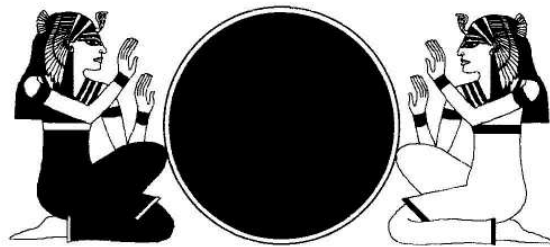


Temple of the Dark Moon



The Goddess is Alive in Australia

© Frances Billinghamurst (first published in "Insight" December 2008)

In October I was fortunate enough to travel to the Gold Coast where I was joined by many other women partaking in the Australian Goddess Conference. Over three days various rituals, workshops and lectures were held, all echoing the theme of the conference, "Earth Alchemy", the returning to the Earth, to Gaia, our sacred mother.

*"... we will follow the journeys of Inanna and Persephone to meet the Crone
and seek Her wisdom¹ ..."*

Friday was the community day where the doors to the venue were open to the general public and during the community ritual that evening over 120 men, women and children participated, which somewhat overwhelmed the ritual organiser, Glenys Livingstone. The ritual was focused on the sacred Wheel of the Year. It was obvious that the time is arriving for both men and women to come and work together in the name of the sacred Goddess.

The rest of the weekend was for women only as we undertook the underworld journey back to the womb of the Great Mother for an "alchemical transformation of inner reflection"². So

¹ From the description of the Conference found on Goddess Association in Australia's web site – www.goddessassociation.com.au

² *ibid*

much happened over the weekend that space would allow only a brief description of some of the events.

The conference opened properly on the Saturday morning when over 100 women proceeded into the sacred space in silence. Here we were greeted by the priestesses from various groves who were connected with the Goddess Association in Australia (G.A.i.A.), who organised the conference. After acknowledging and welcoming in the elementals, we officially commenced our honouring of the Great Mother by leaving gifts of fruit and chocolate on the altar and tying our pledges and offerings onto the Web of Life that were to be returned to Her at a later stage.

Over the weekend many talented women shared their knowledge and their ways of connecting to Mother Earth. Lucy Cavendish talked about how the heart beat of Mother Earth had actually started to speed up as the pace of our own lives had increased. In order to slow down this beat, she shared her insights into Earth Priestessing, of how to feel Mother Earth's pain and how to return healing back to Her. The divine voice of Goddess singer, Anique Radiant Heart gave me goose bumps as it was her music I used during services at "The Goddess House". Queensland based Wytch singer Julie Walton also led us in a Gaia based song that she had specifically written for the conference.

The ritual on the Saturday night was a labyrinth walk through the elements and returning back to the Earth. Here we were greeted by the ancient one, the wise priestess, who distilled her words of wisdom upon each of us. Her words had a rather profound effect on me that, combined with all the other work we undertook over this rather intensive weekend, came to an emotional head on the Sunday afternoon.

Senior Woman and Grandmother of the Larrakia Nation (Darwin), Bilawirra Lee talk about her work with the Gathering of Grandmothers that she attends, with her message being that now is the time for the White Nation to stand proud of their own aboriginal roots and be represented at these meetings. When this happens, all four nations (red, yellow, black and white) will then be able to move forward in spirit as Rainbow people, allowing the next evolution, that of the Crystal people, to occur.

Over the weekend I had the great honour of staying with Patricia Corner, the founder of G.A.I.A. and High Priestess of the Pomegranate Grove, at her beautiful home on Mt Tambourine. Everyday we journeyed up and down this mountain that the local Aboriginal

people perceived as being a sacred mountain for women. As a parting gift, I was presented with a jar of sacred red soil from that sacred mountain. Upon my return to Adelaide, I discovered two exquisite irises in my garden that further reminded me of the subtle gifts of the Goddess.

Over the weekend I had experienced a sense of sisterhood that was both extremely powerful as well as emotional for me for I had witnessed a similar vision that I had been quietly nurturing for over 10 years. When I established "The Goddess House" last year as a sacred place where people could gather in honour and worship of the Great Mother Goddess, it was an attempt of manifesting into reality this desire.

Having also met the delightful thea Gaia, who was involved in the 1980s Goddess movement here in Adelaide, I have inspiration and passion again to reopen "The Goddess House" in 2009. And in doing so, call out to the women here to come together once again, but this time to also bring the men.

Goddess Association in Australia (G.A.I.A.) is a not-for-profit organisation that celebrates, unites and supports women in the wider community. For more information about G.A.I.A., write to PO Box 7, NERANG QLD 4211, or visit their web site - - <http://www.goddessassociation.com.au>

About the Author:

Frances first connected with the Divine Feminine in the late 1980s. This connection was strengthened in 1993 when during a Wiccan rite known as "Drawing Down the Moon" the great Egyptian Goddess Isis made her presence felt.

Since that time Frances has continued to strengthen her personal relationship with the Divine Feminine - the Ancient Matriarch - the Goddess. Now Frances is drawn to share her knowledge and experience with others in order to assist them to re-connect with this ancient, yet powerful force.

Since 2002 Frances has been regularly writing for Australia's No.1 spiritual lifestyle magazine, "Insight", and her articles have appeared in over 10 separate publications around the world, including "SageWoman" and the 2008 Llewellyn "Witches" calendar. She has also appeared in the "Sunday Mail", the "Messenger" and the "Melbourne Age".

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