



sky gazing ★ books ★ gardening ★ recipes ★ ritual elements ★ articles

# Sword & Chalice

magazine of the Wiccan Church of Canada

Vol. 4 | #6

Summer Solstice



Lughnasadh

Jun 21 – Aug 1

HAMILTON ★ TORONTO ★ WINDSOR



# Celebrate the Turning Wheel

"POWERFUL DISK OF GOLD GLORY, YOU HAVE BESTOWED UPON US THE BLESSINGS OF YOUR BRONZED-BEAMED BRIGHTNESS, COAXING FORTH FLOWERS AND FRUIT FROM THE HIDDEN TREASURES OF SEED AND VINE."

The Summer Solstice comes. It is the longest day of the year. In Ontario sunrise on June 20th is at 5:35 am and sunset at 9:02 pm. That is 15 hours and 26 minutes of sunlight. It is the day when the Sun Gods and Goddesses are at their greatest power.

With all that we have gone through this year (or two), this is the perfect Sabbat to celebrate. It has been a trying time, with many people fighting dark moments in their life. We have all felt it. But this Sabbat brings us brightness, a light that casts all darkness from our souls. Take this time to soak in the energies of the sun while it is at its strongest – a day when we will have more light than any other day this year.

Let the strength of the Sun burn away all those things that hold you back, burn away the clouds blocking your vision, so you can see clearly a direction to move you forward.

Sunrise is a time of transition. Rise early and welcome the dawning of the day, watch the sky brighten, and listen to the birds sing up the sun. What rises within you? The awaking and re-charging of your spirit? Or do you have a song in your heart to sing up the sun?

Mid-day is the sun's strongest time. Glory in the life that is around you. All of this made possible by the very same sun that warms your skin and fills your heart. Give thanks for the blessings. Consider a Summerpole: much like a Maypole but add flowers and leafy branches and dance

in the heat of Summer Solstice.

At sunset, another transition. A time to say farewell to the Sun. Did you spend the day wisely, soaking in all the rays of healing, rejuvenating energy? As the light fades from the sky, give thanks for all that the Sun gives to us.

And as the darkness of night envelopes you, light a small bonfire or even just sit outside with a candle. The sun hasn't left you to the dark, it is in the flames and if you are lucky, you might catch a glimpse of fireflies piercing the darkness of the night. Lie back in the heat of the Solstice night and gaze up. In the dark velvet of the sky, look for the stars, little orbs that reflect the blaze of the sun and know that the Gods' light watches you always.

As you prepare for your journey through Solstice day, look for things that cross your path that remind you of the sun. Gather them, decorate your altar or shrine.

On the Solstice, take the time to celebrate through all the elements of your day. Wear bright colours or red, orange, yellow or gold – colours of the Sun; make some wonderful feast food, for yourself and for the Gods (remembering to give back to Nature's creatures) – round, sun-coloured fruits and vegetables, or food grilled on an open flame capturing the essence of the sun; take in all the beams of glorious light and let it inspire you to create – make a craft, a tool relating to the sun, paint a picture, write a story, all with the energies of the day.

Spend the day doing something you love! And take the time to say to someone "Hello Sunshine". It will make their day!

**"HAIL THE SUN! HAIL THE GODS!"**

**DUE TO THE CURRENT SITUATION WITH COVID-19 the WCC is pleased to offer free online weekly classes alternate Saturday & Sunday. As well as a social Meet & Greet Wednesday nights via the ZOOM conferencing app.**

**If you wish to participate, please email [LPH.WCC@gmail.com](mailto:LPH.WCC@gmail.com) with your email address.**

# SABBAT STONE

WITH SHELLEY

## Sunstone

Sunstone's warm shades of gold and red, sometimes orange, will make you think you're looking at the sun. These colors are what gave the stone its name.

Sunstone is all about freedom, self-empowerment, and independence, and this stone can indeed be your best companion! It also works to improve movement, physically, emotionally, and spiritually. It increases your joy and metabolism, leading to increased levels of heat and exertion.

**ELEMENT:** Fire

**PLANET:** Sun

**ZODIAC:** Leo

**ENERGY:** Projective

**TAROT:** The Sun

**CHAKRA** Sacral & Solar Plexus

**Magical Properties:** Divine Masculine, Personal Power, Sexual Energy, Protection, Abundance, Leadership, Health, Contentment, Vitality, Freedom, Originality, Joy, Action

**God/Goddess:** Helios, Mithras, Ra, Cerridwen, Sekhmet, Sol, Sunna, Tonatiuh, Amaterasu.



# THE GARDEN WITH GLENYS

## Evening Primrose

Also known as common evening primrose, field primrose, tree primrose, , night willow-herb, evening star, sundrop, , hogweed, King's cure-all and fever-plant

The evening primrose is native to North and South America and commonly found from the

Atlantic coast to the rockies. It is often found in dry meadows and ditches and other uncultivated places. It is a biennial plant. The first year Evening Primrose forms a rosette of lancet shaped leaves fairly low to the ground. During the second the leaves spiral around the tall stem. The blooms are bright yellow and consist of four bi-lobed petals. The plant generally blooms from June to October. The slightly scented blooms open at dusk, hence the common name

The Indigenous tribes in North America have used this plant as food and medicinal crop for hundreds of years. Most of the plant is edible. The roots can be eaten raw or cooked like potatoes. These are gathered for use from September through to the production of the first flowered stem. The young leaves (April to June before flowering) and can be eaten in salads or cooked like spinach

Flowering stems can be used before June but must be peeled first. They then can be eaten raw or cooked. The flowers and flower buds are also edible as are the seeds. Traditionally the leaves were used by the Indigenous tribes boiled into a tea. It was used as a stimulant or to improve strength. They could also be used externally to treat hemorrhoids or boils Evening primrose oil is often used to treat premenstrual symptoms as well as menopausal symptoms in women

Magically, the primrose is a terrific addition to a witch's garden. It has connections to both the sun because of it's bright yellow colour and the moon because of its blooming nature. It will open at dusk and close around noon when the sun is at its height.

Evening Primrose is a feminine plant. Elementally it is tied to water. It is associated with the planet Venus as well as the Moon and the Sun. It is considered a fairy herb and can help connect to lunar deities especially feminine ones such as Artemis, Diana, Selene, Luna

Because of this duality in personality, it's an excellent plant to promote balance and integration. With the influence of the Sun, it can be used to shed light on a problem or hidden things which are represented by the moon. The nurturing lunar aspect can help in healing these areas

With the energy of the moon and Venus, it can help magically with things related to beauty and love. Because it is often used to treat female issues it can also magically be used to aid in with personal issues that are feminine in nature.

\* Note that Evening primrose plant is different from the Primrose (*Primula vulgaris*) which is a plant native to Europe. Please understand what you are using before you do so





# THE BOOK NOOK WITH BELLA

Guest review by  
David Bellamy

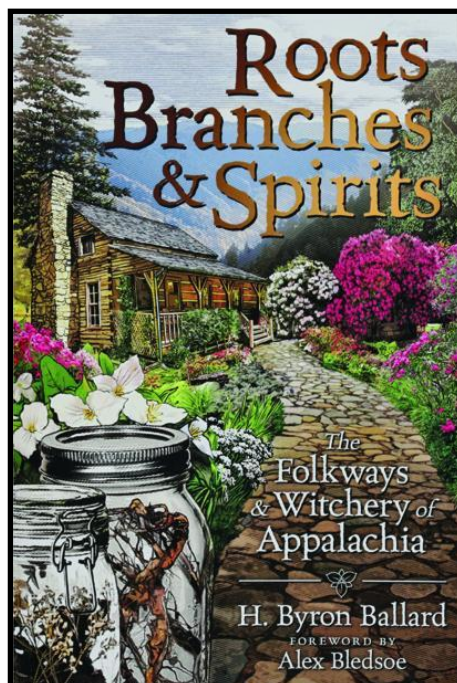
Roots, Branches & Spirit, by H. Byron Ballard

ISBN # 978-0-7387-6453-5

**A**s much as I have loved learning about the origins of Wicca and Witchcraft, most of what I have read so far has not considered the practices of pagan immigrants to North America. This informative book explores the magic and folklore shared by the early Irish and Scottish settlers who called the Appalachian Mountains their home.

The author, H. Byron Ballard, is a teacher, folklorist and writer, born and raised in Northern Carolina, and whose paternal family hails from the mountains of East Tennessee. In her book, *Roots, Branches & Spirits: The Folkways & Witchery of Appalachia*, she dives deeper into the meaning surrounding the natural world and the magic that comes down to us through local folk and fairy tales. A skilled storyteller, she does an excellent job of detailing the history of the Irish and Scottish immigrants that came to the Southeastern United States, bringing their old world practices with them and incorporating them into their daily lives – and yes, even into their religious lives. One of my favorite lines from the book reads, 'The work that puts beans on your table may be bank teller, but there's no reason why that can't be infused with magic and intention.' [indent quote]

This book is divided into two sections, the first beginning with a small storytelling or history lesson, followed by an example of how to practice the magic associated with that lesson. Some of the magic examples involve meditation, medicine, music, or chants. The second section really begins to incorporate the skills and work of practical 'witchery' in a more hands on approach. H. Byron



shares her abundant knowledge involving the various tools, supplies and techniques necessary to be successful in the magic she shares with her readers. She is able to find a purpose for everything from stones to soil, brick dust to river rocks, and seeds to feathers. Even dishwater serves a higher purpose if you have a magical intention. At the same time, she shows uses of the tools in herbal and candle magic that we are familiar with in modern magical practice. Chapter 7 is a valuable read on divination, dreams, cartomancy, and scrying and addresses using signs and omens, making it my favourite chapter!

H. Byron tells you the deeper meanings behind the laying on of hands for healing as well as the many uses for medicinal herbs and plants. She also shares tips for making salves and tinctures and how to work with different phases of the moon. She even shares some of her experiences communicating with the dead and tells some of her most memorable 'Haint Tales.' These are stories from the Carolina coast and various regions of the South of hauntings and encounters with those who have passed on. The author also treats the beliefs and traditions of the Native Americans (the Shawnee, Creek & Cherokee in this particular area) with utmost respect as they were there before the first settlers arrived.

This book is definitely a must read if you are looking for something out of the ordinary. The author does a great job of explaining the history and folklore of an oft overlooked people while helping us to weave what we can learn from them into our ritual and spell-work.

I was able to find it at my local shop but it can also be found on Chapter/Indigo and Amazon.

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# The Art of Divination

*“The practice of determining the hidden significance or cause of events, sometimes foretelling the future, by various natural, psychological, and other techniques.” Latin *divinare*, ‘to foresee, to foretell, to predict, to prophesy’ by divine or supernatural agency.*

Divination as a practice has existed as long as humanity has sought the unknowable, the unseen, and the intangible. A global practice that provides information, guidance and connections to the human experience. It has frequently been applied in reading the future and fortunes of individuals, families, and even nations, proving on occasion to be an intervening or life altering event in the spiritual or mundane lives of those impacted. Divination is more than a ritual or technique, it is an ongoing conversation and a belief in something ‘more’, something greater than ourselves.

We believe we can reach beyond the confines of our five senses, that it is natural and even normal to seek the guidance of a higher power or those who go before us for answers.

Through documentation we know the ancient Greeks made a distinction between inspirational kinds of divination, visions, or dreams such as oracles, seers, and soothsayers, and of those divinations requiring some form of trained skill or knowledge, such as astrology or numerology. One was given, the other obtained. Knowledge in what would be a skill-based divination system involved interpreting diviners, who were socially recognized and respected members of a community, much like tea and tarot readers of today.

Early divination was based in the natural world through listening to the wind (anemosomancy), scrying by fire (pyromancy), or drifting dreamily with hypnotic water (hydromancy). Through these methods we open ourselves and create a common language to be shared between the subconscious and the conscious self. Nature has always connected us, offering divination through sacred or consecrated objects – be they tea leaves, bones, sticks, stones, shells, animal behavior, or various representational imagery, they all act as tools where messages can be received from divinity or our higher self. Divination can also be done in or with our bodies, through meditation, dreams, visions, and mediumship.

For pagans, exploring the channels of divination allows us to expand our symbolic and unconscious language, in turn opening avenues of communication with what is unseen or heard. While some magical traditions or systems employ and sanctify divination it is not an act of magic in itself; it is a skill, and a craft to be learned and practiced, to the benefit of sensitives and mediums.

There is an astonishing variety of methods and divinatory techniques across every culture. Take the time to learn with the seasons, embracing the ebb and flow of the world around you. In fact, the next time you find yourself cloud gazing into the summer sky, let your attention to the mundane slip and perhaps aeromancy will open the heavens to your intuitive eye. Learn to listen to the Divine in a whole new way.

Aeromancy (aero for ‘air’ and manteia for ‘divination’) uses cloud formations, wind currents and cosmological events such as comets to divine the future. There are different types of divination within the practice some of which are: austromancy (wind divination), ceraunoscopy (observing thunder and lightning), chaomancy (aerial vision), meteormancy (meteors & shooting stars) and nephomancy (cloud divination).

Bells, wind chimes, weathervanes, ribbons, and other objects may be used to mark the movements of the wind for divinatory purposes or the sound of the wind passing through leaves or grass may carry words of guidance. The movement of the smoke from a sacrificial fire or incense could be carefully observed to determine the divine answer, much like tossing a handful of seeds into the air to observe the fall and pattern.

Learn to listen to the Divine in a new way!





# UPCOMING CLASSES

- June 27 - Auras & Energy
- July 03 - Celtic Mythology
- July 11 - Tool Making
- July 17 - Moon Lore
- July 25 - Stones
- July 31 - Sabbat Class - Lughnasadh

All classes are being offered via Zoom. If you would like to sign up for the classes, please send an email to [LPH.WCC@gmail.com](mailto:LPH.WCC@gmail.com)

## SKY GAZING

FULL MOON / Supermoon - June 24

LAST QUARTER - July 1

NEW MOON - July 9

FIRST QUARTER - July 17

FULL MOON - July 23

Delta Aquarids Meteor Shower.  
July 28/29

LAST QUARTER - July 31

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of Canada



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## Rosie's Elderflower Fizz

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 gal water
- 4 lbs white sugar
- 6 whole chopped lemons
- 6 heads of elderflower
- 4 tbsp white wine vinegar

## THE SABBAT TABLE

Put all the above ingredients into a large container for 24 hours.

Strain, bottle and keep for 2 weeks before serving.

Serve over ice.

The Wiccan Church of Canada has offered open Wiccan temples facilitating classes, rituals, and training to the public since 1979. Drawing on resources available in our own communities and temples, we are a diverse, accepting, caring, group of people united by our love of the Gods and our own journeys. W.C.C. rituals are open to one and all, regardless of one's level of knowledge in the Craft. There is something for everyone, an experienced practitioner or someone who's vaguely curious. We hope our newsletter will reflect the diversity of our membership by offering the pagan community articles, resources, local events, links & libraries and the W.C.C calendar.