

## Minutes from The Geomancy Group meeting on 22 April 2002 during the Roslin weekend.

As the meeting had been postponed until the last day, it was felt there was insufficient time available for a full talking stick circle. This meeting was held over lunch in the hotel bar...

### **Group Identity: are we clear as a Group about how we want to appear to outsiders and clients?**

After some discussion, it seemed clear from this weekend that we already have some sort of identity to those outside the Group. We were clearly perceived favourably as a group by both the hotel and Jim Munro, our tour guide for the chapel.

There was some discussion as to whether the Group could serve both those wishing to undertake full geomantic training and those whose interests are more varied. We eventually agreed that this is indeed the case and that we should all be aware of this and accommodate the differences. Summarising everyone's comments, Patrick suggested that our declaration of Group identity should be "as a forum for the study, practice, discussion and promotion of geomancy and geomantic awareness". Everyone seemed generally in agreement with this, and this will be included in the Group brochure.

**Brochure & logo:** Grahame produced some mock-up brochures for everyone to have a look at, with the intention that we could have some generalised handouts that would explain in broad terms what geomancy was about and the kind of services we offer, without going into too much depth and without mentioning charges. But they would carry the name of the Group, with individual contact details added as required. The general look and feel of the brochure was liked, but there were differences over content. However, many constructive suggestions were made.

People are pretty evenly divided on the logo design, with many feeling that the background gold line appears to strike out the words, whilst others seemed happy with it. Grahame said he would make some changes to the design, ranging from attempting to make the line less prominent and/or making the letters look raised, to alternatives with the text above the line. (Done) We did make some progress in establishing that the basic design has merit and can probably be amended to suit everyone. Five versions of the design are currently on view on the new forum.

Some people couldn't see themselves using the brochure, as they didn't feel it relevant enough to their own work. Grahame offered to customise it as far as possible to individuals, including their contact details and their own pictures if required. If a suitable file-sharing format could be found, the DTP files could then be sent to individuals for them to get it printed at their local bureau. There was a certain amount of resistance to excessive customisation as a number of people felt that there should be some uniformity in the overall appearance of the brochure, with only the individual contact details being different.

Sally suggested some changes to the actual text (now implemented).

It was felt that the idea of including other skills of the Group was perhaps not a good idea, as it serves only to muddy the waters over what our geomancy is about. Furthermore peoples' special skills will continue to evolve anyway and we want to ensure that clients have up-to-date information.

It was also suggested that we should consider the use of recycled paper for the brochure. Grahame did point out that this may compromise the print quality of the photographs, but promised to look into it.

**Bank account:** John has been looking into the bank account options. If we want an account with a cheque book, it appears that we have to be properly constituted with office-bearers and all the other frills of bureaucracy. We have indicated at previous meetings that everyone would like to retain our present loose structure if possible. However, it appears this is not an option if we want the ability to write our own cheques. Further investigation is promised, but for the purposes of further exploration of a NatWest chequing account, Maria was elected Chair, with Grahame as Vice-Chair and Sara as Secretary. A proper constitution has still to be produced, but Patrick's suggested "aims of the Group" is a good step towards this.

The current situation with the building society account, though unwieldy, seemed to function adequately during the weekend. Many of the pre-written building society cheques were for incorrect amounts due to Nicola's absence, but John coped admirably with this, although he inevitably had to process a lot of transactions through his own account, which is hardly ideal.

**Opening the Group to Others:** The Roslin weekend was the perfect time to discuss this as we had Barry along as our guest. Although only a few of us knew him at all beforehand, he blended in incredibly well with the group energy. His presence caused a couple of people who had previously resisted opening the group, to embrace the idea wholeheartedly. Patrick also contributed an outline of the Maple Dragon model. Their experience is that while others being admitted initially diluted the energy a little, it has ultimately been a very positive thing for the group and it is a course of action that he would heartily endorse. Although we have yet to examine the parameters that we might establish for enlargement, it looks as though we have reached consensus that it is the way forward for the Group. The suggestion that we might have some meetings reserved for founding members was rejected as being divisive. Barry has indicated that he would love the opportunity to join us again and Ros Briagha has also indicated a strong interest in joining the Group.

**Website:** Barry informed us that he has found a new, third party community area on the internet that has many more features than our current forum, including the ability to share files and pictures, a chat room, and a calendar, and suggested that we move over to it. It is currently free, and carries no advertising. It's also a totally private set-up as you have to be invited to join. (Since returning, M, G, B, J & S have been playing with this new facility and customising it to meet our requirements, and are generally very impressed with it. The rest of the Group will be invited to join it very soon).

Barry offered to take some of the pressure off Maria by putting our website together for us, and this was enthusiastically received. Although the new online community serves many of our needs within the Group, it is felt that we still need a public presence on the Internet. (Grahame has since suggested that the old forum could be linked to the website and used as our public interface, where people can ask questions and get advice in the manner of the MAG forum.)

A reminder then, that we still need pictures and content for the website. Pictures of your sacred space, ideas for things we should have on the site, and so on. Please contact Maria or Grahame.

**Communications:** We are all concerned that group communication is not all that it might be between meetings and this is something that Maria and Grahame would really like to improve. It seems that the new forum presents a remarkable opportunity in this respect, as it will allow us to have online conferences etc. Maria has consistently been resistant to moving to an entirely web-based solution, as it would seem to exclude those who cannot use computers, nor prefer not to do so. However, after much discussion, and input from Jamie on behalf of those in this category, it was agreed that we would indeed move our operations online, with the occasional phone call to fill in anyone outside the system. It would also seem a good idea to have more telephonic communication in any case. We also confirmed that anyone wishing to receive the Newsletter should pay the £10 subscription fee. It remains to be seen if this is an annual fee (unlikely), a quarterly fee or if we perhaps need to contribute £5 per month for ongoing expenses.

**Upcoming Events: Cornwall** Nicola has already done a lot of work researching this weekend and we would like to express our thanks for this. However as she didn't make it to Roslin at the last minute, there wasn't much new information to share. Unfortunately, there wasn't an overwhelming enthusiasm for this trip from the people present due to the most popular dates (5-7 July) being unsuitable for most people there, but Maria is going to investigate this further with Nicola and we will probably have a phone poll to try and get a definitive answer on this one. Clearly accommodation will need to be booked very soon if we do wish to go.

**Summer Camp:** This looks exceedingly dubious at the moment, as there didn't seem to be much interest in holding it in August, which had seemed the most suitable time from the questionnaire responses.

**Ros' stone circle build for the Welsh Green Gathering:** Not much news to report on this, as Ros is still searching for suitable stones. She thinks it likely that, given the time constrictions, the circle will be constructed with smallish stones, allowing a 2-3 day build time.

**Earth-Healing School:** Ali has again offered her course event weekends to the Group as was mentioned in the newsletter. Those that she currently considers of special interest to our group include: 'Creative

Earth Healing and Nature Spirits – Earth Art and Creative Communion’ with Marty Caine in Cornwall 25-27 May 2002, ‘Chakras in the Landscape – Landscape Temples, the Europa Line and Global Grid Activation’ with Peter Dawkins in Pembrokeshire 4-7 July 2002, and ‘Alignments, Astronomy, Astrology – Astro-drama, Cycles, Lunar & Solar Alignments, Ceremony & Attunements’ with Ros Briagha in Glastonbury 13-15 September 2002.

**Global Geomancy Gathering:** Maria and Grahame reported having been invited to the advance planning meeting for this, though regrettably neither was able to attend due to the short notice given. Suzie Lee-Vickers has promised to keep us updated on further developments. On Friday 27 September, there will be an informal dinner and forum for working geomancers, followed by the main conference on Saturday and Sunday. These two days will be open to anyone interested in geomancy.

**Samhain 2002:** The proposition that we hold the Samhain Group weekend in Derbyshire, facilitated by Ali and taught by Patrick, met with general approval. Theme is proposed to be Celestial Mechanics with emphasis on the lunar cycle – Grahame has offered to do a workshop on this, with possible orthographic projection revision, and including several site visits to nearby stone circles to demonstrate approaches to analysing such sites and more nature spirit work from Patrick. Patrick has also offered to teach something about EM and air quality in buildings, and how to correct problems. Ali has done some initial groundwork on this regarding a possible venue that has a limited amount of accommodation across the courtyard available for hire separately, with other cottages, B&Bs etc in the locality. The brief outline of this given on the agenda may have been misleading. The hire cost of the venue was £200, with £400 (weekly rate) being the hire charge for the cottage (sleeps 5) as it’s peak period due to half-term holidays. However this proposal has become somewhat redundant because of our experience over the weekend. There was a general feeling that having the Group all staying together had worked wonders for cohesiveness over the Roslin weekend, and this is something that we should strive to continue. Suggestion has been passed back to Ali to see what the alternatives are. Assuming that there isn’t a substantial change in costs, Ali estimates that the cost for the weekend will be in the region of £210 plus Friday night’s dinner and transport, based on 10 attendees. We would like to thank Ali for putting this together for us.

Dates for this are also still floating as Patrick is due to be a father at the end of September. The initially proposed dates of 18 – 20 October may be too close for comfort, and it was suggested that we try and put this back a weekend to 26-28 October, when Patrick is also available. A phone poll will be held to try and resolve this ASAP as early accommodation booking is needed.

**Patrick’s other dates** in 2003 are 26-27 April, 12-13 July, 6-7 September, 25-26 October, and 1-2 November. We haven’t confirmed dates for his two teaching weekends yet, but these are worth pencilling in the diary. We also hope that he may be able to join us in his role as group member on occasion. Please get back to us as soon as possible to notify us of any dates that you may already have booked in for next year. This will allow us to schedule all our meets to facilitate attendance by as many members of the group as possible. It looks as though we will have four main weekends, with the Annual Meeting scheduled to coincide with the Samhain gathering.

**Imbolc 2003:** Ros Briagha is very keen to host a group weekend over Imbolc (31 Jan – 2 Feb). The venue would be Brithdir Mawr in Wales where she has been building her most recent stone circle. The theme of the weekend would be astrology and ceremonial space construction; looking at what’s happening astrologically and then designing a temporary sacred space using local materials to hold a new moon ceremony on the Saturday night. It would be an ideal opportunity to put our training into practice. There is also a Sweat Lodge available for our private use that weekend. We would like to point out that the Sweat Lodge is entirely optional. Although most of the group participating are likely to be naked as the traditional ceremony calls for, anyone who prefers to do so may wear a swimming costume. Accommodation for the weekend will be in the youth hostel (that also serves as the venue). This sleeps 12 and has cooking facilities. Local B&B accommodation is available for those that require it, though as was said earlier it would be ideal if we could have everyone under one roof.

Reports from Absent Members: Maryrose and Pam sent greetings; Paul’s contribution on the discussion document was read out and supportive messages were received from Tony and Sig.

*Minutes processed by Grahame and Maria.*