

Geomancy Group meeting 10/12 September 2002

Present: Maria, Grahame, Sally, Susie (10th only)

No particular agenda was set for this meeting, but the general direction of thoughts seemed to be towards the future of The Geomancy Group, and the feeling that we should focus on proposals to be discussed and ratified at the Samhain meeting. The ad-hoc agenda evolved roughly as follows:

- **Community Zero charges – do we like it enough to pay for it, or should we go elsewhere?**
- **Other administration costs**
- **Subscription fees**
- **Outline proposal for membership categories**
- **Dates for 2003**

Community Zero charges: This was largely thrust upon us by the announcement from Community Zero that they were to commence charging for use of the forum. Since this has been presented to us with little warning, it was felt that an executive decision was required in the short term in order for us to be able to continue using the forum. A fuller report of this has been posted on the forum and emailed out to all forum users, but the end result of it means that we have forum hosting charges of roughly \$20 per month to consider. Those present were in agreement that the enhanced storage facilities and privacy offered by the CZ forum make it worth staying with, at least in the short term. However, not everyone may agree with this policy, particularly since some people have trouble getting into the CZ forum in the first place. Sig, who falls into that category, has since suggested that we should return to using the old MEG forum, which although boasting none of the file-storage or other features of CZ, does have the big advantage of being free. This is certainly worth considering, although the forum is now used as the message board for our public website www.geomancygroup.org. It can only be perceived as taking a technological step backwards; but it is worth thinking about. Barry could probably set up a separate message board for us, and we could use surplus capacity on the website to post any files that need to be shared, as "hidden" pages.

Other administration costs: We looked at some of the other administration costs that have been incurred over the past year. Many of these relate to our internet activities including domain name registration and hosting fees, but there are significant paper and postage costs involved in sending out newsletters to everyone. If we opt to keep our forum with Community Zero, the annual recurring charges are in the region of £350. Clearly our current ad-hoc 'subscription' of £10 per year is not going to be sufficient to cover this. This conversation led to...

Subscription fees: The question is; what level of subscription **should** we levy? Some members are more active than others; is it fair that those who only want to receive the newsletter, who may have little or no interest in using the forum, website or proposed brochures should pay over the odds to support those who **are** interested in such things?

It was felt that we should consider introducing different levels of subscription to reflect this. After a very rough estimate of the comparative annual costs, we came up with suggestions of £25 and £50, although these figures will need a more rigorous examination before anything is decided.

Maria has felt for some time that perhaps we needed to have a notional 'split' in the Group between 'practitioners' and 'non-active' members, perhaps even setting up a 'commercial' arm to cover this.

Although some of us are keen to do see the Group as a semi-commercial presence; that may not apply to everyone. Perhaps such a measure is still some way down the road.

Outline Proposal for Membership categories: The question was also raised of whether we should consider outside applications to join the Group, and if so, how best to handle things. This led to a very interesting and lengthy discussion on membership options. We

What we came up with as a proposal divides the membership onto four categories:

Firstly, the foundation of the group comprises everyone who did the course in Glastonbury. That will never change. Even if people choose to pay nothing towards a subscription, they will always be part of the Group energy, and should receive, at minimum, a yearly digest of some sort and current contact list. However, non-paying members of this category would have no voting rights at AGMs.

The second category would be people who are not interested in practicing professionally, in which case they should not have to pay for the 'publicity' functions like the website or brochures etc; but who still want to keep in touch via the forum, receive the newsletter and attend some meetings. This level would carry a minimal subscription fee, and members would have voting rights.

The third category would be for those interested in practicing professionally, and would have the highest subscription rate to cover things like the public website including personal pages on that, forum, brochures and so on. Members of this category would have voting rights.

A fourth category would be for outsiders that want to join the group. They would pay the same subscription as the second category, have moderated access to the forum, receive newsletters and be able to attend meetings. They would not have voting rights however. New members would have to be approved by a Group majority, and would undergo a probationary period of at least a year and a day (during which time they must have attended at least two Group meetings), whereupon a vote would be taken to decide if they are allowed to be full members of the Group.

Sally proposed that we do not assign any hierarchical name structure to the categories, allowing people to choose which level they want to subscribe at without feeling there was any implication of one or other category being "better" than others. Grahame suggested perhaps four tree names, such as ash, rowan, willow and birch?

Ria – that's about as far as I've got. The rest is notes that need to be integrated/ expanded...

Confirmed dates for 2003: Imbolc, 31 Jan – 2 April, with Ros. Astrology, ceremony, creation of sacred space. Sweat lodge. Location- Brithdir Mawr, Wales.

Proposed Dates for 2003: Beltaine 25-27 April, with Patrick. Suggested themes; Creativity/ storytelling/ EMFs. Astronomy – Grahame's Celestial Mechanics workshop? Location – Avebury?
11-13 July. Suggestions wanted for teacher and theme. Possibly more astrology with Ros?
Samhain 24-26 October. Patrick available. Possible Iona retreat??

Other stuff: Level of payment for teachers, especially if they are Group members. Usually dependent on energy exchange, an intuitive approach usually works best...

Public selection of practitioners from website – do we assign according to best ability, or do people choose who they want?

- We don't put practitioner locations on website, but 'areas covered'. Clients can then choose who they feel is best, or can ask that we assign someone to them. If no clear candidates are obvious, we can make a short list and draw names out of a hat if need be. This is probably the most impartial method.

Sally suggested that practitioners could opt to contribute a small voluntary percentage of their fees to Group funds for work that is sourced in this way (through a website referral).