

Goddess Temple News

Samhain 2017

Donations Welcome



*The Goddess Temple,
2-4 High Street,
Glastonbury, BA6 9DU
www.goddesstemple.co.uk*

I write this after the conference, having visited Ireland, taken a road trip, celebrated Autumn Equinox, and settled back to my Canadian life. Always missing Avalon I haven't taken off my conference bracelet yet, so that I have one foot in the circle. I recall greeting new and familiar faces, voices full of love and gratitude – of those who plan and scheme, who paint scenes and compose music, speak and sing and dance and heal through our week. I assimilate images and songs into my soul to bring out at will until we meet again. This summer, we worked our way through transition and we did it well. I see Goddess smiling on Kathy, with gratitude for the firm foundation she has laid, beckoning her to follow other dreams, maybe to rest a little, though I doubt that – always with such grace.

Then there are those who ground us – builders and hewers, fetchers and carry-ers, ladder-climbers and rock-scrubbers. When these people transition, yes, their bodies can be replaced, but the firm ground never



*It's Not Up To You
<http://www.cathyhookey.com/>
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scatters away, and will provide strong terrain for us all to dance on always.

Four strong women are stepping away this year – four powerful women who have served Goddess in Glastonbury for many years.

Geraldine Charles has been web-mistress for the Goddess Conference from at least 2003. For 14 years she has created exquisite pages that tease people into registering time after time. She's like the cobbler's elves who work late into the night, using codes of which most of us mortals have no understanding. Geraldine, always conscious of the tiniest detail and the most minute glitch, will solve any snafu before dawn, using her sharp computer-forensic skills. Once the site is launched, Geraldine juggles all the registrations, questions, concerns, and problems we send to her! – until the rest of the team arrives and she can share her wealth of resources and good-natured practicality. Then, left alone again, she finalizes stats, sums up activities and

closes the book on yet another conference. Geraldine has played her valuable roles with integrity, humour, legal savvy, and technical brilliance.

Lorraine Pickles and Lisa Newing have been editors of this Goddess Temple News since 2010. This will be the last edition created by these two eloquent scribes. Writers both, they choose and arrange pieces that create a visual environment for the season they are celebrating. Designed by the other member of the team, Paul Williment, as cross-quarter fire festivals, free creativity's heat in response to Lisa and Lorraine's call. Knowing our pieces are treated with such respect and honour is a gift. Knowing that Lorraine and Lisa work as a loving team with Paul, that the combination of words and pictures is memorable in every issue, and especially knowing that the editing is flawless, is gratifying for writers and artists. I am personally grateful to Lisa and Lorraine for accepting my work and I am sure I speak for all the contributors over the years. These two fine wordsmiths have played their valuable roles with integrity, honour, patience, and technical brilliance.

Yamuna Wynn has fed our bellies and souls since 2006. Her task is a sacred one: she creates dishes for our conference week as a service to the Goddess Radharani. Her mission is, as she says, "That all the food be prepared in such a way that it all could be offered and blessed by Radha and Krishna, and we could all enjoy a Karma-free diet." Yamuna's work begins well before the conference – shopping, preparing, freezing, in large quantities – drawing around her a team of like-minded souls who, after nourishing us for four days, then proceed to work around the clock to load the banquet tables with plates full of delightful nibbles, dancing energy. Yamuna plays her valuable role with grace, devotion, sensitivity, and technical brilliance.

I deeply love these women and have worked closely with them for years, appreciating their love and friendship. They'll be missed as we all wend our way through the stones of forever, and rest in ancient memories, while we create a future that sings of peaceful unity – wherever we all are.

With much gratitude, thank you and Blessed Be.

Roz Bound, Conference Elder

Tales from the Summerlands

Somerset – A Dragon Quest

©2017 Geraldine Charles

Who isn't fascinated by dragons? There are so many mysteries to dig into and enjoy – with some care because although digging around and beneath dragons may yield hidden treasure, awakened dragons are wont to incinerate anyone within reach and then demand regular tribute by way of fair maidens to terrorise.

Could these tales be a recognition that the chthonic serpent or dragon guards the treasures of the earth, those not immediately visible to us, but of great value? The hundred-headed dragon Ladon, who never slept, watched over the golden apples of the Garden of the Hesperides, which had been gifted to Hera by Gaia. These apples, it is said, could confer immortality, as with a similarly guarded fruit in the Garden of Eden. The gift may not have been literal immortality, but knowledge and wisdom – perhaps better called *gnosis* as that word also suggests insight.

Hilda Davidson tells us that Anglo-Saxon burial grounds were known as the "Hill of the Dragon"¹ and it seems that churches were often built on these mounds, maybe not simply in hopes of overcoming pagan beliefs: such sites may then have been seen as doubly powerful, drawing on the magic of both the old gods and the new.* Later myths show archetypes more familiar to us, with the warrior once identifiable as a sun god now transmuted into a Christian hero like St George. Here the ancient Goddess of Earth's treasure has become a princess or damsel in distress.

There is, of course, no physical evidence for the existence of fire-breathing dragons now or in the past, although of course absence of evidence is not evidence of absence! It is fascinating to see that tales of dragons occur in apparently unrelated cultures all over the world. Did we bring the original story with us on leaving Africa and populating the world, or was there once, perhaps, a time of high worldwide culture before the most recent descent of the ice over a hundred thousand years ago?

It may be, too, that geological or meteorological phenomena were thought to be sightings of dragon fire: volcanoes, of course, but also fiery fissures in the earth such as those found in Iceland or Hawaii. It's difficult to tell whether sheet lightning or the Northern Lights are being described in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle of 793 CE – perhaps both – but the light show was seen as a portent of evil – and perhaps rightly so as that year saw the first Viking raid in England:

"This year came dreadful fore-warnings over the land of the Northumbrians, terrifying the people most woefully: these were immense sheets of light rushing through the air, and whirlwinds, and fiery dragons flying across the firmament. These tremendous tokens were soon followed by a great famine: and not long after, on the sixth day before the ides of January in the same year, the harrowing inroads of heathen men made lamentable havoc in the church of God in Holy-island, by rapine and slaughter."²



The Gurt Wurm of Shervage Wood © Mick Bailey



A cylinder seal thought to show Tiamat as a horned dragon

One of the earliest dragon images I could find is a Babylonian cylinder seal, now in the British Museum,³ which shows a large, horned reptile that is believed to depict Tiamat, an ancient Goddess seen as the personification of the primordial salt sea and Mother of all deities and pretty much everything else. Very briefly, according to the *Enuma Elish*,⁴ that wonderful Babylonian creation myth, Apsu, the personification of the sweet sea (or fresh water) and consort of Tiamat, was killed by Ea, a grandson. Tiamat wanted to avenge him but in the battle that ensues She is killed by Marduk, another descendant and the patron god of Babylon, who splits Her in two, creating heaven and earth from Her body, the rivers Tigris and Euphrates from Her tears, and so on.

Fascinating then, to discover that of seven distinct dragon tales in Somerset folklore, one also follows the pattern of creating a part of our landscape by its destruction. From near Crowcombe in the Quantock Hills comes the tale of the "Gurt Wurm of Shervage Wood", "wurm" or sometimes "vurm" being the old English name for any kind of large serpent. In case you're wondering, "gurt" is a West Country word meaning "big" or "very" and is still occasionally heard.

This terrifying creature lived in the woods, preying on livestock and wildlife. One day a clever crone, it is said, sent a man new to the area into the woods, ostensibly to pick whortleberries, those delicious European equivalents to the better-known blueberries. By way of payment the crone provided the man with a packed lunch and a generous quantity of cider. Did she know what would happen next?

As he sat on a fallen tree to eat, it gave a lurch and the man spilled what remained of his cider – it sounds as though he had already imbibed plenty as he rather intemperately seized his axe

and set to work to punish the tree, which began to bleed – and only then did he see that he had just cut a large dragon in two. The top half of the “tree” ran away towards Taunton while the headless half made for Minehead. We’re told that the dragon didn’t get very far but instead its body formed the Quantock Hills. And just maybe that isn’t the end of the story as some people say that the dragon laid an egg in the woods....

Shervage Wood belongs to an ancient and magical land: nearby is Dowsborough Hillfort, where, it is said, old warriors live within the hill, feasting in celebration of a victory over the Danes: if you go there at midnight you may hear them singing and laughing and if you’re very lucky you may hear the Wild Hunt as it passes overhead.

There is also the fascinatingly named “Wayland’s Pool” within the Wood and, as with Wayland’s Smithy in Oxfordshire, the name probably derives from Welund, smith to the gods. At the pool Wayland made horseshoes for Odin and the Wild Hunt and people say that horses tend to shy away from the area to this day....⁵

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 * I didn’t realise until reading through the article a couple of days later that I had “Game of Thrones” so much in mind: “the old gods and the new” is pretty much a direct quote! But of course the show does bring dragons into our consciousness, although it is only fair to point out that the dragons’ back story there lacks the thousands of years worth of mythology and human culture that have made our Earth dragons just that – embodiments of elemental power that so-called heroes constantly have to slay “before patriarchal order can be secured”.⁶

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1. Hilda R Ellis Davidson (1950) *The Hill of the Dragon*, *Folklore*, 61:4, 169-185
 2. <http://omac.org/Anglo/part2.html> – accessed 26th September 2017
 3. http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=277961&partId=1 – accessed 25th September 2017
 4. <http://www.sacred-texts.com/ane/enuma.htm> – accessed 28th September 2017
 5. <http://www.themodernantiquarian.com/site/7233/dowsborough.html> – accessed 26th September 2017
 6. Melissa Raphael, *Theology and Embodiment: The Post-Patriarchal Reconstruction of Female Sacrality*, Sheffield Academic Press, 1996

Editorial

Samhain. Way down we go, into the cauldron, into the deep dark time of the year, into the arms of Keridwen, Crone Goddess, She who holds us and gently leads us through that which we must endure, until we are transformed in Her love.

As I write this, I am recovering from breast cancer, and my co-editor Lisa is recovering from two recent eye operations. How strange it has been to try to co-ordinate Goddess Temple News between our respective operations! I am sure you will join with me in wishing Lisa a speedy recovery from her eye surgery.

I was diagnosed with breast cancer when the Lammas sun was still shining, and now as I peer from the rim of my own cauldron, the nights are drawing in and winter approaches. Never for me has the autumn seemed more glorious, never has the love of family and friends seemed to me more precious. Every day falls like a pearl drop into the cauldron, both scorching hot and icy cold. Her love continues to be changing, yet constant; this is the journey we must all make as Samhain comes. When death and change come into our lives, through illness, loss, or disappointment, it transforms us into new beginnings, and leads us on to new life.

Change has come this year to the Priestess of Avalon Training. Ruby Ward has stepped down as tutor of the First Spiral. Erin McAuliff has stepped down as the tutor of this year’s 2nd spiral, thus ending several years for her of teaching this life changing course. Both amazing women, who are succeeded by the wonderful Luna Silver, who begins teaching the first two years of the training this Samhain. Together with Kathy Jones, they will take it forward next year into its twentieth year.

And so too, Lisa and I are preparing to hand over the Co-editorship of Goddess Temple News after seven enjoyable and fulfilling years. We have seen the Temple change and grow, and we have always tried to reflect that in the Temple newsletter. We now feel it is time for Goddess Temple News to evolve and grow in different hands.

May She hold you in Her love this Samhain, and always.

*Lorraine Pickles and Lisa Newing,
 Priestesses of Avalon, Co-Editors Goddess Temple News*



Ruby, Kathy and Joanne with the new Sisters of Avalon and Brother of Avalon (24 September 2017) • Photo by Matthew Holbrook

Black Annis The British Kali

by Daniel Le Fey
Priest of Avalon

In the heart of England just outside of Leicestershire lives a legend, an ancient story of an old Hag, Witch, Goblin or is she the Dark Goddess the Midlands forgot.

People say her skin was so cold it turned blue and withered up; she had long talons as fingernails so sharp she carved out her bower (cave) with her bare hands. Her hair was as white as snow and when people looked up at her face only one eye gazed back at them for the other was picked out by crows. The locals dared not go near her for she ate the flesh of their children and dried out their skins (which she wore on a winters day) on an old oak tree next to her bower, so the legend says.

From this dark tale, we see the real glimpses of her true self. Annis's name originates to Anu the Great Celtic Mother Goddess, and the location of her bower is called Dane Hill, possibly from Dane Law of Viking times or more likely to the Goddesses Danu or Diana.

Some believe her historical figure was a Dominican nun called Agnus Scott who wore a black habit while being a hermit in the forest, Agnus died in 1455 and was buried inside a church nowhere near to Annis' supposed cave. Another legend tells of a witch who informed King Richard the Third of his defeat and death, as he travelled over Leicester's Bow Bridge while on his way to the Battle of Bosworth in 1585.

If we are to believe that Annis was once a Goddess just like Anu, potentially a Mother Goddess in the Midlands how did she become so dark? How did she get the name, Black Annis? Well maybe this local legend explains? Leicester's Bel 'Bright' was a giant who boasted he could reach Leicester in three large leaps. He mounted his mare at Mountsorrel and took one leap to Wanlip. The next step injured his mare and the last jump, was too much for them both and he died a mile and a half short of his destination, some believe that Bel was coming to see Annis and make her his Summer bride, did his death lock Annis into her winter form?

For me, Black Annis is a Goddess in her own right; she is the wise old crone, a figure misunderstood and demonised into hag form. Having one eye often represented peoples keen sense of vision and psychic skills relating to the third eye. Her skin being blue could be a representation of Kali the Hindu Dark Goddess, for they share the same raw grit and underlying strength of no-nonsense. Just like Kali, Black Annis will fight for you, destroying and slaying your inner demons. She is ready to push you into that place of surrender so you can grow to new heights and ambitions. The only children Annis eats are your insecurities and inner demons, unlike Kali who wore these demons around her neck, Annis displays them by drying your fears out on a nearby Oak Tree.

I quite enjoy the tale of Bel not reaching Annis, maybe she was the original Miss Havisham (from Great Expectations). We do many crazy things for love, but I believe Annis has learned how to control her heartbreak and teach us ways to love again, she knows our pain our heartache making it easy for us to fall in love with her charm and character.

There are other incarnations of Annis throughout these Isles from Gentle Annie who lives in Lowland Scotland, to Cailleach



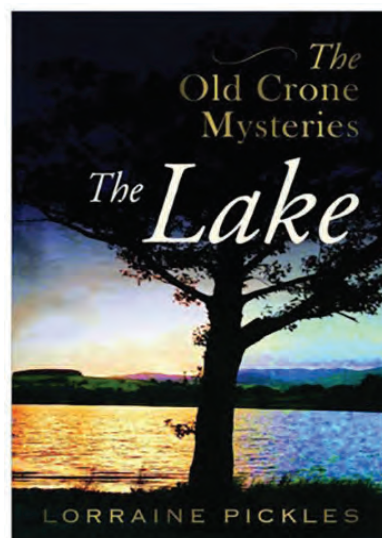
Bheur who lives high up in the mountains of the north. All three are depicted as Hags and Witches with blue skin and white hair. Today they hold the raw energy of the land, leading us to our edgy places, are we ready to listen to her wisdom or does she have to push us through our barriers to reach new heights.

Do you still believe she's a Goblin or shall we rightfully reclaim Black Annis as the Dark Goddess of the Midlands?

Samhain Blessings Daniel Le Fey Priest of Avalon

SAMHAIN APPROACHES...

THE OLD CRONE MYSTERIES BOOK 1 - 'THE LAKE'



ON SALE ON AMAZON
AND GODDESS TEMPLE GIFTS

WATCH THIS SPACE FOR NEWS OF
BOOK 2 - 'THE ISLAND!'

REVIEW of *Soul and Shadow*, Kathy Jones' New Book

In several ways this book amazed me. First, I was blown away by Kathy Jones' utter honesty about profoundly personal parts of her life: her deep fears, her screw-ups, her cancers, and her confusions about her own life, motivations and leadership abilities.

Second, whatever she herself felt about it, I was struck by Kathy's remarkable ability to lead others. The sheer number of outstanding Goddess workshops, classes, presentations, field trips, conferences, plays, and other activities she has lead, created and/or organized is overwhelming. After finishing the book I am in awe of her energy, dedication and creativity.

Third, Kathy describes her years-long battle with certain members of the UK Goddess community, her attempts to understand and heal the ancient wounds she feels caused this friction, wounds not only in the others but also in herself. Despite all her painful and laborious work, however, the abuse continued – mostly on social media. What's amazing to me is that Kathy didn't give up. At one point, driving in her car, she looked at a wall ahead of her and had thoughts of driving into it. She didn't, and she didn't desert the Glastonbury Goddess community, either.

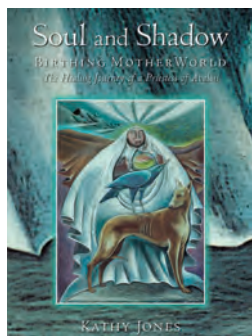
As someone who's organized and lead Goddess and other women's groups myself, I can attest that almost every leadership issue Kathy experienced was an issue I experienced myself. As Kathy notes, some women drawn to women's groups seem a bit more likely to be those extra-damaged by the patriarchy. The question is, how do we deal with this? Kathy thinks one way Goddess devotees can heal their wounds is by reliving the experiences they suffered during past lives when they were connected to Goddess temples, while these temples were being obliterated by patriarchal men (and possibly women too).

A fourth amazing part of this book consists of Kathy's attempts to help readers relive the closing of the ancient Goddess temples. She does so in 10-15 short "stories" that pepper the second half of her book. I call them stories because they have characters, dialog, settings, action, and all other aspects of literature, but Kathy says many came to her as visions. In each story, Kathy is a central character, as if she herself is actually going back in time and reliving her lives in several ancient Goddess temples, as each was decimated (this temple destruction was a long, drawn-out process beginning around 4000 BC and ending around 400 AD – plenty of time for someone today to have lived through countless closings).

Especially those leading Goddess groups will want to read this book. It's comforting to read someone who's shared your difficult experiences, the book provides ideas about how to cope in such a role, and Kathy herself serves as a superb role model re: Goddess leadership.

Kathy's book is available at Goddess Temple Gifts and on Amazon

Jeri Studebaker – author of 'Switching to Goddess', 'Breaking the Mother Goose Code' and two books in her 'The Land That Worshipped Women' series.



The Dark-Bright Art of Teaching

I worked as a teacher in schools and colleges for many years, and lately as a CPD trainer for teachers. I know about the pressure they are facing each day, teaching our young people. Some may think working now as a teacher for adults would be easier, but adults have grown up problems which come to the surface when we go into the self development work we do on the Priestess courses. You see, without diving deep into that cauldron, without facing that dark mirror, without knowing yourself completely, I feel it is near impossible to do the work we do as Priestesses. As it says above the Delphi temple: "Know Thyself". Without learning about the conditioning we received from our parents, grandparents, schools and society at large, we can't recognize some of the poor choices we have made in our life, which spring from the behaviour patterns we have learnt and perpetuate over and over. Knowing what makes us tick, why we react to specific things in a certain way, solving the puzzle of our likes and dislikes, being completely honest with ourselves about our failures and faults, exploring all the dark corners of our personality, that takes true courage. Look at it this way... we are the undiscovered land of secrets and mystery we yearn to explore.

We can run and try to hide but our shadow side will always find us – or – we can turn around, face what is within us, make peace with it and embrace it as a wholly integral part of us. When we achieve that, not just do we release the energy we have used for so long to hide who we truly are from ourselves and others, but we also find what the Intuitive Healer Caroline Myss calls the Golden Shadow, the one that can give us strength and courage. It is an interesting dichotomy that Shadow saps our energy when it is denied but gifts us energy when recognized and acknowledged. Priestess Training allows you to discover all this in a safe container, held and protected.

Starting a course at Samhain, in the dark time of the year, is a particular challenge. Many people reflect on their life, bring to the fore memories of the past. They remember loved and lost ones, relive the trauma of losing them, the grief and suffering. Or they may recall those who were not beloveds but who hurt and harmed, and they remember the trauma of that, feel it once again keenly. Stepping forward into a training with all that ballast can be difficult. This is why we enter the realm of the recent ancestors at this time and begin to heal the past.

As a temple teacher I see myself first and foremost as a Priestess whose sacred duty lies in bringing forward new generations of Priestesses and Priests to serve Goddess and Her/their community. I hold space for my students to release all 'that no longer serves' them. Only then can they go onwards towards learning all the necessary skills to be an effective and efficient Priest-ess. Dedication and Initiation into a new stage of life necessitates absolute faith in oneself and in Goddess, surrender and allow yourself to be reborn into the form of a healthier, stronger and more resilient Priest-ess Self, which will be the vehicle that grows into a power for good in the world. We all have been tasked to bring Goddess back into the awareness of everyone we interact with and into the Collective Consciousness. It is a sacred and joyous work.

Bee Baganz-Dickinson is tutor of the Priestess of Cerridwen course in the Temple, a new training year is starting this Samhain. If you would like to know more about this and other priestess trainings, please see the Temple website.

Samhain Poetry and Prose

The Crones of Keridwen

We are the crones of Keridwen.
We speak in words of power.
We are knowledgeable and wise,
not because we have never made stupid choices;
but exactly because we have made plenty of stupid choices,
and, hopefully, we know better now.
We are the crones of Keridwen.
We are kind and helpful right up to the moment
that someone takes the piss
and then we turn into ball breaking bitches.
We are the crones of Keridwen.
We do as little harm as possible to everyone
but we take no shit either.
We are the crones of Keridwen.
We can be sensible, practical and safe.
But we can also be wild crazy witches who like to dance naked
under the moon and to hell with the neighbours.
We are the crones of Keridwen.
We might look like a bunch of mad old biddies
but you'd be wrong to think that.
We are a bunch of mad powerful old biddies.
We are the crones of Keridwen.
Blessed be.

Janet Parfitt, Priestess of the Goddess

Dark Dark Mother

Dark dark mother
Your face is here
Samhain descent
To heal and clear

I feel your depth
You feel my pain
Take me deeper
Release my chains

In loss and illness
Let me thrive
Give me new hope
I will survive

Beyond despair
Keep me near
Give me Your peace
Beyond all fear

Dark dark mother
Hold me safe
Give me the strength
To liberate

Dr Lynne Sedgmore CBE, poetess and priestess healer

Old Crone

Old Crone sits resting in her rocking chair nestled in the sheepskin warming her aged back, the warm glow from her fire heating her rustic home. She had walked many miles over the land during the light of the day, gathering herbs and carefully choosing blossoms from the early flowers that mingled with the damp grasses beneath her old scuffed boots. The wild animals shared many footsteps with her along the earth trackways that led her many miles deeper into the wilderness. Here she became alive, feeling the rain falling from the sky that was bringing a freshness to the ferns and mosses surrounding her. She felt the raindrops cleansing her and blessing her, for she was an earth-dweller whose feet walked to the beat of the Earth Mothers heart. She collected fresh food to eat as she walked the land, taking only what she needed and thanking the spirits of the plants, for this was the way of the Wise Women who had walked before her, she knew of no other way.

Old Crone was solitary but for a few souls who came to her for her magical herbs, for her wild healing and mysterious visions that she saw in the flames of her burning fire. Those who visited her with good hearts got to know her and respected her and her ancient ways. She taught them how to hear the whispers of the world of nature, to awaken their senses to the energy of the dark nights, the dark moon and the waxing and the waning moon times so that they may wander safely at anytime through the woods to meet her, often joining her for ceremonies on the land during the between times when the veils were thin, where she awaited them wearing a black cloak, holding staff of Yew adorned with Crow feathers and hag stones.

There were many tales about Old Crone which were said by whispered voices, many untruths spoken by those who had not seen her, nor bothered to connect with her to truly know who she was. Stories of her curses, her hexes and of her madness flowed through the air like shards of winter ice meaning to harm her good nature. She had grown tired of the false words, the emptiness of their meaning, for those who's lips told the untruths were indeed hollow within themselves, without the richness of life within their souls. There would have been times in the past where the older Crones would have mixed poisons of the land to silence the loose tongues of those who told such stories of them but this Old Crone was good of heart. She chanted good intentions into her elixirs bubbling in her cauldron, asking for those who had loose tongues to be soothed and to find peace, to be healed of their shadows and their pain, for she knew, like the animals of the land, only those who are injured howl across the winds of change.

Old Crone's eyes grew weary with age and tiredness from the day as the firelight danced its orange glow around her humble home smelling sweetly of the abundance of the drying herbs. Her black Crow sat on the back of her rocking chair as she rocked gently to the rhythm of the hooting owl who had awoken in the woods ready for its nocturnal flight.. All was well in her world as the darkness of night embraced her sleepy stillness... all was well.

Healing Blessings from Goddess House

This month Goddess House will once again be filled with visitors from all over the world, who come to learn all about Goddess, to feel Her blessings, relax in the beautiful rooms dedicated to our Wheel of Brigid-Anna Goddesses and to receive healing of body, heart and soul from our Healer Priestesses.

The healing rooms in the house are filled with the blissful smells of aromatic oils, often used in our diverse types of massages offered. The curative power of sound and vibration are streamed to places of discomfort in treatments using tuning forks, crystal singing bowls, Koshi and Aura chimes, drums and rattles. We also offer the therapeutic sound of voicework, to aid self reflection, mindfulness and soul healing. Meditation helps to still the busy mind and reconnects you with your soul space, whilst the words of wisdom from Goddess just for you are spoken by trained Priestesses. The magic of nature in form of crystals is used to conduct the power of Earth towards a settling and strengthening of the body energies.

Our healers use their grounded presence, connection with Goddess, healings hands and compassionate hearts to assist the client back to wellness. Releasing pain from the body and strengthening resilience to further disease completes our sessions. At Goddess House we believe that the sacred trinity of body, heart and soul needs to be aligned in harmony to allow the healing of the whole person. As therapists and healers we open ourselves to Her divine presence to the highest good of our client. It is the loving relationship we have with Goddess that aids us in our work. As Priestesses we call upon Her guidance to show us what and where the true centre of dis-ease lies and how we may best remove it.

The healers at Goddess House see their work as sacred service, and on every Thursday afternoon we offer our Goddess Healing sessions by donation. It is a loving gift from us to our community.

In this season of releasing we recommend a detoxifying massage, a deep soul healing, a guiding card or rune reading and the Cerridwen Dark Mother Blessing. Please visit our website for further information on www.glastonburygoddesshouse.co.uk. With many blessings of the season from Goddess House

Bee Helygen Baganz, Priestess of Avalon, Priestess of Cerridwen

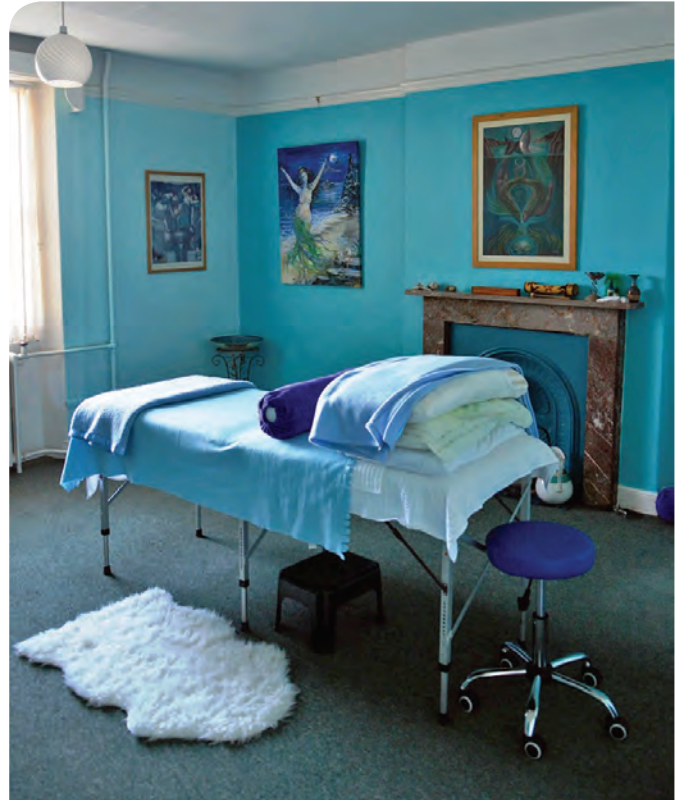
The Motherworld Party

The Motherworld party is bringing to life a new vision for a world where all of life is sacred and Mothers and the values of mothering are placed in the centre of our families and our communities. We will be working collaboratively with many other grass roots organisations to create a political party visioned in a new way.

Please join us as we birth a new way of being into the political arena, join us and support us to grow this into a worldwide grassroots movement that will change how we live together in communities and in the world. For the future of our Mother Earth, for the future of our children's children. For all the women who have gone before us who hold the red thread of sisterhood, it is time for us to rise rooted.

Please email your details to sue.quatermass@virgin.net and we can add you to our email list. Or go to www.goddess temple.co.uk for details of The Motherworld initiative.

Sue Quatermass, Priestess of Avalon.



Support the Goddess Temple

Giving Your Time and Energy

The Goddess Temple is open to the public seven days a week with volunteer Temple Melissas looking after the space while it is open. All kinds of people come to the Temple, some experiencing a Goddess Sacred Space for the first time, and many Goddess pilgrims who come to bathe in Her loving energy, to attend Ceremonies and Healing Days. We always need more volunteer Temple Melissas. If you would like to become a Melissa and can offer two or more hours of your time regularly to care for this beautiful sacred space. Contact Dawn Kinsella – dawnkinsella@hotmail.co.uk.

Become a Temple Madron

Make a monthly standing order donation to the Goddess Temple to help cover our regular monthly costs. Any amount you can donate will support the Temple. As a Temple Madron you will receive our Temple Newsletter four times a year, plus invitations to special yearly Madrons, Friends and Melissa days where Goddess speakers and presenters will delight and entertain you. Please see details on the Temple website: <http://www.goddess temple.co.uk/index.php/how-you-can-help>.

Donations to the Goddess Temple, details – Lloyds Bank, The Goddess Temple, Sort Code 30-98-28, Account No. 0583169.

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The Divine Feminine and the Reclamation of Death and Dying

When I was lying there on the ground, under a hail of bullets, the word "Mother" escaped my mouth. Just like that. It wasn't an exclamation or a cry for help, I just calmly uttered the word 'Mother'... I don't even think that I was addressing or thinking of my mother as a particular person (I used to call my mother with her first name and not with 'mother' or 'mum' or something), but that word 'Mother' referred to a more universal principle: The beginning of life. Our lives begin with our mothers giving birth to us and on the day when I thought my life was over, my mind circled back to where it had begun" *Extract from "My First Battle" by Raymond Bartetzko*

You may have noticed that rising in consciousness at the moment is a great yearning to attend more lovingly to people dying in our communities.


It is half spoken in sterile corridors, between the beeps of machines and overlaid with antiseptic smell; it is swallowed by the widow who would have wanted him to sleep in their bed one last time but felt she couldn't ask; it is commented on at crematoria that 20 minutes is no time at all to do justice to a whole life. Where did death go? Forced into the shadows by industrialisation and medical advancements which severed the workers from their tribal communities, bringing them en-masse into the city slums where death was an unspeakable risk to health; ushered behind the closed doors of the funeral homes in a flurry of pot pourri and pumped full of formaldehyde. Death became the ultimate capitalist taboo, reminding us that infinite growth and expansion was a folly conceived by the bosses to convince us to keep on the corporate treadmill. Big pharmaceuticals telling us we can cheat death, we can live forever, we can remain forever young. The patriarchy that

burned our foremothers at the stake for practising healing arts replaced Her with monitoring machines and doctors for whom death is a complete failure.

"They call for their mothers at death" it is said about soldiers on the battlefield (not least reminding us that gentle men have suffered so greatly at the hands of the patriarchy too, for this is not about gender). The Divine Feminine is calling for the balance to be restored alongside the positives of modern medicine and the often excellent palliative care movement that it has birthed; that balance might be manifest in death literacy in our communities, a reduction in the fear of death, more people choosing to die at home, choosing to keep the body at home before the funeral, for a return to the traditional wakes and laments, a home death, a good death in whatever setting; with loving people attending to the dying, conscious of the transit of the soul and the sacredness of the body, the threshold and the Mystery that lies beyond. This is the act of the midwife, the *doula*, a mother figure, a solace and comfort whose arms and heart can hold the Infinite. This is about embracing the cycles and seasons of life itself; accepting and aligning with (rather than battling against) the decline of health and darkening of the years. It is a radical act: to choose to die well, to retain sovereignty in death; to accept one's end helps us to come most fully to life, today. It is a sacred act: to honour the body and the soul and to consciously return both to their Source. This is a great calling of our times.

This article was written by Rev Alexandra Wilson, Interfaith Minister, co-founder of Red Tent End of Life Doula Preparation with Awen Clement, more can be found about us both and our work at www.redtentendoflife.wordpress.com and www.alexandrajwilson.com

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