



The Simmering Cauldron Newsletter

Ostara
2017

A mystical and magical resource based in Mid Wales

Shop address – 7 Shortbridge Street, Newtown, Powys, SY16 2LW

Witchcraft Museum, Boscastle

This year, whilst in Bude for the Devon and Cornwall Pagan Conference, we visited the Museum of Witchcraft in Boscastle. This is the first time we have been there since the new curators took over from Graham King and since our friend Ian Steele's regalia was put on display there after his death. The museum is packed with fascinating objects; the focus of which is traditional Cornish witchcraft. Amongst the things that fascinate me most are witch bottles and spirit houses.

The traditional witch bottle has been used for centuries in Cornwall and many other parts of the country. Created by the cunning man or wise woman, it was a stoneware vessel, filled with all sorts of noxious ingredients and stoppered with wax. It's purpose was to repel bad magic and return it to the sender. The bottle would be filled with pins, rusty nails and thorns, topped off with the urine of the bewitched person. The bottle would then be taken home and placed in the chimney of the victim's home and as the heat from the fire warmed the contents, pain would be caused to the original spell caster. The idea was that this person would be discovered and called to account, or that the pain would result in them calling off the curse. If you decide to make this kind of charm, make sure it is hidden well away from prying eyes!

A modern version of the witch bottle can be used to protect the home from unwanted or undesirable spirits. A glass bottle is filled with beads, threads, pins and any other tiny objects: it is then corked and sealed with wax. The idea is that the spirits are drawn to the brightly coloured contents and are then distracted or confused, thus leaving your home and contents alone. Spirits are naturally drawn to bright shiny things



and cannot resist the urge to count endlessly the threads and beads with which the bottle is filled. The advantage of the modern 'witch bottle' is that it can be left on display, usually on a mantel piece or window sill, where it has the maximum 'attract and distract' effect. The effectiveness of these bottles is in the sheer number that have been found and the number of consultations that have been recorded between afflicted people and the local witch, cunning man or wise woman!

A further tip on making these bottles is the 'feel' of the house. If, for example it feels cold and unwelcoming, use 'warm' coloured beads and threads, thus adding the power of colour magick to the charm.

Next newsletter, I will discuss the use of the spirit house.

Angela

Clun Green Man Festival Bank Holiday Monday - 1st May



A fantastic enactment of the start of summer on the bridge (midday) followed by a parade through the town and fair in the castle grounds.

See you there

India



Our recent tour of India was not so much a holiday as a complete overwhelming of the senses. Looking back at photographs barely does justice to the memories as all five senses are needed. The BBC programme 'The Real Marigold Hotel' (we spent 5 days in Kerala) helps a little as we saw most of the sights visited in the programme.

My plan was to write a short piece on our experiences but it proved impossible - you just have to see it for yourself!

We've been shopping since getting back!

This has included incense, dragons, fairies, oils, books and several new deities.



The deities include two Pans (larger one gone already) Brigid, Morrigan, Loki and Herne. They have joined Danu and King of the Wildwood figurines all crafted in 'Cold cast bronze'. The technique used for making items in cold cast bronze, involves blending bronze powder with epoxy designer resin to produce a material which is applied to the interior of a silicone mould. The mould is then filled with a blend of resin and bronze metal powder which are then left to set. Whilst 'hot cast bronze' (metal) is very nice (and expensive) much finer detail is obtained using a cold casting as can be seen on our figurines.

So lots of new stuff to peruse on your next visit to the shop – don't leave it too long!



**Fantastic
New**

Cauldron Card offer

(Offer subject to conditions)



FREE

**Simmering Cauldron
'Squiggle' Pen**

When spending over £10

Don't forget to flash your CC when you shop!

Our Diary

Newtown shop opening hours	Tuesday – Friday 10.00 – 5.00 Saturday 10.00 – 4.00
Notice - We endeavour to keep the Shop open whilst we are away attending events or on holiday but this may not always be possible. We apologise for any inconvenience this may cause	
Monday 1 st May	Clun Green Man festival, Clun, Shropshire