

Goddess Temple Bellingham

# Late Summer 2026

## Lughnasadh

On Gumbaynggirr Country

Artist: František Dvořák



# Late Summer

This festival, held at the midpoint between summer solstice and autumn equinox, is the first of three harvest festivals.



It is also known as Lughnasadh and is traditionally held on the 1st/2nd February in the southern hemisphere. It is a time when the abundance of the earth goddess in her aspect as Grain Mother, Harvest Mother, Harvest Queen, Earth Mother, is celebrated.

We have entered the season of waning light and waxing dark. The portal to the dark half of the year began with summer solstice. With Earth's tilt, we move away from the sun, and each sunrise moves slowly northwards on the horizon again.

We celebrate the abundance and its passing into the period of decomposition and rest - the turning back inward and into our deeper self. We begin to feel the call to let go, to begin the retreat into darkness for restoration and replenishment.

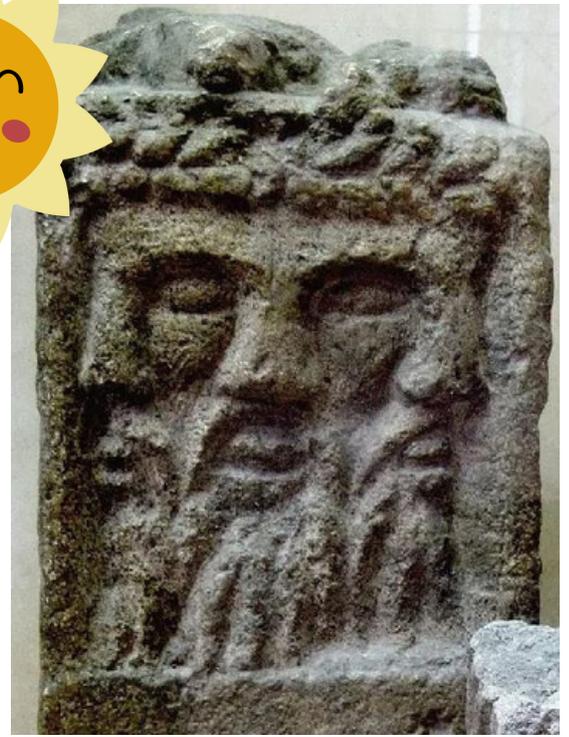
There is a season for all things. Through the light half of the year success, progress, and busy-ness are celebrated. But it is not possible to maintain that level of abundant creativity indefinitely without cost. Now is the time for celebrating ending, when the grain and the fruit is harvested. We remember the Dark Mother, She who nourishes us with Her embrace, and Her soft wise whispers as we begin to lean into the quiet, fallow time to come.



Now is the time for figs  
- oldest and most  
beloved food of  
Goddess cuisine.  
Lush, sweet and  
fecund.

Associated with the procreative power  
of the goddess since the Neolithic.  
Egyptian mother goddess Hathor was  
said to have emerged from a mystic fig  
tree, as did Inanna - Ishtar in  
Mesopotamia. Some speculate that it  
was the fig which tempted Eve in the  
Garden, not the apple

# folklore



Lughnasadh (pronounced LOO-nah-sah) combines 'Lugh', the Celtic god of nobility, and 'nasadh', meaning a gathering or assembly. Lughnasadh celebrates the grain harvest and was a time for fairs, games, feasts, and ritual offerings, often held on sacred hilltops.

Lugh was one of a set of triplets, all of whom had the same name, but he was the only sibling to survive - beautiful to behold and fair. The Irish god of nobility, Lugh was a master of crafts and a cunning warrior. He is often depicted with three faces.



There may have been two roots for the name 'Lugh.' Most modern scholars think that it derives from the Proto Indo-European root word 'leugh' which means 'to bind by oath.' This ties in with the theories that he was also the god of oaths, truth, and contracts. Earlier scholars theorized that his name derived from the root word 'leuk.' It was also a Proto Indo-European word that meant 'flashing light,' giving rise to speculation that Lugh may have been a sun god at some point.

Lugh Lámfota, or Lugh of the Long Arm (referring to his magical sword, which none could stand against) is known as a brave warrior, a wise king, and a master of many skills. He is also called Samildánach "Skilled in All the Arts". He could sing and play the harp, he could work as a smith and with wood, and he was skilled in war and healing.



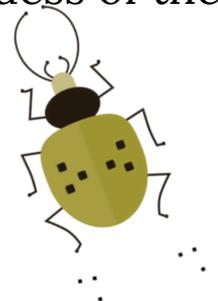
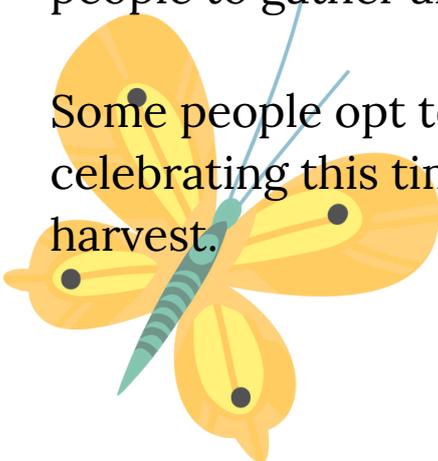
Artist: Shelly Mooney

Lughnasadh marks not only the beginning of harvest, but also the mythical funeral games Lugh held in honour of his foster mother and earth goddess, Tailtiu. These athletic games also named Tailteann or Óenach Tailten were similar to ancient Greek Olympic games.



Tailtiu, with her supernatural might, felled great forests to make way for the transition to agriculture. When her feat was complete, she lay down and died of exhaustion - a mother, a wife, a land goddess and an exhausted woman whose final wish was for her people to gather and thrive.

Some people opt to see Tailtiu as an alternative to Lugh in celebrating this time of year, and choose her as the goddess of the harvest.

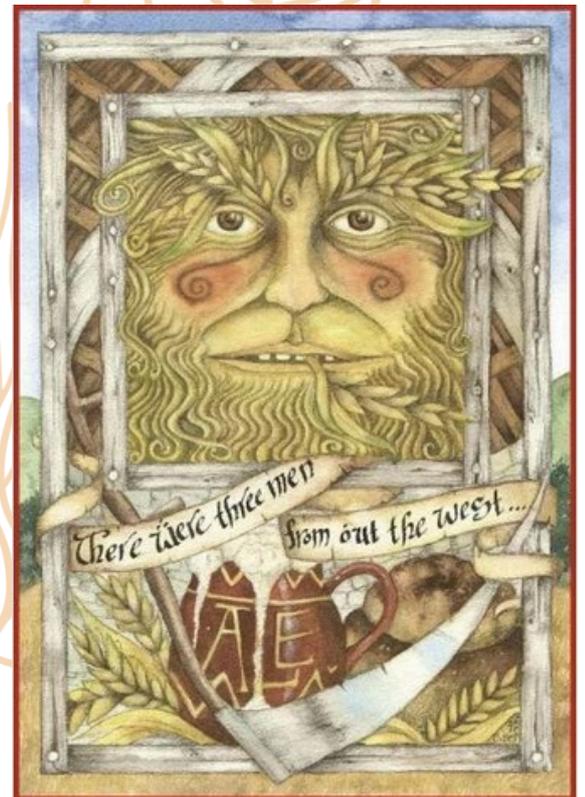


# folklore



Another name used for Lughnasadh is “Lammas”, from the old-anglosaxon “hlaef-mass” (loaf mass, mass where the first loaf of bread is consecrated), which developed into the later medieval English and Scottish “Lammas”. As such it is first mentioned in old anglo-saxon chronicles as early as 921 CE as “Feast of the First Fruits”. In an agricultural society the beginning of the harvest was a natural occasion to celebrate and to give thanks to the Divine for Its gifts.

In English folklore, John Barleycorn is a character who represents the crop of barley harvested each autumn. Equally as important, he symbolizes the wonderful drinks which can be made from barley—beer and whiskey—and their effects. In the traditional folksong, John Barleycorn, the character of John Barleycorn endures all kinds of indignities, most of which correspond to the cyclic nature of planting, growing, harvesting, and then death. Ultimately, the character of John Barleycorn is a metaphor for the spirit of grain, grown healthy and hale during the summer, chopped down and slaughtered in his prime, and then processed into beer and whiskey so he can live once more.



Grain has held a place of importance in civilization back nearly to the beginning of time. Grain became associated with the cycle of death and rebirth. The Sumerian god Tammuz was slain and his lover Ishtar grieved so heartily that nature stopped producing. Ishtar mourned Tammuz, and followed him to the Underworld to bring him back, similar to the story of Demeter and Persephone.

Lammas revolved around the cutting of the first grain or cereal crops including wheat, barley, rye and oats. The first sheaf would often be ceremonially cut at dawn and baked into a 'harvest bread' shared at community feasts. The last sheaf was often made into a 'corn dolly' representing the goddess and she was placed above the fireplace or hearth of the home, to bring blessings of abundance and prosperity.



For many cultures, the breaking of bread is symbolic of peace and hospitality. Once you have welcomed someone into your home and you have eaten bread together, you're far less likely to kill one another. In parts of Norway, boys and girls who share bread from the same loaf are destined to fall in love and marry.



It's become a custom to give people the gift of a pair of gloves at Lughnasadh. In part it's because winter is just around the corner, but it's also related to an old tradition where landowners gave their tenants a pair of gloves after the harvest. The glove is a symbol of authority and benevolence.

# folklore



Artist Unknown

Thor's wife, Sif, had beautiful golden hair, until Loki the prankster cut it off. Thor was so upset he wanted to kill Loki, but some dwarves spun new hair for Sif, which grew magically as soon as it touched her head. The hair of Sif is associated with the harvest, and the golden grain that grows every year.

Late Summer is also the time of the Wise Old Woman - Hecate, Medusa, Erishkagal, Lilith - who accepts what has gone before. She is the divine compassionate one, She creates space to be.



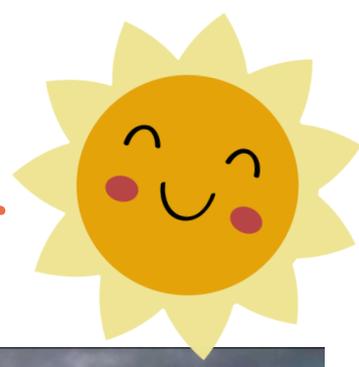
Artist: Rima Staines

In Slavic folklore, decrepit Baba Yagá might be a maternal effigy fashioned from straw that was also identified in some traditions with the summertime Pleiades star cluster. The constellation's bright appearance portended favorable harvests. Baba Yagá appears ambiguously in agrarian folklore as both guardian of crops and as ogress who could withhold humanity's bounty from the earth. For this reason the "Old Woman" existed in the fearsome twilight between nature and culture, said to dwell in the unfenced borderlands separating field and forest.



What better way to celebrate the first harvest than getting together with friends and enjoying all the fruits of the harvest. Include bread, wine or ale, or sparkling grape juice.

# Celebrating Late Summer



With gardens full of produce, a potluck is perfect for a late summer feast. Cook up a feast to celebrate first harvest.



Bake and bless bread. If you have the tools, grind enough grain to make a loaf. Break bread with friends, or make an offering to the land giving thanks for all that you have harvested this year



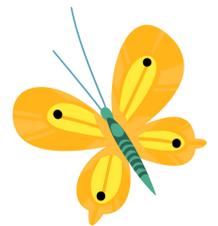
Do a meditation with Peridot, enjoy a Lammas tea blend, or perhaps donate to a local shelter or community food bank.

To dress yourself in seasonal talismans is to clothe your body as you would an altar, with reverence, beauty, and meaning. In this, you become the altar. A living invocation of the season itself.

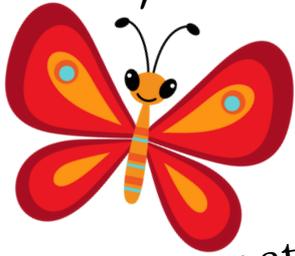
This Roman festival was held on the 17<sup>th</sup>



**Women prepared for the Nemoralia by washing their hair**



Celebrate the god Lugh, master craftsman and warrior. Enjoy a day at a craft fair, or learn a new craft. Practise or share your own craft skills.



Host or attend games and competitions – Athletic contests, horse racing, and tests of strength were held in Lugh's honour.



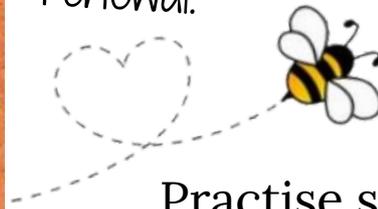
Consider these questions, and maybe journal your answers.  
'What within you is seed?'  
'What within you is chaff?'  
'What is the blessing of your harvest?'

In this season, it's time to begin reaping what we have sown throughout the past few months, and recognize that the bright summer days will soon come to an end. We celebrate our achievements and our progress - the harvest of our endeavours.



Artist: Cindy Paulson

Giving back part of the harvest to the earth or river honours the natural cycle of life, death, and renewal.



Practise seed saving from all those plants going to seed. Giving thanks for the bounty.



# INDIGENOUS WISDOM



Here on Gumbaynggirr land we are moving from Galaagaarr (hot) to Yarrawirrga which encompasses March, April and May.

*This is the time we think of as high summer, which corresponds with the end of the 'summer' holidays and the return to school and work.*

*Prior to colonisation Indigenous people would light fires to regenerate the land through carefully controlled burning, which created fertilizing ash and enable small animals to be hunted.*

*Like the Goddess Kali, the fires have a creative side, along with the destruction, in regenerating the land. "Seasons of the Goddess"*

*Dr Tricia Sziron*



From Facebook Page Dance of the Plants (Kulin Nation)...

When they [dragonflies] appear at the beginning of the season it tells us it is a time to harvest fish and yams. Aboriginal grandmothers use the dragonflies to test babies' hearing. They catch the dragonfly making them buzz near the babies' ears. When the baby responds, we know that they have good hearing. If not, the elders bring the dragonfly closer so the baby can feel the vibration and sound of its wings, then they sing to the spirits and the dragonfly to help the newborn to grow and be able to communicate. Dragonfly represents transformation and family.



# Correspondences

## Elements

Harvest  
Bounty  
Plentifulness  
Purification  
Change  
Sickles/Scythes  
Corn dollies



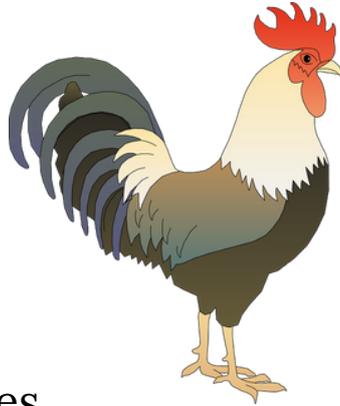
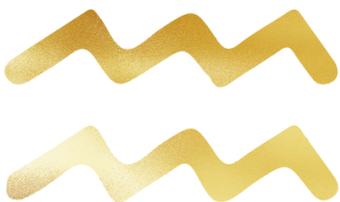
## Incense

Frankincense  
Basil  
Rose  
Sandalwood



## Colours

Deep Greens  
Deep Orange  
Golden Yellow  
Bronze  
Light Brown



## Animals

Rooster  
Crow  
Calves  
Stags

## Food

Bread  
Corn  
Berries  
Nuts  
Beer  
Wheat  
Barley  
Jams



## Deities

Demeter  
Pomona  
Lugh  
Parvati  
Tammuz



## Crystals

Carnelian  
Tigers Eye  
Adventurine  
Citrine  
Obsidian



## Plants

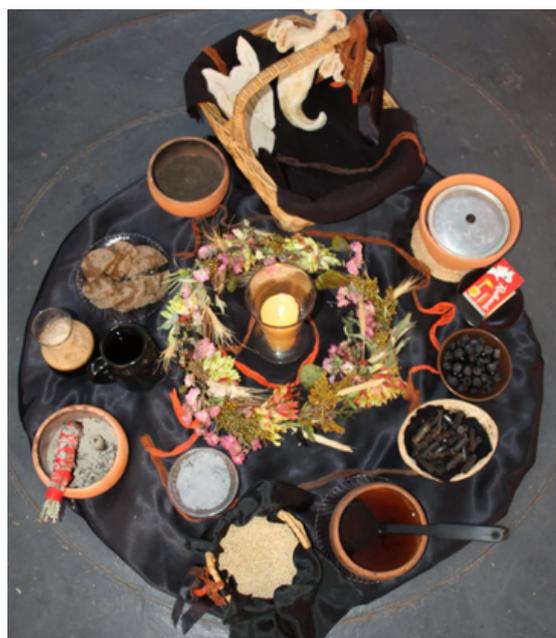
Peony  
Marigold  
Echinacea  
Rosemary  
Hops  
Corn  
Sunflower  
Vervain





Lammas is a welcoming of the Dark in all its complexity: and as with any funerary moment, there is celebration of the life lived (enjoyment of the harvest) – a “wake,” and there is grieving for the loss. One may fear it, which is good reason to make ceremony, to go deeper, to commit to the Mother, who is the Deep; to “make sacred” this emotion, as much as one may celebrate the hope and wonder of Spring, its opposite. If Imbolc/Early Spring is a nurturing of new young life, Lammas may be a nurturing/midwifing of death or dying to small self, the assent to larger self, an expansion or dissipation – further to the radiance of Summer Solstice. Whereas Imbolc is a Bridal commitment to being and form, where we are the Promise of Life; Lammas may be felt as a commitment marriage to the Dark within, as we accept the Harvest of that Promise, the cutting of it. We remember that the Promise is returned to Source. “The forces which began to rise out of the Earth at the festival of Bride now return at Lammas.”<sup>[i]</sup>

Creativity is called forth when an end (or impasse) is reached: we can no longer rely on our small self to carry it off. We may call Her forth, this Creative Wise Dark One – of the Ages, when our ways no longer work.



We are not individuals, though we often think we are. We are Larger Self, subjects within the Subject.<sup>[ii]</sup> And this is a joyful thing. We do experience ourselves as individuals and we celebrate that creativity at Imbolc. Lammas is the time for celebrating the fact that we are part of, in the context of, a Larger Organism, and expanding into that. Death will teach us that, but we don't have to wait – it is happening around us all the time, we are constantly immersed in the process, and everyday creativity is sourced in this subjectivity.

As it is said, She is “that which is attained at the end of Desire:”<sup>[iii]</sup> the same Desire we celebrated at Beltaine, has peaked at Summer and is now dissolving form, returning to Source to nourish the Plenum, the manifesting – as all form does. This Seasonal Moment of Lammas/Late Summer celebrates the beginning of dismantling, de-structuring. Gaia-Universe has done a lot of this de-structuring – it is in Her nature to return all to the “Sentient Soup” ... nothing is wasted. We recall the Dark Sentience, the “All-Nourishing Abyss”<sup>[iv]</sup> at the base of being, as we enter this dark part of the cycle of the year. This Dark/Deep at the base of being, to whom we are returned, may be understood as the Sentience within all – within the entire Universe. The dictionary definition of sentience is: “intelligence,” “feeling,” “the readiness to receive sensation, idea or image; unstructured available consciousness,” “a state of elementary or undifferentiated consciousness.”<sup>[v]</sup>

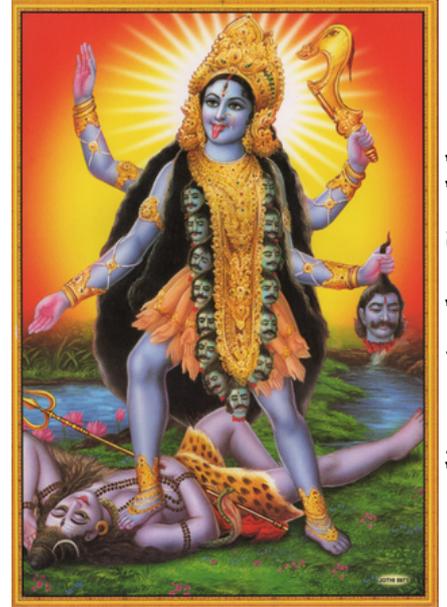
The Old Wise One is the aspect of the Cosmic Triplicity/Triple Goddess that returns us to this sentience, the Great Subject out of whom we arise. We are subjects within the Great Subject – the sentient Universe; we are not a collection of objects, as Thomas Berry has said.<sup>[vi]</sup> This sentience within, this “readiness-to-receive,” is a dark space, as all places of ending and beginning are. Mystics of all religious traditions have understood the quintessential darkness of the Divinity, known often as the Abyss. Goddesses such as Nammu and Tiamat, Aditi and Kali, are the anthropomorphic forms of this Abyss/Sea of Darkness that existed before creation. She is really the Matrix of the Universe. This sentience is ever present and dynamic. It could be understood as the dark matter that is now recognized to form most of the Universe.



*Nammu - Sumerian Goddess*

This may be recognized as Her “Cauldron of Creativity” and celebrated at this Lammas Moment. Her Cauldron of Creativity is the constant flux of all form in the Universe – all matter is constantly transforming. We are constantly transforming on every level.

These times that we find ourselves in have been storied as the Age of Kali, the Age of Caillaech – the Age of the Crone. There is much that is being turned over, much that will be dismantled. We are in the midst of the revealing of compost, and transformation – social, cultural, and geophysical. Kali is not a pretty one – but we trust She is transformer, and creative in the long term. She has a good track record. Our main problem is that we tend to take it personally.



Kali - Hindu Goddess

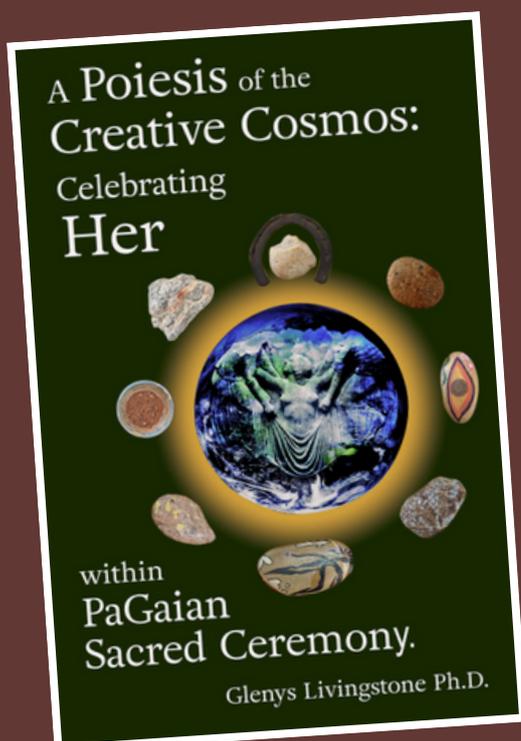
The Crone – the Old Phase of the cycle, creates the Space to Be. Lammas is the particular celebration of the beauty of this awesome One. She is symbolized and expressed in the image of the waning moon, which is filling with darkness. She is the nurturant darkness that may fill your being, comfort the sentience in you, that will eventually allow new constellations to gestate in you, renew you. So the focus in ceremony may be to contemplate opening to Her, noticing our fears and our hopes involved in that. She is the Great Receiver – receives all, and as such She is the Great Compassionate One. Her Darkness may be understood as a Depth of Love. And She is Compassionate because of Her dismantling ... where we may not have the will. We may want to be ever fresh, ever new, yet it is not possible without the Wise Old One, who will mercifully shake us loose from our tracks. Often we have only feared Her. Sometimes the changes that need to be made are awesome ... we would not have chosen them, but they serve us deeply. The Zen Buddhist tradition speaks of the “tiger’s kindness,” that is, we want to change, but may not have the will. (The tiger fears the human heart, the human fears the tiger’s kindness).[vii]

This Seasonal Moment is about trusting and rejoicing in the kindness and Creativity of the Dark – knowing it is centrally part of us and we are part of it. Loren Eiseley describes his pulse as “a minute pulse like the eternal pulse that lifts Himalayas and which, in the following systole, will carry them away.”<sup>[viii]</sup> Our organisms are constantly a microcosm of the cataclysmic transformations of Gaia – transformations that allow the life of the organism to go on, be that our small self or that of the Large Self of Earth or the Universe.

To find out more about Dr Glenys Livingstone’s work, you can find her website [here](#).

#### About the Author:

Glenys Livingstone graduated with a Ph.D. in Social Ecology from the University of Western Sydney, Australia. Her action research and thesis in the study of female imagery for the Sacred – upon which this book is based – grew from inner and communal work over the period of nearly three decades. An Australian with country roots, teacher training, theological and social science studies, she has journeyed into life’s compost and found transformative power to return smiling.



"This is a deeply spiritual work, beautifully articulating the sacrality and the profundity of our lives and of the cosmos. Glenys Livingstone writes of communions, celebrations, wonderfully creative ceremonies, the continuity of our turns around the Wheel of the Year." -Miriam Robbins Dexter, Author of *Whence the Goddesses: a Source Book* and *Sacred Display: Divine and Magical Female Figures of Eurasia*

## Notes:

[i] McLean, The Four Fire Festivals, 22.

[ii] As Thomas Berry has described the situation of being, in talks he has given.

[iii] Doreen Valiente, “The Charge of the Goddess” cited in Starhawk, The Spiral Dance, 103.

[iv] Swimme, The Hidden Heart of the Cosmos, Chapter 13.

[v] Webster’s Third International Dictionary of the English Language.

[vi] Berry, Evening Thoughts, 149.

[vii] Susan Murphy, upside-down zen: a direct path into reality (Melbourne: Lothian, 2004), 89-93.

[viii] Eiseley, The Immense Journey, 20.

## References

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Many thanks to Dr Glenys Livingstone for her kind permission to reproduce this essay here.

# Late Summer Ritual



You will need a candle (orange, red or yellow), a few stalks of wheat, and an unsliced loaf of bread (homemade is best), a goblet of ritual wine is optional, or you can use apple cider, which makes a great non-alcoholic alternative. Cast a circle, if that is your tradition.

Light the candle and say...



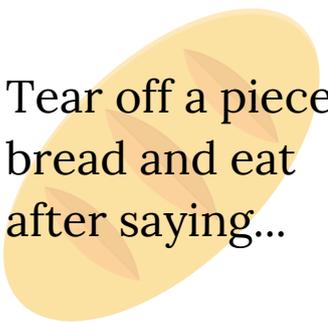
The Wheel of the Year has turned once more, and the harvest will soon be upon us. We have food on our tables, and the soil is fertile. Nature's bounty, the gift of the earth, gives us reasons to be thankful. Mother of the Harvest, with your sickle and basket, bless me with abundance and plenty.

Rubbing the wheat shafts between your fingers so that the wheat falls to the ground say...



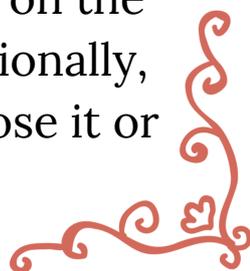
The power of the Harvest is within me. As the seed falls to the earth and is reborn each year, I too grow as the seasons change. As the grain takes root in the fertile soil, I too will find my roots and develop. As the smallest seed blooms into a mighty stalk, I too will bloom where I landed. As the wheat is harvested and saved for winter, I too will set aside that which I can use later.

Tear off a piece of bread and eat after saying...



I receive this gift of first harvest. The bounty is here for all of us, and we are so blessed.

Drink your wine or alternative. Take a moment to meditate on the cycle of rebirth and how it applies to you –physically, emotionally, spiritually. When you are ready, if you have cast a circle, close it or simply end the ritual in the manner of your tradition.





# Lammas Blessing

By Caroline Mellor



1 Bless the earth underfoot  
 the breeze on my neck  
 the still dawn  
 the open sky  
 the feather fall  
 the beetle climb  
 the crow call  
 the swift fly  
 the cloud drift  
 the rising sun  
 the barley field  
 the river run  
 the grass seed  
 the ripe plum.



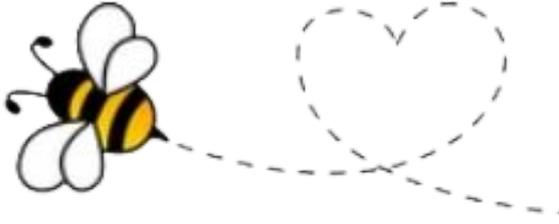
3 Bless the seed  
 on fertile ground  
 the skylark trill  
 the morning mist  
 the hazy heat  
 the twilight glow  
 the meteor shower  
 the midnight kiss  
 the fields and stones  
 the Lammas bread  
 the wheel that turns  
 that all are fed.

2 Bless the toad leap  
 the thunderclap  
 the kingfisher and dragonfly  
 the sunlight dancing on the water  
 the wildflowers growing in  
     the summer  
 the meadowsweet  
 the honey bee  
 the blackberry moon  
 the gliding swan  
 the eyes to see  
 the ears to hear  
 are all part  
 of the river's song.



4 Bless us, Grain Mother  
 Harvest Queen  
 Demeter and Persephone  
 Sun God  
 and John Barleycorn  
 All that dies shall be reborn  
 Bless this body  
 this breath  
 this good earth  
 this new day  
 May our dreams of days and  
 years to come  
 be blessed by the radiant golden  
 sun.  
 May abundance be a constant  
 friend  
 by our hearths 'til winter's end.





# Honey Bee Lore

Generally, the best time to harvest honey in Australia is February to March

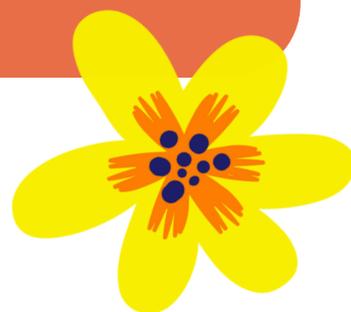
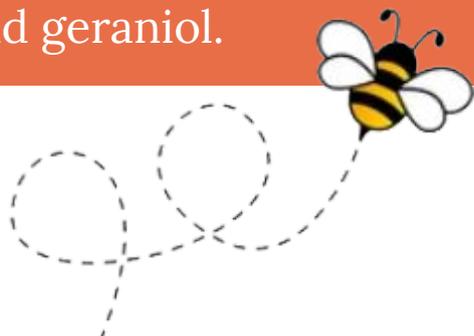
And once harvested? You could always start brewing mead - it will have aged enough for Beltane celebrations later in the year.

## Some notes from Stella Porta

The frequency of 110 Hz is known for its ability to induce an out-of-body experience, opening a doorway to higher realms of consciousness. Strangely, this is the same frequency at which a bee colony vibrates as they prepare to swarm—a sacred moment when they leave the old behind and step into the unknown. The bees, as guardians of liminal spaces, move through thresholds with ease, embodying transformation, transition, and collective decision-making. Their buzzing hums through the in-between, a place where new possibilities emerge and old structures fall away.

What if home was a fragrance? For bees, it is!

The Nasonov pheromone—the irresistible scent the bees use to guide their hive—contains seven volatile compounds: ((E)-citral, (Z)-citral, geraniol, nerolic acid, geranic acid, (E-E)-farnesol, and nerol). This is almost identical to those found in Lemon Balm (*Melissa officinalis*) where the main constituents of Melissa essential oil are: citral (geraniol and nerol), citronellal and geraniol.





### Beeswax

the hive's sacred architecture, embodying creation and manifestation through the alchemy of the bees. It holds the essence of warmth, structure, and the ability to transform dreams into tangible form.



### Honey

the solar essence of the hive. A liquid gold that is both food and medicine, connecting us to the sun's energy and the labour of love.



### Pollen

the life force of the hive. Gathered from the heart of flowers, it carries the pulse of the Earth and infuses us with vitality, aligning us with nature's sacred rhythm.



# MAGIC OF THE HONEYBEES



### Royal Jelly

the hive's elixir of life. A sacred substance that transforms maidens into queens. It aligns us with the generative forces of the Earth, guiding us through deep metamorphosis.



### Propolis

the hive's shield. A resinous substance that seals, protects, and heals. It symbolizes resilience, serving as the sacred boundary between the inner sanctuary and the outer world.

@stella.porta



### The Hum

the heartbeat of the hive. A unifying vibration that connects all life. It is the sound of creation, a frequency that heals and aligns.



Find out more about [Stella's work here](#)

Many religions including the ancient Egyptians revered honeybees as messengers from the gods, who called them “Tears of Ra’, and even used the bee as a symbol to represent Lower Egypt in the royal hieroglyph

The word melissa means bee (singular) in Latin, melissae is the plural, it can also be the possessive: ‘of the bee’.



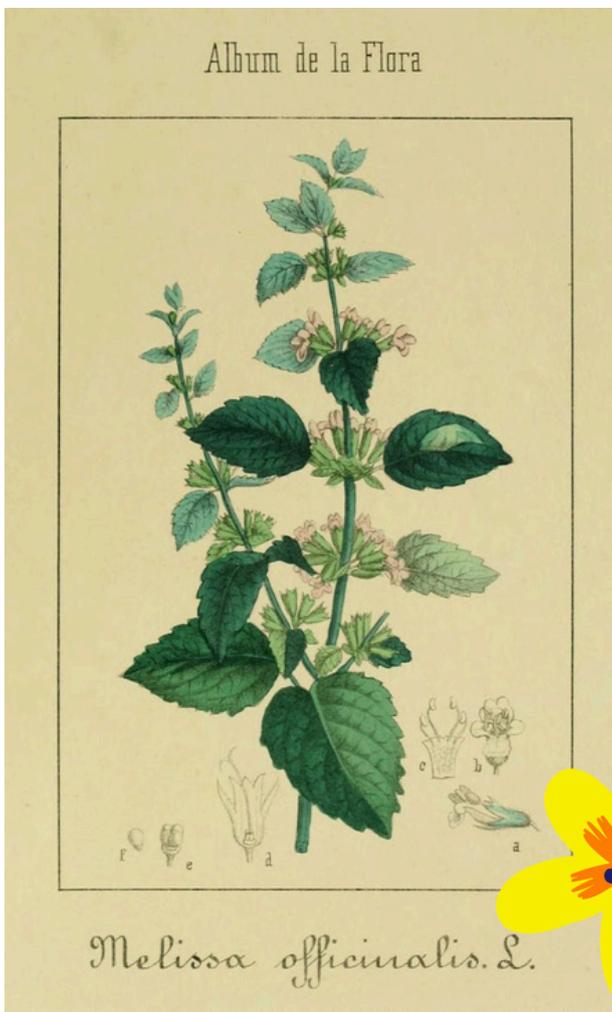
Melissa in Greek mythology is often referred to as a nymph however in one ancient text she is “...Melissa, a woman of very beautiful appearance, whom Jupiter turned into a bee.” translated from Lucius Junius Moderatus Columella’s *De Re Rustica*

In her review of “*Meeting the Melissae*” by Elizabeth Ashley, Carolyn Lee Boyd writes the following.

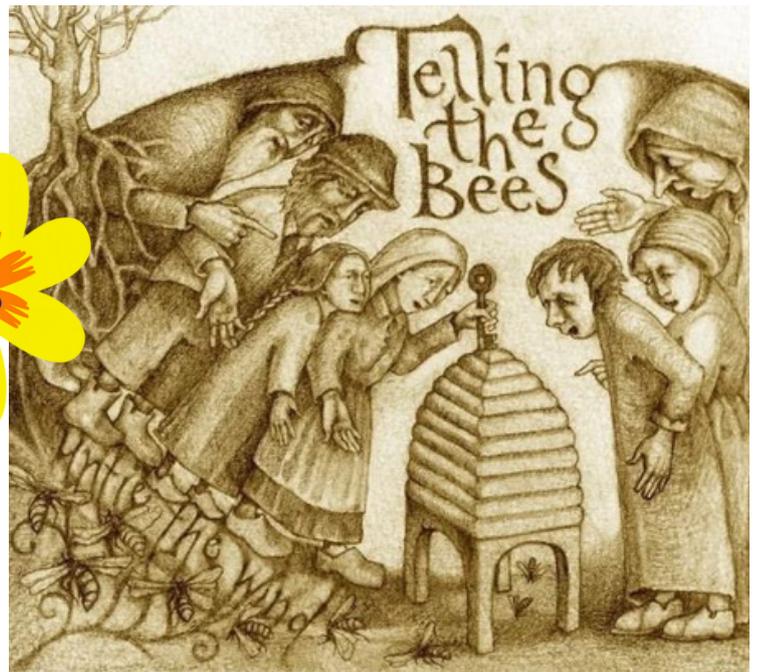
The Melissae were not only the bee priestesses of Demeter, but also other priestesses who “celebrated various aspects of the fertility goddess” that had bee associations, including Artemis of Ephesos, Cybele, Rhea, Aphrodite” (85) as well as moon goddesses, like Hekate. Ishtar of Babylonia, Inanna of Sumer, the Snake Goddess of Crete, and Neith of Egypt were also associated with bees. Other bee priestesses were associated with oracles, including the most famous one at Delphi where the oracle Pythia was known as “The Bee of Delphi.” (149).

Ashley notes that “not all Melissae were priestesses, and not every priestess was known as a Melissa” (the singular of Melissae) (85). “Any honorable woman would qualify as Potnia or Melissa”





“Lemon Balm (*Melissa officinalis*), revered by the Melissae priestesses of ancient times, was used as a bridge to connect with their wombs and the divine wisdom of the bees (*Apis Sophia*).”  
- Stella Porta



Artist: Rima Staines

The tradition of telling the bees is an ancient agricultural custom, believed to date back centuries. This is where the beekeeper treated their bees as extended members of their own family and kept them informed of any family news in the household. To fail to do so might weaken the hive, or cause the bees to leave.

Beekeepers also needed to talk to the bees in calm voices and never use harsh words for fear of upsetting the bees.

Legend has it that telling the bees originated in Celtic mythology. In Celtic mythology, honeybees were regarded as messengers between our world and the spirit realm and were associated with wisdom garnered from the otherworld.





# Harvest Goddesses



## **Ceres (Roman)**

Ever wonder why crunched-up grain is called cereal? It's named for Ceres, the Roman goddess of the harvest and grain. Not only that, she was the one who taught lowly mankind how to preserve and prepare corn and grain once it was ready for threshing. In many areas, she was a mother-type goddess who was responsible for agricultural fertility.

## **Demeter (Greek)**

The Greek equivalent of Ceres, Demeter is often linked to the changing of the seasons. She is often connected to the image of the Dark Mother in late fall and early winter. When her daughter Persephone was abducted by Hades, Demeter's grief caused the earth to die for six months, until Persephone's return.

## **Mokosh (Mokoš, Mat Zemlya) - Slavic**

Often called "Mother Moist Earth," she is the primary Slavic goddess of fertility, female endeavors, and the harvest. She is associated with spinning, weaving, and shearing sheep, and she oversees the harvest of crops, including hemp and grains.

## **Nomkhubulwane/Mbaba Mwana Waresa (Zulu)**

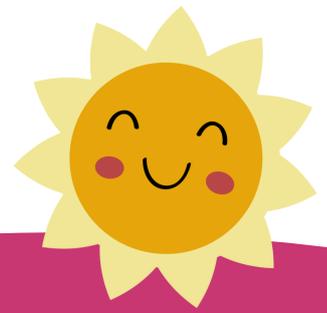
A highly revered goddess of agriculture, rain, fertility, and rainbows. She is considered the guardian of crops and, in some traditions, is believed to have taught the Zulu people to cultivate the land and brew beer.

## **Parvati (Hindu)**

Parvati was a consort of the god Shiva, and although she does not appear in Vedic literature, she is celebrated today as a goddess of the harvest and protector of women in the annual Gauri Festival.



# GARDENING GODDESSES



If your garden is anything like mine, with not enough rain and lots of humid warm sunshine, you've probably had to do more watering than you'd like. Even so, I hope your gardens are flourishing and feeding you well - if not in food, then beauty.

If you're lucky enough to be blessed with green thumbs and garden space then here is a list of veggies, herbs etc. to plant now in the mid north coast of NSW area. This list is not exhaustive, and there are many other fabulous plants you could add to it. Remember that much of the region is on the cusp between temperate zone and sub-tropical zone, so you may need to experiment if you don't already know where the warm and cool parts of your garden are situated. Have fun and good luck with your gardening.



- Angelica
- Beetroot
- Broccoli
- Calendula
- Carrots
- Chinese Cabbage
- Chives
- Cornflower
- Delphinium
- Dill
- Forget-me-not
- Hollyhock
- Leeks



- Lettuce
- Lupins
- Marigolds
- Mustard
- Parsley
- Potato - tubers
- Shallots
- Silverbeet
- Swedes
- Sweetpea



# Traditional Australian Damper



This Aussie damper is about as iconic as Australian food gets. A quick easy rustic bread perfect for Lughnasadh.



## **Equipment:**

Baking tray OR a Dutch oven OR a camping oven OR 6 solid sticks

## **Ingredients:**

3 cups (450gms) plain flour  
2 tablespoons baking powder  
(80gms) salted butter at room temperature  
1 cup (250mls) milk  
oil to grease

**Optional add ins** - add just before adding in milk

### **Savoury**

½ cup tasty or parmesan cheese  
¼ cup chopped herbs such as parsley and or chives

### **Sweet**

½ cup sultanas OR  
½ cup chocolate chips

## **Instructions:**

1. If using a Dutch oven make sure there is enough room in your oven with the lid on first. I have to put my oven rack on the bottom shelf and take out the other shelves to fit mine in.
2. Pre-heat the oven to 390°F (200°C).
3. Lightly grease a Dutch oven or baking tray with oil.
4. Add the baking powder to the flour and mix well.
5. Cube the butter and add to the flour. Rub the butter into the flour with your hands until fine bread crumbs form.
6. Add the milk and mix with a spatula initially until dough starts to come together, then switch to using your hands.
7. Shape the dough into a rough ball.
8. Put the ball into the Dutch oven or onto the baking tray. Cut two or three shallow lines in a cross/star shape.
9. If using the Dutch oven put the lid on. Bake in the oven for about 40 mins  
or until starting to go golden brown and makes a hollow sound when you tap the bottom.
10. Remove from oven, serve with your favourite toppings and enjoy!



Damper, the traditional bushman's bread originally made from flour, water and salt and cooked in the campfire, was first mentioned in Memoirs edited by Barron Field, judge of the Supreme Court of New South Wales from 1817 to 1824. According to the Australian Dictionary Centre, the name is derived from a Lancashire expression meaning "something that damps the appetite". Modern recipes often include baking soda or self-raising flour, beer, butter or powdered milk.

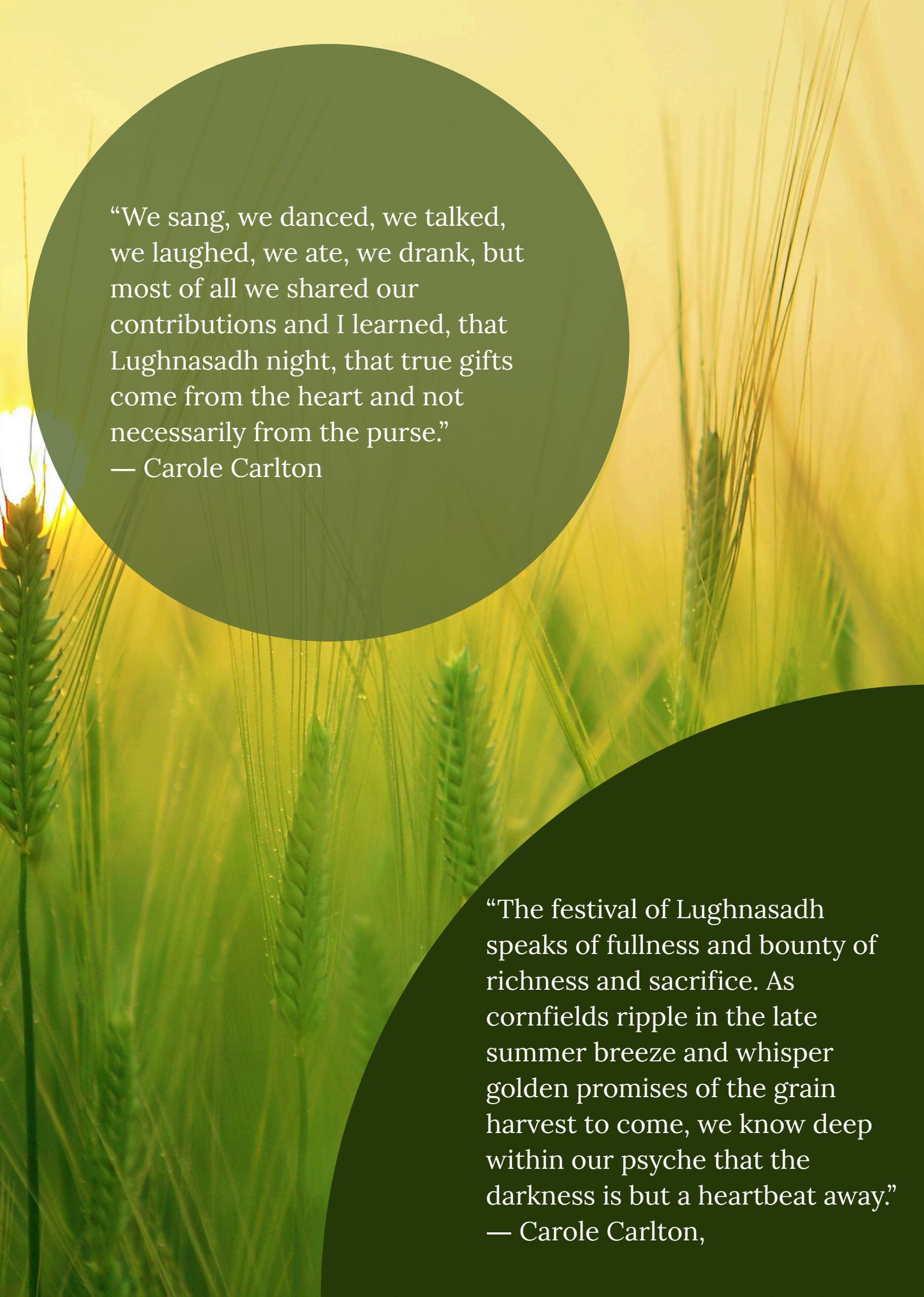


“Tea and Damper” by A . M. Ebsworth. From Digital Collection of the State Library of Victoria.

It may well be, however, that the damper was actually invented in Sydney. Historian James Bonwick ( 1817 – 1906) refers to a First Fleeter by the name of William Bond, who had a bakery in Pitt Street, and claims the first bread he made was damper. According to Bonwick, the name was derived from Bond’s way of “damping” the fire, covering it with ashes. This preserved the red coals, ready to rekindle the fire the following morning. The damper was buried in the ashes to bake.

In the bush, it was cooked in the same way. It became a staple for swagmen, drovers, stockmen and other travellers, as flour and salt could easily be carried and all that was required was to add water. As the sugar industry developed, damper was often eaten with “cocky’s joy” – golden syrup – which was easily transportable and cheaper than jam.

*History of Damper sourced from*  
<https://australianfoodtimeline.com.au/australian-damper/>



“We sang, we danced, we talked,  
we laughed, we ate, we drank, but  
most of all we shared our  
contributions and I learned, that  
Lughnasadh night, that true gifts  
come from the heart and not  
necessarily from the purse.”

— Carole Carlton

“The festival of Lughnasadh  
speaks of fullness and bounty of  
richness and sacrifice. As  
cornfields ripple in the late  
summer breeze and whisper  
golden promises of the grain  
harvest to come, we know deep  
within our psyche that the  
darkness is but a heartbeat away.”

— Carole Carlton,



Content in this publication  
has been lovingly curated  
from many sources and  
credit has been ascribed to  
original authors and artists  
where possible.

We wish you all the  
blessings of this season,  
With love from  
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