

SILVER WHEEL

Newsletter of the Pagan Alliance Inc. (SA)

Edition 7: BELTAINE 2006

Web Version

The web version contains only a few of the articles from the Pagan Alliance newsletter. Become a member if you'd like ALL the articles, photos, book reviews, and contact details for workshops and courses being held in Adelaide!



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SILVER WHEEL

OUR VISION

Silver Wheel aims to provide a forum through which the South Australian Pagan community may express its creativity, share news and distribute information about various Pagan paths. Spirituality seems barren if it does not reinforce our connections to the Earth and to each other, touching all facets of our lives. Through Silver Wheel we hope to weave the strands that will link us more intimately to each other and inspire us to manifest our own personal visions through music, poetry, art, ritual, tree planting, environmental activism, mythology, recycling, celebration – the affirmation of our common passion for life.

THE PAGAN ALLIANCE ETHIC

As Pagans we sincerely affirm the following principles:

Reverence for the life force and its ever-renewing cycles of life and death. Each individual is responsible for discovering and developing his/her own true nature in harmony with the greater world and takes full responsibility for his/her own actions. We accept that divinity exists in many forms and can be worshipped as male, female, androgynous, or in a form beyond definition.

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Written articles of 900 words or less are very welcome. To fit space and content requirements, these may be edited. Please keep Letters to the Editor to 300 words or less. Photos and artwork are also welcome. Please send by disk, or reduce (to approx. 1.5 mb at 200 dpi) before emailing. Send your creative efforts by e-mail to **touchwood8@bigpond.com**, or post to **Silver Wheel, PO Box 3756, Clare, SA, 5453**. If you would like your original returned, please enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

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All enquiries - contact Don on 8270 4998
or email don.vicki@ozemail.com.au

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Secretary, PO Box 5003, Alberton, SA, 5014

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Editorial

It's Beltaine, a time to celebrate one of our exceptional fire festivals and rejoice in the fertility of mind, body and spirit. This edition of the Silver Wheel is full of things to make us think, opportunities to have fun and lots to feed our curiosity.

We have walked, conferenced, met and pubbed our way through the past few weeks, and have the tales to prove it!

Thankyou to all our great contributors for making sure there is no lack of content in this edition – hopefully there will be something for most people to enjoy. Keep those articles, poems and reports coming in – I am hopeful of receiving a host of wonderful reports of Beltaine celebrations for the Litha Silver Wheel.

If you haven't time for anything else right now, flick through the issue and check out the ads for local Pagan events – musical witch Wendy Rule will be in Adelaide on November 5, while Spiral Dance will be performing at the Gov this month, the Folk Federation's medieval feast and again at the Gov on new year's eve. Maymoon Madness is on again, with expressions of interest now being taken to ensure a spot.

I did promise there would be an interview with environmental biologist Dr Chris Daniels, but the space and time continuum conspired against me – look out for it next time.

The Wiccan Conference in Sydney provided another fertile plane for those who attended and had a great time. There was a goodly representation from South Australia.

On another note I was recently accused of producing “two tame and convent school/grandma style Silver Wheels” and of being an Old Fart of Paganism.

Praise is wonderful and always appreciated, but criticism is even better. It makes you take a step back and analyse what it is you are doing – and there's nothing wrong with that. So I took a step back and spent some time looking through past copies of the Silver Wheel (I've got quite a lot) and evaluating the content. I came to the conclusion that I have been following pretty much in the footsteps of the estimable editors who nurtured it before me.

I don't think the current content is tame, although it is catholic – but I'd be pleased to hear from anyone regarding their opinion, as it would make a good debate for the Can of Worms.

I did notice that on the whole the Silver Wheel is not a political publication and does not espouse a single point of view – again something I will be sticking to.

And as far as being an Old Fart goes – I take that as a compliment! (Whatever happened to respecting your elders!)

STOP PRESS – WINNER OF THE BOOK, WITCHCRAFT AND THE WEB FOR THE BEST ARTICLE IN THIS EDITION IS THE WAYFINDER FOR HIS REPORT ON THE DAVID SUZUKI TALK. CONGRATULATIONS!

*Editorial blessings,
Nan*

Hooray for the Horae!

“Clearly seen are the bright symbols of sacred rites
at the opening of the chamber of the purple-robed Horae,
the fragrant spring bringeth the nectar-breathing plants.
Then, oh then, are flung on the immortal earth
the lovely tresses of violets, and roses are entwined in the hair;
then ring the voices of songs to the sound of flutes...”

- Pindar, *Dithyrambs Frag 75*

Spring galloped into our backyards with an explosive mix of colour, fragrance and the buzz of bees that were struggling to make it from one flower to the next, because their overflowing pollen sacks were weighing them down so much! And now, lusty Beltaine is upon us.

The warmer weather stirs our hearts and calls for us to stand in the sunshine, to look into our own patch of nature, wherever that may be: paddock, courtyard garden, veggie patch, or just the royal blue sky itself. For it's in these places that we see the flirting, courting and mating of birds and animals. And at this point on the Wheel of the Year, this is what signifies the progress of the seasons.

And who brings the seasons themselves? This honour goes to the Greek Goddesses called the Horae.

As the daughters of Zeus and Themis, this trio of goddesses related to the Greek concept of three seasons, Spring (a time of growth), Summer (a time for lazing about enjoying life) and Autumn (the season of harvest). Classical artwork shows the Horae as gorgeous young ladies, decorated with colourful flowers, vegetation and ripened grain, which of course symbolises their link with fertility.

The Horae had many roles in Greek Myths: they were guardians of the gates of Mt Olympus, and they cared for the

horses that drew the chariots of the gods across the sky. They were also attendants at the birth of Aphrodite, adorning her with jewels and making offerings of blossoms as she rose from the sea. This isn't too surprising, since Aphrodite is a famous symbol of fertility and fecundity.

The Horae were even associated with the goat-footed god Pan, with whom they were “in endless dance and melody divine!”

These benevolent goddesses were particularly honoured by farmers, especially since the Horae had some control over the weather that was sent from Mt Olympus. The cycle of the seasons was poetically regarded by the workers on the land as *The Dance of the Horae*.

So when you see signs of Beltaine around you, or when you first notice the shift into the summer months, remember to give due respect to these Goddesses of the seasons, for their influence is subtle, yet constant, and is so important to the land and Pagans everywhere.

Hip, hip, Horae!

- Don

"Out of this potent cauldron comes a celebration of vitality, fecundity and sensuality, which includes garlanding lovers and homes, dancing and sexuality, music, drinking and laughter. This expresses the intimation that everything alive is holy and that all of life is holy, and simultaneously asserts that holiness does not preclude either sensuality or humour. For some the festival celebrates the marriage of the vigorous Sun and the bountiful Earth and is thus an appropriate time for rites of love and marriage."

From the book Listening People, Speaking Earth - by Graham Harvey

“Thirteen pear-trees, ten apple-trees,
forty fig-trees...
each of them bearing fruit in turn;
there were clusters on them of every degree
of ripeness
as the Horae of Zeus shed down their influence
from above.”

- Homer, *Odyssey 24.343*

2006 Wiccan Conference

What a marvelous setting, perfect weather, wonderfully organized weekend shared with equally wonderfully friendly and informative people from all over Australia.

I enjoyed the atmosphere of 'family' that prevailed throughout the weekend and felt that here at least, all knowledge belonged to everyone and not just the select few.

The workshops I attended were not about one person 'telling' us, but rather more about them presenting the topic and everyone there having input. I learned more from other attendees than from the presenter and I feel that this was the whole idea of the weekend – the sharing of knowledge and experiences; making us more of a community than ever before.

And I particularly enjoyed that most of the workshops on Saturday had something to do with actual input into the ritual that evening. Although the ritual had already been written etc. the setting up of it all, the circle castings, calling quarters, making tools like the broomstick, wands etc. were all put together by the community of the conference giving everyone a piece of ownership of the ritual.

And I must congratulate those few who brought along their very well-behaved young children which only made the family aspect of the weekend even more prominent.

I had to travel thousands of kilometers to find my wand! And a piece of eucalypt I could have found anywhere around my own back yard if I had bothered to look! But then again – no. While I have wanted to make my own wand for some time now, I have been willing to wait (read - *lazy in its sourcing*) for the right stick to make my acquaintance. Tony and I walked the bush paths of the island and I pick up a few sticks but none that felt 'right'. I had seen one at the very beginning of the walk but dismissed it as being too easy and not worthy as I had not paid for it with sore feet, scratches, sunburn and insect bites.

After going through with that trial, I finally picked up my original (why don't I just listen to my inner voice?) stick and took it back to the workshop. A straggly stick of ghost gum soon emerged as a very energized and beautiful magical tool. Ever since, bit by bit, I have been slowly and patiently working on it. Taking my time to get it to what it wants to be. My original ideas as to what it would look like with its interesting sticky-out and knobby bits have been thoroughly and irreversibly changed as this wand slowly takes on a shape and magic all its own. I seem to have little influence on what this particular stick will eventually look like. My hands are guided by what this piece of wood itself wants rather than what I have in mind for it. And I have finally realized that what it wants is its own energy to be enhanced rather than overshadowed, by mine. The natural energy in this particular piece of wood is so strong that it needs little else for empowerment – just a touch of mine for direction.

So, I came away with a feeling of belonging to a very wide-spread, knowledgeable and accepting group of people – and a wand!

- Deb

The 2006 Wiccan Conference was extremely well organised by the Sydney committee and PAN, with a comprehensive program and a schedule which ran pretty much like clockwork.

It was held on an island on the Hawkesbury River - a beautiful location in wonderful surroundings which required a ferry boat trip to get to. The weather was perfect, apart from the last day when high winds brought some of the island's infrastructure undone, buffeting the huge outdoor sail which shaded the market and gathering area, tearing it from its uppermost moorings and dropping it to the ground - fortunately it was at the end of the conference and everyone had already packed up and was safely out of the way.

We arrived at lunchtime on Friday, just in time for lunch! (and I know that Pagan's are obsessed with food, so it's probably good to note that the food was absolutely fantastic and the catering flawless by the island's good natured and helpful staff).

Everyone received a conference envelope with a plan of the island's buildings and a workshop schedule, plus a pretty nifty enamel AWC pin.

Things got underway almost immediately with a series of workshops which included making props for Saturday night's ritual, pagan activism and advocacy, herbalism and several others. The Spring Queen and King were chosen at dinner which was followed by a lively and interesting debate on the topic "That insular practice is outdated". The negative won. More workshops on Saturday both in the morning and afternoon, and we were really spoilt for choice with topics such as the use of crystals in ritual, writing visualisations and pathworkings, acting techniques for ritual and trance drumming plus a few more.

For the Spring Equinox ritual we were split up into elemental groups and then marched down, to the haunting melody of bagpipes, to the ritual space - a huge oval a good walk down hill on a rocky path (which was fine in the dusk, but turned out to be a bit of a challenge for many people during the return journey in the dark - in fact it was the bagpipes calling us home that got us all back in one piece!).

An excellent ritual re-enacting the maiden and the stag myth and it was amazing that more than 100 people could gather in a circle and still manage to raise some interesting energy and focus. A flawless ritual thanks to the Applegrove coveners and their hard work.

A highlight for many would have been the fashion parade on Saturday night where we were given a preview of what every fashion conscious pagan should be wearing.

A choice of four more workshops on Sunday as well as a market where there was a fine array of goods to choose from, a brief moot, lunch and farewells. A great conference, and we're now looking forward to Melbourne in 2007.

And I couldn't resist slipping in a photo of the Three Sisters, who we met on the way to the conference, at Katoomba. They are in the Blue Mountains, about 110km west of Sydney, and their heights range from 906m to 922m.

There is a lovely legend which goes with this rock formation, but for me the most special thing was the overwhelming energy which flowed from them – a special place to visit.

- Nan

In awe of a great man

**MICHAEL LEE-PRICE [THE WAYFINDER] GIVES HIS ACCOUNT OF DR
DAVID SUZUKI'S
ADELAIDE PUBLIC LECTURE ON SEPTEMBER 14, 2006.**

I first heard David Suzuki speak in Canada in the summer of 1980. I was in the audience of his new television program, "The Nature of Things with David Suzuki". Even then, I was inspired by this great man and included him in my list of Mentors. It was because of his vast knowledge of Nature and the Environment that I was inspired in writing my article on Aeonism.

All in all, I have been extremely fortunate to have chosen the five men who inspired me to reach for a greater understanding of Universal law. I thank the Goddess for the creation of men like Karl Marx, Carl Jung, Carl Rogers, Joseph S. Campbell and David Suzuki.

On Thursday, September 14, 2006, I was blessed by the Goddess to be fortunate enough to obtain tickets to his public lecture and managed to obtain tickets even prior to them being released.

It has always been my greatest dream to sit once more at the feet of one of my Mentors and unfortunately most have crossed over to now reside with their ancestors.

I sat in total awe on that wonderful spring night at the Adelaide Convention Centre and listened astutely to the man as he re-visited passages of several of his many books.

David Suzuki knows how to engage an audience; he knows how to relate and address the audience as if he is speaking to you personally. He addresses each part of the room with equal courtesy and talks in a fluid and very articulate manner.

After being awarded his much deserved Doctorate (his nineteenth I believe) from the Vice-Chancellor of Flinders University and after being introduced by Premier Mike Rann, Dr Suzuki started with a reminder of the November 1992 document titled: "World Scientists' Warning to Humanity" which was signed by 1500 senior scientist, more than half of all living Nobel Prize winners, from 71 countries.

He then talked at length about economists, globalisation, global warming, pollution and how these pollutions have caused an escalation of asthma world wide. He spoke about alternative power supplies, such as wind farms and solar power, and about nuclear power and how expensive nuclear power would be to generate electricity for homes. He covered a great deal of information in a very short time.

He was extremely critical of the Bush administration and equally harsh in his comments on the Howard government. Dr Suzuki made a very strong and valid point in saying Australia was extremely rich in resources and need not depend on the economic constraints of other nations, nor be

so readily supportive of other governments' policies especially when it came to environmental issues.

He refreshed the memories of those who had read his book, "Wisdom of the Elders", of the emergence of human beings on this fragile planet. He reminded us "that until recently human beings were a local, tribal species, wherein any individual might meet and know two hundred others and travel within a few square kilometres. We didn't have to worry about another tribe on the other side of the mountain."

He went on to examine the fact that all indigenous people world wide acknowledged the Earth as the Mother; that we all came from the mother and that all life consists of the four sacred elements of Earth, Air, Fire and Water.

To paraphrase his quote: "We are all Air. Human beings are made of the four elements - Earth, Air, Fire and Water. All four elements are of equal importance ... but without air we would not exist ... so why do we destroy our air ... with chemicals and pollutants ... when it is apparent that we are destroying ourselves..."

To emphasise this, Dr Suzuki then mentioned a colleague of his who measured the argon particles in air. Argon particles are an inert element of air. The number of argon particles in a breath of air was calculated to be about two litres, which meant that for every breath of air, we breath in about 38 billion argon particles and breath out the same amount, which then disperse and within five minutes everyone in a room would breath in the same. So technically we are sharing air.

This means that we are all inter-linked by the air we breathe.

David Suzuki concluded his lecture by mentioning "The Nature Challenge" telling us we all can make a difference. You can find out more by visiting this link:
<http://www.davidsuzuki.org/NatureChallenge/>

Listening and watching David Suzuki bounce from one topic to another then bringing it all back to the main message he was conveying was mind-boggling. It was totally mesmerising stuff. He had a captive audience. His presentation was forceful, dynamic and extremely powerful.

As a speaker he knew how to work his audience and his entire presentation was thought provoking, captivating and totally educational.

Thank the Goddess for people like David Suzuki.

ASTROLOGY WITHOUT TEARS – Pluto, The Transformer

Poor Pluto – one of the most powerful forces of our solar system reduced to the status of ‘dwarf planet’. There have been jokes in the Astrological community about people with their Sun sign Scorpio (ruler of Pluto) suddenly losing their power ...

As I mentioned in my previous article on Uranus, the energy of the planet is very much related to what is happening in the world at the time of its discovery. Pluto represents power and dramatic transformation - around 1930 (when Pluto was discovered), fascism and Stalinism was on the rise, as well as major organised crime in the United States and the Depression.

Pluto is the planet of ‘wipe out’. Where Pluto is placed in your birth chart is where your life has (or will be) wiped out so you can start afresh, and look at situations from a new perspective. Death, birth and rebirth are the keywords for this planet.

Pluto is a very slow-moving planet, taking around 248 years to revolve around the Sun, and, due to its erratic orbit, can spend between 12 and 31 years in one sign. Slow-moving planets have the most effect in our lives, causing major changes and shake-ups. Pluto in Libra was the destruction of the marriage and the start of divorce - it destroyed the concept of marriage. We became aware of AIDS when Pluto moved into Scorpio. Pluto is currently in Sagittarius, and will therefore bring out a lot of truths to be discussed.

Pluto is the Roman God of the Underworld – the Greek name is Hades, meaning ‘hidden riches’. UNDERWORLD DEITIES ARE ONES OF INITIATION AND TRANSFORMATION.

Pluto’s story is well known – Pluto/Hades abducts Proserpina/Persephone – her initiation is sudden and violent. Psychologically, Persephone had to go to the Underworld to establish her own identity, and to separate herself from her mother, Ceres/Demeter. When she becomes Queen of the Underworld, she balances Hades, her bright self with his shadow self. Hades is the dark soul of Persephone, just as Persephone is the bright soul of the Underworld, each is necessary. We all need this balance in our lives in order to evolve as spiritual beings.

In this article, I am going to talk about Pluto in the different houses of your Astrological chart – since Pluto is such a slow-moving planet, a lot of people would have it in the same sign, therefore the house placement is more personal. In a natal chart, there are twelve houses in total, each representing a different psychological component of your life.

Pluto in the first house indicates changes regarding your personality and/or appearance. You may be seen as being a powerful person, but you may not feel this way on the inside.

Pluto in the second house could indicate a wipe-out regarding your finances, which may in turn effect your self confidence. You may ‘die’ to an old way of life in order to find what your true gifts and talents really are.

Pluto placed in your third house would indicate a very powerful and intense communicator. You may have been affected by the death of a sibling, or your relationship with your siblings is very intense, and possibly a bit of a power-play.

Pluto in the fourth is a wipe-out of the family, or your views on family life. Many people with this placement have had a falling out with the family, or rebel against traditional family concepts.

Pluto in the fifth house may indicate your life being dramatically transformed through your powerful creative skills, especially with small groups of people. Sometimes this placement can indicate the death of a child.

The sixth house rules health issues and daily work life – Pluto in this house indicates you may be powerful with work colleagues, and your life is transformed by daily work routine. Your challenge is to

recognise the power of the relationship between mind and body – this transformation may occur after a life-threatening illness.

The seventh house rules marriage and partnerships – Pluto in this house usually indicates a marriage break-up, death of a partner, or your life will be transformed by an important relationship.

The eighth house is ruled by Pluto, so this placement is very intense – your life may be deeply transformed through sexual relationships, or shared resources (bank accounts, wills, shared knowledge, etc.). You may have deep death, birth and rebirth experiences throughout your life.

Pluto in the ninth house would indicate transformations that come about through seeing the truth in life through higher education and learning.

The tenth house is connected with your career – with Pluto in this house, you would be seen as being a powerful person within your community, and your life is transformed through your career. You may have had a powerful father.

Pluto on the eleventh would indicate deep, intense friendships, and the ability to transform people’s lives through large groups, causes and organisations.

The twelfth house is hidden, therefore if Pluto is in this house, your power may also be hidden. Your personal power will be realised through exposing your deep psychological issues that are holding you back. On the positive, this can be a very deep, spiritual placement.

Transformations will also occur when transiting Pluto is travelling over a major planet / point in your natal chart, or when a major planet aspects your natal Pluto.

Wipe-outs are good for us – they shake up our old systems of belief, our old routines that are not working for us, and old relationships with people that are not positive. Just be aware that if you don’t make these changes willingly, Pluto may take the reins himself and ‘abduct’ you!

text Michelle Riley

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Foot Notes

PAGANS ON THE MOVE

- by Orbmooth

Our Morialta Falls walk in **August** was about all things Giant.

Strolling up the steep Second Falls trail we were rewarded by a close encounter with a sleepy Koala - how do they not fall out of the tree?

Spring was in the air and we were treated to a parade of beautiful blossoms and a day long musical performance by the birds.

Storm damage reminded us of the awesome power of nature and her ability to reclaim what is hers. The energy at the top of the First Falls is exhilarating and the view of the water running between the ancient boulders mesmerizing. We exercised our vocal chords in the Giants' Cave and then four Goddesses relaxed at the waterfall, with the spray on our faces and scent of mint in the air.

In **September** we walked through the looking glass into the enchanted Mack Creek.

The trail changes often through tuggly Sapling Woods, tranquil Grasslands and olde River Red Gums. We meditated in the sunshine at the second dam then retreated back into the cool for lunch with the company of five friendly and very cute baby Emus.

Later we crossed the road to the 'revamped' Humbug Scrub wildlife sanctuary to hand feed Wallabies and spend some time with a magnificent Red Deer.

October's six hour walk took us from Semaphore beach to Grange Jetty and back. We saved starfish, played with baby fish in the shallow pools, built burial mounds, dug for oil and jumped off the new sand cliffs. By the end of the day we all had wonderfully smooth sore feet, pink cheeks and big smiles.

Novembers walk, (tba), will be somewhere very cool and very short!

In December we will be doing a moon walk in conjunction with Frances's Full Moon Gathering at Grange beach, date tba.

For future walking dates, info or send ideas to Julie at orbmoth@kern.com.au

"Sexual imagery is the strongest recurrent theme in witchcraft. It is the witches' main symbol of integration. In this image, the witch seeks to harmonize with the natural flow of life, as well as to reconcile the intuitive and the rational, the inner and the outer, the passive and the active, within his or her own nature."

- from 'Hedge Witch' by Rae Beth, 1990

Adelaide Pagan Forum

A free event organised by the Pagan Alliance

- **Perceptions of reality – it's all in the mind**

Early in October Vietnamese Zen Buddhism practitioner, **Thich Thông Pháp** spoke gently and eloquently about **Buddhist Meditation**.

He began the evening with a joke about perceptions of reality, and this led to an explanation of Buddhism as an educative practice, rather than a religion.

His talk was based upon the idea of observing the mind in order to cultivate wisdom, clarity, and wholesome behaviour.

"Buddhism is really about mental training," he said.

He covered many areas about Buddhism, including the interconnectedness of all things – a concept that Pagans could readily identify with. He also suggested that the world was a product of our own minds, so the skilful use of our thoughts could lead us to more peaceful, fulfilling lives. It was obvious to everyone this man fully lived his spiritual path!

- Don

The Pagan Forum...

When: the FIRST Tuesday of each month at 8pm.

Where: the function room of The Queens Arms Hotel, 88 Wright Street in the city, near Compton Street.

Contact Don about presenting a talk at the Pagan Forum. Email: don.vicki@ozemail.com.au

To Socialise and have a great meal prior to the meeting, you can join us in the dining room from 6:30pm

ADELAIDE Pagans in the Pub

Discussions, open forums & social interaction. Another free event!

The West Memphis Three

Shortly after three eight-year-old boys were found mutilated and murdered in West Memphis, Arkansas, local newspapers stated the killers had been caught. The police assured the public that the three teenagers in custody were definitely responsible for these horrible crimes. Evidence?

The same police officers coerced an error-filled "confession" from Jessie Misskelley Jr., who is mentally handicapped. They subjected him to 12 hours of questioning without counsel or parental consent, audio-taping only two fragments totaling 46 minutes. Jessie recanted it that evening, but it was too late— Misskelley, Jason Baldwin and Damien Echols were all arrested on June 3, 1993, and convicted of murder in early 1994.

Although there was no physical evidence, murder weapon, motive, or connection to the victims, the prosecution pathetically resorted to presenting black hair and clothing, heavy metal t-shirts, and Stephen King novels as proof that the boys were sacrificed in a satanic cult ritual. Unfathomably, Echols was sentenced to death, Baldwin received life without parole, and Misskelley got life plus 40.

For over 13 years, The West Memphis Three have been imprisoned for crimes they didn't commit. Echols waits in solitary confinement for the lethal injection our tax dollars will pay for. They were all condemned by their poverty, incompetent defense, satanic panic and a rush to judgment – *From the front page of "Free the West Memphis Three" website: www.wm3.org*

Dael was our guest speaker at the September Pagans in the Pub and showed a video documentary of the case and shared her passion about helping the three boys gain justice. She has begun an Australian link for the campaign.

The Lunar Standstill at the Sacred Standing Stones of Callanish, Scotland

On **Tuesday, October 17** we heard about the **Lunar Standstill at the sacred Standing Stones of Callanish, Scotland** with Lynne Sinclair-Wood. Lynne who showed photos of her recent trip to Callanish, Scotland where she led a tour group at the Lunar Standstill. At this special time, the end of a 19 year lunar cycle, the moon can be viewed through the stone circle and be seen to rise through mother earth. This symbolic rising and setting of the moon represents the birth, death and rebirth cycle of life. Lynne says: ""It is all to do with the regeneration of the land, the land is re-energised at the end of a cycle and the beginning of a new one."

GAWLER Pagans in the Pub

Discussions, open forums & social interaction. Another free event!

Connecting with the divine

The subject for September's Gawler Pagans meeting was Gods and Goddesses.

It was lovely to see so many people bring reference books and articles for discussion. There were many different ideas – some had their own “patron” God or Goddess, some gave them names, others just thought of them as thought forms.

We talked about mixing and matching a female and male – was it better to have each from the same area of the world, or didn't they mind?

Some had experience with Deity in Ritual, and spoke about the profound feelings the experience brought, but what we basically came up with was that we all connected to Deity in our own way.

We also performed a simple Ritual for the Equinox at the meeting.

Picnicking with pride

What a perfect Spring day it was for the GawlerPagans Spring Picnic on Sunday, October 22 with people traveling from all directions attending. In all 18 people ranging from a baby to great grandparents joined in the picnic and enjoyed the lovely surroundings.

The area was decorated with colourful scarves and a space designated for Animal Welfare League donations. An information table and another with unconsecrated altar tools and a few books were also set up.

There was no denying that we were there to celebrate Spring and all the glorious colours she brings to our lives. Tamzin and Tom brought along a beautiful purple and silver, satin pentagram flag which was hung in the trees behind us.

The scarves tied around the huge gum under which the picnic table was set disturbed the bull ants, who soon came out in swarms to investigate, even dropping from the leaves overhead. We moved a little away from their domain, still wanting the dappled shade of the giant gum, only to have them follow us - obviously drawn by the yummy cakes!

Donations were steadily added throughout the day as each person arrived and contributed blankets and food. Kids played on the playground equipment, kicked balls around, climbed or hid in the trees and had a great free time while parents enjoyed the relaxing and safe atmosphere of the beautiful Apex Park with its benches, gums and Morton Bay Figs.

I brought along a selection of drums and Nan and I played a little during the day, but there was more talk and social chit

Everyone helped to cast the circle, then a black and a white candle were lit to symbolise the balance between dark and light.

Some Nigella seeds were sown in a little pot of earth. (Nigella is a pretty blue flower known as “Love-in-the-Mist”). Water was consecrated, and poured onto the soil and seeds. The pot was passed around the circle and everyone poured some of the new season's energy into it. These flowers should grow SO well!

We performed a healing while in Circle, and then extinguished the candles. They are going to Ireland with Robyn, to help balance the energy there.

It was a very lovely warm Ritual, symbolising our group's unity and balance.

As always, we ended up with coffee and cake – now that's a FABULOUS way to connect with the divine!

- Tamzin

chat than anything else with people being happy to just sit and relax with good friends and good conversation. We discussed Beltaine, May Moon Madness 2007, the 2006 Australian Wiccan Conference and the theatrics of ritual.

Towards the late afternoon a small blessing was given over the donation haul. A blessing of thanks for the goodies; asking for healing and well-being energy for the animals who receive them and also for responsible pet ownership for the people who have pets and/or who are thinking of getting one in the future. And did anyone else notice the two white doves that came out and joined us for the blessing? Circling above and then roosting in the giant (bull ant laden) gum while the photo was taken.

We all moved up towards the Morton Bay fig tree and out of the way of the bull ants that had, in the few moments we were away blessing our animal donations, quite thickly taken over picnic blankets. As soon as the ants made their appearance I should have realised to go to the Morton Bay Fig – but no sunshine, no dappled shade and not a lot of lush grass didn't seem too inviting at the time. All this also meant NO ANTS either and we probably should have thought about that earlier! Ah well, live and learn – can someone remind me about this next time please?

The picnic ended at around 5pm with everyone saying they had had a lovely, relaxing and fun time.

Donations of blankets and linen and dry or tinned dog and cat food can still be handed in at the Adelaide Pagan Forum on November 7.

- Deb

When: last Tuesday evening each month, 7.30pm, unless otherwise advised. Wherever possible, when meetings fall on or close to a sabbat, we will celebrate and acknowledge the time of year.

Where: Cafe Nova (upstairs) in Gawler – 19 Murray Street, next to the Gawler Cinema.

Contact Kerry on 8254 2721 for more details; or email Nan: touchwood8@bigpond.co

