or affected by COVID (a full 'Kwen Yin' Conference ticket is available for £150). Partial tickets are also available for mornings or afternoons and evening concerts, and recordings of workshops and presentations will be available for full ticket holders for the whole of August. In addition there are 5 days of fringe events, costing between £30-£80, so it is easy this year to dip in and get a taste of conference without having to pay for travel or accommodation.

Ann and I are holding the Continental plate of Ibu Australia-Asia, and the students in the first year of our Temple Priestess training have been invited to create a 15 minute presentation of the Goddesses of our Northern Wheel of Brigantia, so our Temple will be very present at conference this year!



You can get all the information about the full 9 days and tickets on

www.goddessconference.com

If you haven't already visited that page you will be amazed at just how much is posted there, including free weekly crystal grid meditations and videos.

And finally to say that because so many of us will be involved at conference, we will not be having a separate Lammás ceremony in the Sheffield temple because the Earth Priestesses at conference will be creating a free on line ceremony on the Wednesday 29th July that anyone can join. We will post details of how to register for the ceremony on Facebook. Hope to see you there!

The Longest Day - by Jamie Lang

The Summer Solstice is the longest day of the year- that is to say: the day with the most daylight, and the shortest night. After the solstice the hours of daylight gradually begin to reduce again, until half a year later, we reach the shortest day, which is the Winter Solstice. In the northern hemisphere the Summer Solstice occurs



between the 20th and 22nd of June each year. This year it is on Saturday 20th June, when the sun will rise around about 4:44am and set around 9:20pm. However the precise times vary depending upon exactly where you are, and in particular how far north you are. At Stonehenge for example the sunrise will be at 04:52 and sunset at 21:26. On this day the sun will be seen in the sky for about 8 hours and 50 minutes longer than at the Winter Solstice (around 21st December).

You might think then that the 'longest day' will also be the day in the year on which the sun rises earliest - but that isn't the case! Generally, the earliest sunrises of the year occur slightly before the summer solstice, but as the sun also sets a bit earlier those days do not have the most daylight. ¹

Goddess of the Sun

Across the world there are of course many and varied celebrations of the Summer Solstice. In Europe many of them date back to pre-Christian times, and often referenced female fertility and divinity in many forms. In Poland for example a Slavic Goddess of the summer solstice, known as Sobótka, took her name from a word that means "to bathe" - for her worshippers bathed in rivers and in dew gathered on June mornings. Then on Midsummer's Eve at night-time bonfires would be lit, and there would be dancing until well into the night.

This festival has its roots in magical pagan rituals that honoured two important elements: Water and Fire. It is also a feast celebrating the Sun as a source of light and warmth on the longest day of the year. Young maidens dressed in white, with wreaths of yellow and white wild flowers on their heads would set canded wreaths afloat on the rivers, in the hope that a fitting mate would find the wreath when fishing and fall in love with them.

¹ www.countryfile.com/go-outdoors/days-out/

The maidens would also throw herbs on to the fire, as protection against evil. To demonstrate their agility, young men would show off by jumping over the fires. At midnight, after the dancing, a search for the elusive “flower of the fern” would begin as unmarried young women and men ran off into forest. Legend had it that if you found the flower of fern, all your wishes would come true. Any man lucky enough to find such a bloom after midnight would be able to return at dawn wearing a wreath of the flowers on his head, given to him by his new fiancée!

In Slavic religion Sobótka, also known as Kupala (depending upon region) was the goddess of herbs, sorcery, sex, and midsummer. She was also the Water Mother, associated with trees and flowers. Her celebration fell at the Summer Solstice in June. However after Poland embraced Christianity in 966, its ancient traditions were replaced with Catholic ones. In the 14th century, the bishop of Poznan banned partying on the eves of holy days. The celebration was moved to the night of June 24th, St. John the Baptist’s feast day, and Sobótka was changed by the Church to be the name of that male saint’s day!² The Goddess of Summer however was never quite forgotten, and some are now reviving her celebration of feminine fertility in the 21st century.

Great Places to see the Summer Solstice Sun

With Covid-19 and the resultant required ‘social distancing’ in 2020, it might be best to find your own local sunspot to enjoy a good view of the sunrise on the 20th June, perhaps with just immediate family, though at the time of writing (mid-May 2020) we are now permitted to travel again anywhere in England (though not Wales or Scotland) – as long as we “Stay Alert” to avoiding intimate social contact with others (!) If you do wish to mark the occasion in a special place, BBC Countryfile Magazine² recommends:

Saltwick Bay (North Yorkshire)

“During summer, a small yet particularly photogenic section of the North Yorkshire coast has the distinction of hosting both sunrise and sunset over the sea. Head for Saltwick, where the sandy beach is flanked by the Northern and Southern Shelves, whose textured rock formations and mirror-like pools make for breath-taking reflections. As the sun sets, it picks out the whale-shaped silhouette of Saltwick Nab. On rising, the Black Nab rock stack and the twisted wreck of the Admiral Von Trump [!] take centre stage. But... please make sure you check tide times.”

Glastonbury Tor, Somerset

“After Stonehenge, Glastonbury Tor is surely the second most obvious place in Britain to celebrate the summer solstice and, arguably, it has the better views. Crowned by the ruins of 15th-century St Michael’s church, the tor rises 158m above the Somerset Levels to give a timeless 360° view of Wells, the Bristol Channel, Wiltshire, the Polden

² <https://www.polamjournal.com/Library/Holidays/Sobotka/sobotka.html>

Hills and Exmoor. It's one of Britain's most spiritual sites, so you'll be part of a crowd drumming and chanting as they have done here for millennia."

Avebury Henge, Wiltshire

"Avebury is often thought of as Stonehenge's quieter cousin. Not so at Midsummer as druids and other sun worshipers converge on the small village en masse. Visit



England's largest Neolithic henge, making the most of the long evenings with a walk to the Bronze Age burial grounds, or just bring a picnic and watch the sun rise. John Aubrey [author of Brief Lives, (1626-1697)] noted that Avebury far surpassed Stonehenge "as a Cathedral doth a Parish Church". Then again, he didn't have to pay the car-park charges. On 20 June, the car park will be open from 9am and parking costs £7 (£4 after 3pm). It

fills up quickly and there is no street parking for non-residents. Avebury is 30 mins by bus from Swindon. Local accommodation is likely to be full if you leave it too late."

Sheffield - Parkwood Springs ³



BBC Countryfile Magazine has probably never heard of Sheffield, never mind Parkwood Springs, but I have. It is the site of, amongst other more mundane things such as playing fields:

✓ Sheffield's largest ex-landfill site - now disused and being landscaped (complete with a full array of slightly sci-fi looking methane vents)

Parkwood Springs Ski-slope May 2020

³ Parkwood Springs main entrance is from Cooks Wood Road, postcode S3 9AA. More info: Friends of Parkwood Springs: <http://www.parkwood-springs.btck.co.uk/>

- ✓ Sheffield's Interfaith Forest Garden
- ✓ Ex-anti-aircraft gun emplacements - it's high up on the top of a hill, and in the second World War Sheffielders used to try and shoot down, from here, German bombers attacking the Don Valley steel industry (and the occasional Zeppelin airship back in 1914-18)
- ✓ The estimated pre-historic border of Brigantia, running along high points from Mam Tor in Derbyshire, to Carl Wark (near Fox House), Wincobank Hill Fort and Shirecliffe/Parkwood Springs, and then on to Caesar's Camp (Scholes Wood) in Sheffield



- ✓ A massive and well used mountain biking track, snaking through the woods and heathland
- ✓ Sheffield dry ski-slope - now derelict but where some Olympic level skiers and skateboarders learned their stuff
- ✓ Wardsend Cemetery - also now derelict and completely overgrown, looking like something from a 1960s Hammer Horror film with 19th century gravestones sticking up through the undergrowth; site of the Sheffield riot of 1862, and the only cemetery in Britain with an active railway line passing through it
- ✓ Viewing points over Sheffield City Centre. Most of the good viewing points look west or south-west, so good for Summer Solstice sunsets (but not sunrises).

**Entrance Sculpture at Parkwood Springs
(Cooks Wood Road, Sheffield S3 9AA)**

Article by Jamie Lang

The Cloak of the Shadow Lord, by Hayley Jane Nightingale



This is the poem that introduced our Summer Solstice ritual theatre, which was written by Hayley Jane Nightingale and produced by Jo Ashberry. The Thursday Magic Group, including Paul, Kate, Viv, Ann, Gemma, Hayley, Jo, Vicky and Pauline all worked hard to put this event together and performed in it.

You will be pleased to know that the confusion was resolved, and balance restored by Derwenna, our Goddess of the Summer Sun!

The day was long, the night was not,
The weather was dry and stiflingly hot.
A stillness hung about the air
Both man and beast were all aware
Of how this stillness crept and choked,
The heavy darkness of a cloak
That swept across these summer lands.
Not one being could understand

Why Air was whispering words of fire,
Earth was proclaiming to be higher
Than the farthest skies that air could reach.
Fire waved across the beach,
Water confusing it's ripples for mountains,
Hills and valleys were present in fountains.

First came fear and then confusion,
Believing it to be an illusion,
But then a rumble shook the ground,
Split the earth, and people found
That they were mostly separated
From dear ones whom they were related.

Many stood in isolation,
Shocked and distraught by this separation.
The elements' confusion worsened still,
The unbalance spiralling higher until
The darkness roared then pulled and pushed
And onto the land two figures rushed
Separated by the twisted chasm
The called to each other and tried to fathom
How they could be one and united once more
But, Crack! Then darkness, as they fell to the floor.