



Tarot Association  
of the British Isles

# *TABI NEWS*

*Issue #11 20<sup>th</sup> May 2004*

Welcome to the Spring 2004 edition of the TABI Newsletter.

We hope you enjoy this issue, which features a fascinating interview with Paul Hughes-Barlow, author of *Tarot and the Magus*, plus some really interesting examinations of timing with tarot and the automated reading process, and all our usual fun & games!

Blessings of the Season to all our readers.

With best wishes,

**Shelley King**

Editor

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## *How to get the most from the newsletter*

Clicking on the page numbers in the contents table will take you directly to the page you want to view. To make the text on a page look larger, use the magnifier, or go to “View” and set the option to “Fit Visible” or the similar command that appears on your version.

## *Availability, Notification of Accuracy of TABI News*

We do our best to keep the information in TABI News up to date and accurate. If anything needs updating or correcting for future reference, please let us know. TABI News currently appears as a PDF file on the TABI website and on the databases of TABI’s e-mail discussion lists. We send out notification of new issues of TABI News to reach a wide and interested audience and for each issue we endeavour to ensure that all contributors are kept informed of the release date. If you should wish to be removed from our mailing list, however, please email us at [newsletter@tabi.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@tabi.org.uk)

## *Submissions*

We welcome submissions, but as a non-profit organisation are unable to offer payment. Please send articles, ideas or suggestions to the Editor: [newsletter@tabi.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@tabi.org.uk)

We wish to thank all of our writers and volunteers for their input and all of our members for their interest in TABI. Please note that article copyrights remain with the authors. The articles, reviews and information are offered for interest purposes and are not necessarily reflective of the views of or indicative of an endorsement by the Tarot Association of the British Isles.

# Greetings from TABI

The Who, What and Where...

## WHERE WE WILL BE

TABI's Endorsed Readers will be giving readings at the following events.

### **Saturday 8 May 2004**

WitchFest England (Readings & Workshop)  
(Children of Artemis)  
Fairfield Halls  
Croydon

### **Saturday 30 & Sunday 31 May 2004**

Beltane Bash (Readings)  
(Caduceus)  
Conway Hall  
Red LionSquare  
London

### **Friday 4, Saturday 5 & Sunday 6 June 2004**

The Wessex Gathering (Readings & Workshop)  
(Green Man)  
Isle of Purbeck  
Dorset

### **Saturday 12 June 2004**

Witchfest Wales (Readings & Workshp)  
(Children of Artemis)  
Cardiff International Arena  
Cardiff  
Wales

### **October 2004**

London Halloween Festival (Readings)  
(Caduceus)  
London

### **Saturday 6 November 2004**

WitchFest International (Readings & Workshop)  
(Children of Artemis)  
Fairfield Halls  
Croydon

## **WHO WE ARE**

The Tarot Association of the British Isles is a primarily online community run by volunteers with a passion for tarot and the esoteric. TABI was formed in January 2001, to provide support, information and resources for UK tarotists of all levels. Whether you are a beginner or an experienced reader, you are welcome at TABI.

Our aims are to provide a supportive and friendly environment for all those interested in tarot - whether you want to study, play, provide or receive readings, or just chat and network with others of a like mind - and to promote the use of tarot as an ethical tool for guidance and self-development.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

In order that TABI may continue to grow and fulfill our aim of being the premier resource for UK tarotists, we have a formal membership programme. Membership of TABI costs £15 per year, and entitles you to the following:

- Membership Certificate
- TABI Keyring and Pen
- A free in-depth reading
- Quarterly Newsletter
- Opportunity to apply for Endorsed Reader status
- Free online beginners' training, in a mentored study group.
- Participation in fayres and festivals
- Invites to social events and regional meetings
- Access to advanced courses/masterclasses/workshops
- Chat groups and forums
- Discounts on TABI merchandise
- Use of TABI logo for personal website/stationery
- The chance to practice your skills and meet other like-minded people, in a fun and friendly environment

If you would like to apply, please send a blank email to: [membership@tabi.org.uk](mailto:membership@tabi.org.uk)

## **TABI SERVICES**

**Readings:** Our Free 1-3 card reading service is still proving extremely popular. To request a reading, please visit our website: <http://www.tabi.org.uk> If you would like a longer, in-depth reading, we are pleased to confirm that these are now available in return for a donation to TABI. For further details or to request a reading, please send an email to [admin.ian@tabi.org.uk](mailto:admin.ian@tabi.org.uk)

**Training:** Beginners to tarot can take our FREE training course, based on Joan Bunning's Learn the Tarot, in an online mentored study group. Upon completion of the course, students may join TABI and start working towards earning their Certificate of Endorsement. For more information, contact [trainingadmin@tabi.org.uk](mailto:trainingadmin@tabi.org.uk)

**Endorsement:** As there is no central governing body for tarot, and no qualifications, it can be difficult to know how to find a reader. Recognising this, TABI has created a system of Endorsement, whereby our readers agree to adhere to our Code of Ethics and undergo an ongoing process of mentoring to ensure that TABI readings are of a consistently high standard.

**UK Readers Listing:** If you would like to promote your reading service on our site, please contact [ukreaders@tabi.org.uk](mailto:ukreaders@tabi.org.uk)

### **CONTACT US**

What would you like to see on our website or newsletter? Do you have suggestions, questions or thoughts on the subject of Tarot in general? Please feel free to get in touch with information you think may interest us, or with any questions – we'd love to hear from you!

Newsletter: - [newsletter@tabi.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@tabi.org.uk)

Membership: [membership@tabi.org.uk](mailto:membership@tabi.org.uk)

Training & Endorsement: [training.admin@tabi.org.uk](mailto:training.admin@tabi.org.uk)

## Sadistic Statistics

[Confessions of a TABI Free Readings Monitor]

*By Membership Coordinator Clare McHale*

It's been an eventful few months for me, but unfortunately nothing exciting has happened. It's all down to a bloody, and I mean that literally, computer upgrade. I swear if my life gets anymore exciting I just won't be answerable for the consequences!

Now I've discussed this with my esteemed colleagues and it's been agreed that I can dispense with the torture that is percentages and give you the barefaced numbers instead, it might not be as pretty, but by gum if I don't feel like my corset strings have been cut!

Free Reader of the Year for 2003 is Ray who cornered the market with a whopping 144 Completed readings to his credit. If you think it doesn't sound like much think again. All our Free Readers have busy offline lives as well as having to wait in line to be assigned a request. Congratulations Ray and thanks!

In December 2003 TABI's terrific Free Readers completed 105 readings, 93 of which were from women. This leaves 12 for the boys, not bad and hopefully a sign of an upward trend. 8 Requests had to be made Inactive for one reason or another.

In January our Free Readers Completed 156 Requests, unfortunately a larger number had to be made Inactive, and at 28 it's a big Jump up from December.

On the upside we did have 51 more requests than the previous month, so it's logical we'd also have more Readings made Inactive. A few of these do appear to be genuine mistakes, impatient Seekers clicking send twice. We even had an extra request from a man, beating December 13 to 12!

In February we had 125 Requests with 26 made Inactive, including a rather strange one from a person called Ania – you know who you are ;) We also had a couple of Seekers so keen for TABI guidance they fair hurdled over the 1 reading per 30 days rule, the perils of popularity!

February was a shorter month with 31 less readings than January, despite the leap year! However, this is a huge, huge improvement over 2003, as last year we only had 53 Completed Readings. In fact this huge increase also applies to January, which just goes to show that TABI's

having one hello of a growth spurt. [No, that's not a typo, I'm being a lady, did I not mention a corset earlier in this ramble?].

February has also seen in some newly Endorsed readers, and a flurry of new TABI members keen to jump into the fray. We can now boast a grand total of 40 Free Readers with more on the way soon, and of those 40, 19 are TABI Endorsed with the rest chomping at the bit.

The lowest number of Readers we have on roster for any one day is 6 and our highest 12, I've even had complaints from Readers asking why they're not getting any requests – talk about keen!

Bless, you've got to love the little critters ;)

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Free Readings Random Raffle went well, [Dec/Jan/Feb]; I managed to track down all eligible entries, despite losing a few stray emails to the beast that is Yahoo during the computer upgrade. In December we had 45 entries, January 68 and in February 56, that's a grand total of 169 for the 3 month Raffle period. The Raffle closed on midnight 7<sup>th</sup> March and the winner of the £15 Amazon UK voucher is... Geoffrey, [with no. 71], one of our new Free Readers no less; Congratulations Geoffrey!

I asked Geoffrey for a sentence or two for the newsletter and being the gentleman he is he thanked TABI, and went on to say that he's, "enjoying doing the free readings very much, and especially many thanks to Ian for his help and support, it has given me a lot more confidence". Thanks Geoffrey!

And Thank You to all our Free Readers for their continued support and dedication to TABI!

That's All Folks!

Clare [Dark Flower]

TABI Membership Coordinator - [admin.clare@tabi.org.uk](mailto:admin.clare@tabi.org.uk)

TABI Free Readings Monitor - [FRmonitor@claremc.co.uk](mailto:FRmonitor@claremc.co.uk)

TABI website - <http://www.tabi.org.uk>

## Mixing the Majors: Movies, Cocktails and Tarot - Pt 3

*By Clare McHale*

Shakers and little umbrellas at the ready for the final part of our feature, from The Devil to The World...

### 15 The Devil

This is one card that's not short of a film or a drink or six to match up with. I had wanted to use the movie 'Gilda', a favourite of mine starring Glen Ford and the gorgeous Rita Hayworth, but horror of horrors, it's not in the book!

Still, there's this little thriller that admirably fits the bill and then some, so it's all downhill from here as we concentrate on some of the Devils more negative aspects, with wickedness, temptation, violence and deceit, and Barbara Stanwyck as the devil with a blue dress on...

'Double Indemnity' (1944) stars Fred MacMurray as an insurance salesman Walter Neff, who allows himself to be seduced into a greedy and murderous scam by Phyllis Dietrichson, played by Stanwyck. Unfortunately for them, Fred's in up to here, and sinking fast, and with claims investigator Barton Keyes (Edward G Robinson) giving them the Evil Eye all in a good cause, it's time for Pimm's Cocktails all round.

**Pimm's Cocktail Ingredients:** 50 ml Pimm's No 1 Cup, lemonade or 7-Up, cucumber, mixed fruit to taste, sprig of mint. Use an ice filled Highball glass, pour in Pimm's and lemonade, leave room for the fruit, add sliver of cucumber peel, slice of orange, lemon and strawberry, add sprig of mint, serve with straw and swizzle stick.

Other cocktails that could be a match for the Devil are:

Diablo [1oz dry white port, 1oz sweet vermouth, few drops lemon juice]

Diabol [2 oz rum, ½ oz Cointreau, ½ oz dry vermouth, 2 drops Angostura bitters, orange peel]

### 16 The Tower

'Gone with the Wind' (1939), is the choice for this dramatic and changeable card, and that means Planter's Punch is the drink of choice. Not only that, but Scarlet by name, scarlet by nature, this cards colour association according to Mary K Greer is...

Following the epic story of a country ripped apart by civil war, and in particular how all of this affects southern belle Scarlett O' Hara, 'Gone With the Wind' is based on the only novel of Margaret Mitchell. All the top actresses of the time wanted the O'Hara role, including Bette

Davis, whose own top-notch film, 'Dark Victory' released in the same year (See the Hanged Man), was pushed way out of the picture during the Oscar nominations by the on screen chemistry of Leigh and Gable as war torn lovers, and the sheer sweeping grandeur of the movie production.

On a final note, and I know I've mentioned this before, but what the heck, Clarke Gable apparently had terrible breath, which made the lovely Vivien Leigh's job an unappealing one, and according to you know who, the Hebrew letter for The Tower is Peh, which means mouth, how spooky is that? Yes, that's what I thought...

**Planter's Punch Ingredients:** 50 ml Myers dark rum, 25 ml fresh lime juice, sugar syrup, Angostura bitters, soda, lime wedge.

Pour lime juice, rum into ice filled cocktail shaker, add big dash of sugar syrup, 2 dashes Angostura bitters, shake, strain into ice filled Highball glass, top up with soda, garnish with lime wedge.

*See note at end of article for Sugar Syrup recipe.*

Other cocktails that could be a match for the Tower are:

Tailspin [2 oz dry gin, 1 oz sweet vermouth, 1 oz green Chartreuse, dash orange bitters]

Thunderclap [1 oz dry gin, 1 oz Scotch Whisky, 1 oz brandy]

### **17 The Star**

If you're looking for a star in Hollywood, then Marilyn Monroe fits the bill in suitably glamorous and curvy girlie style. And there's nothing more hopeful than the character of Richard Sherman as played by Tom Ewell, the married man lusting after, and day dreaming madly about, Monroe's character, 'The Girl', in 'The Seven Year Itch' (1955), downing many a Whiskey Sour as he goes.

**Whiskey Sour Ingredients:** 50 ml bourbon or rye whiskey, 40 ml lemon juice (fresh), 1 egg white, sugar syrup, Angostura bitters, stemmed cherry.

Add fresh lemon juice to large dash egg white, mix with bourbon, small measure of sugar syrup, 2 dashes Angostura bitters, shake in ice filled cocktail shaker, pour into a rocks glass, garnish with cherry.

Other cocktails that could be a match for the Star are:

Star [1 oz apple brandy, 1 oz dry gin, 4 dashes grapefruit juice, dash dry vermouth, dash sweet vermouth]

Seventh Heaven [1 oz dry gin, 1 oz Caperitif, 2 dashes maraschino, dash Angostura bitters]

### **18 The Moon**

The Moon has many aspects, but one of the most easily identifiable is its connection to the emotions. Add that to other key words such as, sensitivity, dreams, intrigue and creativity, and it's a good match for the movie 'Humoresque' (1946).

This melodrama stars Joan Crawford as Helen Wright, a wealthy patron of the arts, who sponsors and falls for, talented young violinist Paul Boray, as played by John Garfield. She tries, and fails to win his heart and ends up drowning her sorrows drinking 'Tom Collins' cocktails like a fish.

Fish, dolphin, Pisces? No? Hey it works for me!

I wonder how many B notes Issac Stern, the stand in solo violinist, played through out the movie...

**Tom Collins Ingredients:** 50 ml London dry gin, fresh lemon juice, sugar syrup, soda, slice lemon. Pour gin, dash sugar syrup and small amount of lemon juice into an ice filled Highball glass, top up with soda and stir, garnish with slice of lemon.

Other cocktails that could be a match for the Moon are:

Moonlight [2 oz dry gin, 2 oz white wine, 1 oz grapefruit juice, 4 dashes kirsch]

Night Owl 253 [1 oz bourbon, 4 dashes Cointreau, 4 dashes lemon juice, chilled soda water]

### **19 Sun**

For the Sun I wanted a movie that would show the cards positive qualities, its cheerfulness, high spirits and friendliness. I also wanted to get Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers in here somewhere, but wasn't sure I'd manage it until I found 'Top Hat' (1935) with the light and airy Buck's Fizz cocktail, that's just bursting with bubbly sunshiny fun.

The movie includes the song, 'Isn't it a Lovely Day?' which fits perfectly with this light hearted song and dance romantic comedy, which won 2 Oscars, neither of which, surprisingly enough, were for Fred or Ginger!

**Buck's Fizz Ingredients:** Dry Champagne, fresh orange juice.

Use chilled ingredients, half and half, alcohol first in Champagne flute, and stir softly.

Other cocktails that could be a match for the Sun are:

Sunburst [2 oz apple brandy, 1 oz Grand Mariner, dash orange bitters, chilled sparkling wine]

Tequila Sunrise [ $\frac{3}{4}$  grenadine,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  oz tequila, 4 oz orange juice]

### **20 Judgement**

Humphrey Bogart as opinionated private eye Philip Marlow, *The Big Sleep* (1946), and the drink Scotch Mist seem a fitting match to associate with Judgement.

The first pairing of Bogart and Bacall after their marriage, the film is based on a Raymond Chandler novel, and sees Marlow having to deal with blackmail, murder, lies, the police, Bacall and her disturbed sister, though not necessarily in that order, while doing his best to come out clean on the other side.

Marlowe needs to judge how best to help his clients without airing their dirty laundry to all and sundry, while considering how his actions will affect those around him, because if he makes a mistake and fails to break the case, he'll need more than a Scotch Mist to help him get out from under the growing number of corpses piling up.

**Scotch Mist Ingredients:** 50 ml scotch whisky, ice, and lemon zest.

Pour whisky into an ice filled cocktail shaker, shake, strain into a wine glass over crushed ice and add some lemon zest as garnish.

Other cocktails that could be a match for Judgement are:

Judgette [1 oz dry gin, 1 oz dry vermouth, 1 oz peach brandy, dash lime cordial]

Eye Opener [1 oz rum, 2 dashes crème de noyaux, 2 dashes curacao 2 dashes pastis, teaspoon sugar, 1 egg yolk]

### **21 World**

'*The Snows of Kilimanjaro*' (1952) is a match for the World in the sense that it's one mans look back at his life, his world, as he lies near death at the foot of Kilimanjaro in Africa. Gregory Peck plays writer Harry Street, whose delirium takes him back through his time during the Spanish Civil War, his first and lost love, Ava Gardner, and the city of Paris. Susan Hayward plays the dedicated wife caring for him in the present.

The film is based on a book by Ernest Hemmingway and apparently he wasn't too happy with the screen adaptation of his work, maybe all he needed was a few Gimlets to improve his outlook?

**Gimlet Ingredients:** 50 ml gin (or vodka), 25 ml Rose's lime cordial

Add gin to an ice filled cocktail shaker, add cordial as desired (2 parts spirit to 1 part cordial is usual), shake and strain into frosted Martini glass or serve in a rocks glass with ice.

Other cocktails that could be a match for the World are:

Empire [dry gin, apple brandy, apricot brandy]

Fine and Dandy [2 oz dry gin, 1 oz Cointreau, 1 oz lemon juice, dash Angostura bitters]

**NB:** Sugar Syrup – 1kg sugar dissolved in 500ml hot water = 1.1 litre of sugar syrup from <http://www.bolscocktails.com/>

Sources of Information:

**Hollywood Cocktails by Tobias Steed with cocktail recipes by Ben Reed**

ISBN 1-84000-199-2

Cosmic Tarot by Jean Huets

ISBN 0-88079-699-5

Bar & Cocktail Book by Michael Jackson

ISBN 1-84000-563-7

Tarot for Yourself by Mary K Greer

ISBN 1-56414-588-3

The Wordsworth Ultimate Cocktail Book by Ned Halley

ISBN 1-85326-762-7

Thanks to:

TABI members Ribbitcat, Diana, Shelley and Bethan and my younger brother for the loan of the great cocktail books.

## An A-Z of Tarot

Our continuing journey...

### *F is for... Fortune Telling*

*By Ian Stevens*

It's ironic that the one thing that most people associate with Tarot is the one thing that the majority of Tarot readers play down or even refuse to admit that they get involved with.

Ask a Tarot reader why they don't 'do' predictions and the answer will probably revolve around ethics, usurping the querent's free will and pandering to the desire for a reason to excuse their possible failure or lack of resolve. This position is also useful in helping the reader to have some control over what they may be asked to do.

There is after all a lot more to Tarot than fortune telling, it can provide insights into the cause and the resolution of the most complex situations and problems and provide a greater understanding of yourself and others. It can be used on its own or in conjunction with other systems such as the Qabalah as a meditation tool to gain access to your higher consciousness. It is these aspects that readers like to focus on, but unfortunately many of those who come to them for readings regard the predictive element as the one that is important.

Tarot has to constantly struggle against its association in the popular mind with 'gypsies' at the end of the pier and crones in second-rate horror movies. In trying to disassociate itself from this candy floss and popcorn image it has been very tempting to rubbish the fortune telling aspect in its entirety, forgetting the fact that 'Gypsy Rose' may well be a total fraud but on the other hand she may be an accomplished reader who for her own reasons has chosen to follow a populist route.

It is of course quite possible to use the cards in a way that never involves any kind of divination. Aleister Crowley for example used them in this way and designed his Thoth deck with that kind of use in mind but most people who use Tarot will sooner or later use them to read for somebody else and as soon as you ask a question about the real world the cards are going to point towards an outcome and whether you like it or not that is going to result in a prediction of some sort. This results in a dilemma for the reader and the most common way out of it is to change either the question or the terminology, much like broadsheet and tabloid newspapers will carry headlines on the same story but will emphasise different aspects or use different language.

Gypsy Rose might read for someone who wants to know what is going to happen in his or her love life. If the King of Swords turns up she is unashamedly going to say “You’re going to meet a tall dark stranger”, and maybe pull a couple more cards to try and find out how, when and where. The ethical reader will change the question, probably to something like ‘what do I need to know about changes in my romantic situation’ but when the King of Swords turns up what are they going to say? They may wrap it up in caveats and possible alternatives but the tall dark stranger is going to be in there somewhere.

Now this is not to suggest that we all start wearing large gold earrings and headscarves, (well maybe bandanas in the case of the men), but if you read for that sort of question at all sooner or later you are going to be making predictions of some sort even if they are dressed up to the extent that they are unrecognisable as such.

So does that mean that like it or not we’re all fortune-tellers then? Well no but the differences may not be absolutely clear cut. Traditional fortune-telling is a dogmatic process, bold statements about a series of events without any alternatives, accompanying information or advice about the persons role in or responsibility for what happens. A ‘proper’ Tarot reading will highlight the events and forces which are at work creating a situation and can thus enable the querent to gain some control over the outcome.

However once you accept that a Tarot reading can indicate an outcome or a possible outcome, (and if you look through a book of Tarot spreads you will see the words future and outcome appearing again and again), you have got to accept that in some form or other you’re going to be passing on advice and information about an event that has not yet happened, and what is that if it is not a prediction?

So what is wrong with prediction anyway, every day people are employed to make predictions about the stock market, commodity prices and many other things, often basing their decisions on little more than a hunch or gut feeling. Why is it then unethical for a Tarot reader to make an observation about the course of events and the likely outcome? In actual fact the majority of tarot readers do make predictions even if they prefer to call them something else. The important thing is the manner in which it is done and the information and advice surrounding the conclusion. As with a stockbroker or venture capitalist there is a responsible and an irresponsible way to go about it and this is the dividing line between fortune telling and ethical Tarot. There may be good reasons why the ‘f’ word is taboo in Tarot circles but perhaps we should be less stuffy about the ‘p’ word; as long as we are among consenting adults of course.

## Featured Reader Interview:

Meeting TABI 's Free Readers...

**Real Name/Reading Name:**

Geoffrey Beitz/ Sidhe

**Area:**

I live in Tunbridge Wells, Kent

**Age:**

*In this short Life*

*That only lasts an hour*

*How much - how little - is*

*Within our power* ( Emily Dickinson)

**Non-tarot occupation:**

I work as an artist/ illustrator. Have been thinking of creating a set of tarot/divination cards, but it needs to be a most inspiring idea? Love to work in gouache, pastels and oils, and have started to develop a series of mystical paintings based on my own experiences, mythology and spirituality.

**Spiritual leanings:**

I have never been able to embrace any religious dogma or creed, always have needed to be a free spirit. Very much drawn to Pagan , Wiccan teachings. Love the idea of angels, spirit guides, faeries and other elementals.

**Astrological aspects ie sun/moon/whatever signs and how you think this affects your tarot approach:**

I have an interest and some knowledge in astrology, it does influence my approach somewhat. I do take notice of the astrological aspects of both the Major and Minor Arcana, it does have some influence on my interpretation of the cards, by adding another layer of meaning to the cards. On my birth chart I am Libra with Aries rising, the initiating force of Aries forever interrupted by the constant weighing up of Libra, continual conflict for me.

**How long have you been involved in tarot?**

About 20 years on and off, but more seriously from 1990. Spent a long time doing an beginner's/intermediate and then advanced course with Annabelle Rankin (Innervision). The course was structured in a way to let the student decide how deep they wished to descend into the subject matter. I took about 5 years to complete the course ( I did work at rather a slow pace).I have been re-looking at the course and all the work I did and am surprised at the content of course syllabus and how many aspects of the tarot it did cover. Still do extensive reading all the time. Call it a bit of a magnificent obsession! It is extraordinary how more and more layers of understanding are revealed every time I investigate further, so I guess it is a lifetime's acquaintance with the tarot.

**What drew you to it?**

I thought about that, but just seemed to find myself drawn to it without really knowing much about it, except it seemed to have mystical aura about it and I find the images are still very alluring and endlessly fascinating. It's amazing how I discover new meaning and understanding from the Rider Waite tarot still. That is what is interesting about occult knowledge, how it protects itself, you can only gain new knowledge when you are ready to understand it, the secrets of the occult is only revealed in ever descending layers; you cannot gain knowledge of what you are not ready for and will not be able to understand.

**Do you read for yourself?**

I do read for myself sometimes. I only tend to read for myself when I have difficult issues to face and deal with. I know when a reading has a deeper truth to it, like an inner knowing, and from that I take comfort and knowledge.

**What was your first deck? Why did you choose it?**

My first deck was the Rider Waite deck, this was in the 70s in South Africa, and the only one available then.. Also bought the Eden Gray book and tried to read the cards for others, with book in hand. Even then it was interesting to see how accurate the cards could be. I still have that original set and use it all the time.

**How many decks do you have now?**

About 85 tarot decks and about 16 other divination sets.

**What is your favourite deck(s)? Why?**

The Vertigo Tarot: discovered this deck on Rachel Pollack's website, discovered it was out of print, but had to have it. Found a first edition, signed by the artist, Dave McKean, on the internet. The images are amazing and are surreal, computer generated images. Have not done a reading with the cards yet!

Margarete Petersen Tarot: found on the German Amazon.com, beautiful painterly almost abstract images, powerful and enigmatic. Breathtaking really! Book is in German, so have to acquaint myself with the cards intuitively.

Voyager Tarot: love the rich collage images, a different kind of tarot.

Tarot of the Mermaids: Recent set from La Scarabeo, stunning mermaid and under water scenes, very good for emotional and relationship issues.

Alchemical Tarot: Robert Place's tarot, drawn to this set because of my interest in alchemy. Beautiful line drawings with soft colours, but it is the alchemical symbols that are most fascinating.

Voodoo Tarot: intriguing tarot, strange and beautiful images. Book a bit scary, talks about mild spirit possession, and how to handle that. Not a good start to get acquainted with a tarot deck! But still very much drawn to the cards and intrigued by the voodoo connection.

The Quest Tarot: recent set of cards, computer based images, slightly reminiscent of the Thoth tarot.. Rich images and all sorts of extras on the cards e.g. Letters, precious stones, directional arrows.etc.

Decameron Tarot: (LoScarabeo) saucy and bawdy! Not really suitable for readings.

Tarot of the Old Path: beautiful Wiccan deck with soft images.

Haindl Tarot: wonderful but quite difficult deck, particularly love the Major Arcana, find the Court cards difficult. Rachel Pollack's books on the cards are extraordinary.

**What is your most used deck for public readings, if different? Why?**

It seems to be the Rider Waite - excellent for general readings; and the Tarot of the Mermaids- wonderful for relationship questions and spreads. But since doing the Free readings I have been more experimental with all sorts of different decks, trying to read the cards more psychically.

**Fave tarot book and/or author?**

I admire the writings of Rachel Pollack ( 78 degrees of wisdom) Have so many books difficult to say which is my favourite. I do love the book "meditations on the tarot". I Also admire the book Tarot and Individuation by Irene Gadd, a real tome of a book, complex and fascinating, a Jungian approach to the tarot. I am slowly working through it trying to understand it.

**Fave/most used spread?**

Keep a book of collected spreads, but do like to use the 15 card relationship spread (Terry Donaldson book). Actually I now like to do 3 card spreads.

**Do you use reversals or other system ie Elemental Dignities?**

I seem to have stopped using reversals, feel both sides of the card's meaning are somehow always implied in some way when looking at an card in a spread. I do use Elemental Dignities in a reading, always aware of the relationship between the different elements, in terms of whether they work with or against each other.

**Do you use other disciplines in your readings ie quabalah/astrology?**

My tarot course covered the Kaballah quite extensively but have only recently re-looked at the kabalistic influences and am now beginning to re-introduce their influence to my readings. Same for astrology.

**Do you add psychic impressions to your readings?**

As I am currently training at the college of Psychic Studies as a sensitive and medium, I have found that I am getting far more psychic impressions during my reading, even have had a few mediumistic connections as well. I have found that since doing the free readings, and mostly working without any background information has been a great way to exercise my psychic ability. Seems to sharpen the psychic antennae. It is really about trusting the psychic information I receive however strange it may seem at the time, and then finding that the information seems to

be relevant to the querent.

**Do you rephrase? Why?**

I do rephrase questions in order to clarify what is being asked, especially if it questions where the seeker places all the responsibility in the hands of the tarot reader. The querent needs to be empowered into making their own choices. I would never take the responsibility alone in answering a question, the querent needs to decide their own fate. I really learnt about rephrasing through doing the Free Readings on TABI, and it has been a valid learning experience for me.

**Are there any questions/subjects you wouldn't take on?**

I would not take on any questions that involve medical or legal issues. Also no third party "spying" either. I also try to steer clear of predictive questions, because I think that if the querent is gullible or vulnerable it robs them of the choice to fulfil their own destiny, and the prediction tends to become a self-fulfilling prophecy. Also I believe in the Laws of Karma, because what you set in motion may return to bite you in the a----!

**What is your favourite theory for how tarot works?**

The tarot works because it is a carefully structured system of 78 archetypal experiences, which reflects back to us, like a magical mirror, each time relevant key moments - highlighted either singly or in combination. From the messages of the cards we are able to better understand the inner world of our psyche, and how these experiences play outwardly in our everyday lives. The cards acquaint us with how we are living out specific experiences, by reflecting back to us what we may not always be aware of, namely, the inner working - the cause and root of a situation which is more important than the actual event - and from that knowledge we are able to make the choices that we may need to make.

**How would you describe your reading style?**

Sensitive, thoughtful, insightful, compassionate, psychic , comprehensive , empowering , responsive.

**Do you read professionally? How long for? What format? (email/phone etc)**

I have been reading professionally now for 3 years. I prefer to read the cards on a one-to-one basis, because I believe that personal contact allows for an exchange of energies and dialogue in order to create mutual understanding between the reader and the querent. Postal and e-mail readings by arrangement.

**How can querents contact you for a reading?**

My telephone number is: 01892 543046

Email address: Taliesintarot@aol.com

## Tarot Poem - Capturing Hope

*By Clare McHale © 2004*

A tarot inspired poem - 17-The Star from the Hudes Tarot



I feel bright today, up to my neck in swirling hope,  
almost blinded by optimism in a pool of night.  
It closes round like setting ice, cracks appearing  
on a threadbare journey against the light.

Hair flowing, clinging like hands at my throat,  
desolate moonbeams piercing my eyes.  
Is this what I longed for? To be devoured by hope?  
Surrounded by a drifting flow of lies?

Or is it a tender craving for fantasy?  
Snarling and trapped, aching for rapture,  
longing for the discharge of resignation  
and hopes final surrender and capture?

# Tarot Timing Calendar

*By Diana McMahon-Collis*

Because I work with astrology for any clients who request dates, as well as for my own readings, I do not often use timing methods with tarot. To be honest I usually find that what I can locate in the astrology with timing measures is enough. However, there are times when, ideally, I would like to see confirmation of a time period in the tarot or when a querent who opts for a tarot-only reading needs the same. It was bound to happen one day; finally my husband asked me for an indication via the tarot of when an important event might take place. That sort of request, from a male Taurean who has been known to veer on the side of cynical, was enough to get me intently working on the best method! I did also suggest that rework the question into something more empowering, along the lines of when it would be favourable for him to take action.

It seemed, then, it was time to explore and deal with the Tarot and time issue, once and for all. Up until this point I had already tried quite a few options, at various moments, out of curiosity. These included the technique Sasha Fenton mentions, in "Tarot in Action", of using the Celtic Cross spread for the question and counting back from card ten until you reach a minor card. For some reason this just didn't add up when I tried it on a couple of occasions, even though I followed the method to the letter. The time span seemed implausible and the events did not "pan out" in reality. Now we all know that the querent's decisions and actions can change things but I just generally felt this method wasn't working for me.

Then there was a system using Aces and counting up the number of cards until one was reached and already allocating this to days, weeks or months for example. Claire Hodson had shown me this when we were going through a tarot brainstorming phase. She was very enthusiastic as it definitely seemed to work for her. Unfortunately, after a few tries, I wasn't convinced it was the approach for me!

Not so very long ago there had also been some discussion about timing methods amongst our lot as tutors and students, when I was a mentor on the TABI Training course with RibbitCat. Several of us liked the method of locating the seasons of the year in the tarot's Minor Arcana but, bearing in mind that we who have arrived at TABI have come from a variety of backgrounds, we did find that one person's idea of which month Autumn begins in is not necessarily the same as another's! That did of course remind me that it is a healthy attitude to be able to live and let live. However, it still left the question of tarot timing hanging in the air. Was it really possible to find a neat little system that one could rely on? I started to doubt it and put the project on ice again, going back to my well tested and comfortable astrology methods!

More recently I caught up with some documentation that was around during my days with the American Tarot Association on their free reading services. James Rioux had written an article for

volunteers, talking about a ratio of passive to active cards and how this could relate to time period. It sounded like an interesting idea but, alas, was not specific enough for what I wanted to do with my tarot readings.

I also found some more up to date articles from the Association's newsletter archives, which can be viewed at [www.ata-tarot.com/reflections](http://www.ata-tarot.com/reflections). DenElder, who I recognised from the original Tarot-301 e-list covered the issue of timing in one of the more comprehensive studies in the new year 2004 issue (although she felt she was being brief, which perhaps indicates how little this subject is usually covered!). Nonetheless, despite DenElder's informed approach and generous sharing I still felt that I hadn't quite found "it" - that is, the timing method that I could really work with - and, dare I say, one that I would feel I could "rely on".

I was feeling like a very fussy Virgo and decided that I would have to do what a typically fussy Virgo would ultimately need to do - and that was to go through everything in minute detail and work out what made the best sense for my situation. From the way I was looking at it, there had to be some reliable way of pinpointing a special moment in time!

This now meant pulling a few books down from the shelves but I did finally find my answer there. My source book is Power Tarot by Trish MacGregor and Phyllis Vega. A range of timing methods is discussed on pages 25-27. This is what the authors say about the one that I settled on:

"The classic, but more cumbersome method, is to key the cards to the seasons of the year. This can be done in several ways. Our favorite is to remove the major arcana from the deck and to work with the court and pip cards. Pick one card from this deck of fifty-six. This becomes your timing card. The key to this system is: wands = spring; cups = summer; pentacles = autumn; swords = winter. An ace then represents the first week of the season, at two is the second week of the season, and so on, though the queen as the thirteenth week of the season. Kings represent the transition from one season to the next."

To be honest I wasn't entirely sold on the idea of the Kings representing a transition point but I could nonetheless see that it might work. What was very obvious was that it was going to be quite difficult to work out any specific dates in my head, with any accuracy - I am just not a natural 'numbers' person. So I set about making up a tool, a yearly "tarot timing calendar", a copy of which you will find below, for this year.

There is an internal logic to this calendar, which works with astrological theory. It begins with the start of the Spring Equinox - that translates to 0 degrees Aries in astrological terms, which is the natural beginning of the zodiac. I have worked with some reliability with the association of tarot card suits to astrological elements. There was no reason why I could not also remember an association of a suit to a season. After all with a timing technique it is rather helpful if you can

easily remember simple correspondences such as these. But even if you can't you can always pull out your trusty tarot calendar for a quick check on dates!

When you look at the calendar I am sure it will be self-explanatory. But if you have any questions please feel free to contact me via the email link at my web-site [www.directdestiny.com](http://www.directdestiny.com). I hope that anyone who tries out the calendar with their tarot readings will find it useful. It certainly helped me to assist my husband with a reading for an important decision he had to make earlier this year. The chart is laid out in Word format so that it can be printed on one x A4 page, for a handy hard-copy reference sheet. But please note that you may have to fiddle with the top/bottom page margins to get it on the one page.

Good luck!

### **Tarot Card Seasonal Date Equivalents for Timing**

*Year 2004-2005*

20 March .....	1 <sup>st</sup> week of Spring.....	Ace of Wands
27 March .....	2 <sup>nd</sup> week of Spring.....	Two of Wands
3 April .....	3 <sup>rd</sup> week of Spring .....	Three of Wands
10 April .....	4 <sup>th</sup> week of Spring .....	Four of Wands
17 April .....	5 <sup>th</sup> week of Spring .....	Five of Wands
24 April .....	6 <sup>th</sup> week of Spring .....	Six of Wands
1 May .....	7 <sup>th</sup> week of Spring .....	Seven of Wands
8 May .....	8 <sup>th</sup> week of Spring .....	Eight of Wands
15 May .....	9 <sup>th</sup> week of Spring .....	Nine of Wands
22 May .....	10 <sup>th</sup> week of Spring .....	Ten of Wands
29 May .....	11 <sup>th</sup> week of Spring .....	Page of Wands
5 June .....	12 <sup>th</sup> week of Spring .....	Knight of Wands
12 June.....	13 <sup>th</sup> week of Spring .....	Queen of Wands

#### **Seasonal Crossover Spring to Summer ..... King of Wands**

19 June .....	1 <sup>st</sup> week of Summer.....	Ace of Cups
26 June.....	2 <sup>nd</sup> week of Summer .....	Two of Cups
3 July .....	3 <sup>rd</sup> week of Summer .....	Three of Cups
10 July .....	4 <sup>th</sup> week of Summer .....	Four of Cups
17 July .....	5 <sup>th</sup> week of Summer .....	Five of Cups

24 July .....	6 <sup>th</sup> week of Summer .....	Six of Cups
31 July .....	7 <sup>th</sup> week of Summer .....	Seven of Cups
7 August .....	8 <sup>th</sup> week of Summer .....	Eight of Cups
14 August .....	9 <sup>th</sup> week of Summer .....	Nine of Cups
21 August .....	10 <sup>th</sup> week of Summer .....	Ten of Cups
28 August .....	11 <sup>th</sup> week of Summer .....	Page of Cups
4 September.....	12 <sup>th</sup> week of Summer .....	Knight of Cups
11 September.....	13 <sup>th</sup> week of Summer .....	Queen of Cups

**Seasonal Crossover Summer to Autumn ..... King of Cups**

18 September.....	1 <sup>st</sup> week of Autumn .....	Ace of Pentacles
25 September.....	2 <sup>nd</sup> week of Autumn .....	Two of Pentacles
2 October.....	3 <sup>rd</sup> week of Autumn.....	Three of Pentacles
9 October.....	4 <sup>th</sup> week of Autumn.....	Four of Pentacles
16 October.....	5 <sup>th</sup> week of Autumn.....	Five of Pentacles
23 October.....	6 <sup>th</sup> week of Autumn.....	Six of Pentacles
30 October.....	7 <sup>th</sup> week of Autumn.....	Seven of Pentacles
6 November.....	8 <sup>th</sup> week of Autumn.....	Eight of Pentacles
13 November.....	9 <sup>th</sup> week of Autumn.....	Nine of Pentacles
20 November.....	10 <sup>th</sup> week of Autumn.....	Ten of Pentacles
27 November.....	11 <sup>th</sup> week of Autumn.....	Page of Pentacles
4 December.....	12 <sup>th</sup> week of Autumn.....	Knight of Pentacles
11 December.....	13 <sup>th</sup> week of Autumn.....	Queen of Pentacles

**Seasonal Crossover Autumn to Winter ..... King of Pentacles**

18 December.....	1 <sup>st</sup> week of Winter .....	Ace of Swords
25 December.....	2 <sup>nd</sup> week of Winter .....	Two of Swords
1 January 2005.....	3 <sup>rd</sup> week of Winter.....	Three of Swords
8 January.....	4 <sup>th</sup> week of Winter.....	Four of Swords
15 January.....	5 <sup>th</sup> week of Winter.....	Five of Swords
22 January.....	6 <sup>th</sup> week of Winter.....	Six of Swords
29 January.....	7 <sup>th</sup> week of Winter.....	Seven of Swords
5 February.....	8 <sup>th</sup> week of Winter.....	Eight of Swords
12 February.....	9 <sup>th</sup> week of Winter.....	Nine of Swords
19 February.....	10 <sup>th</sup> week of Winter.....	Ten of Swords
26 February.....	11 <sup>th</sup> week of Winter.....	Page of Swords
5 March.....	12 <sup>th</sup> week of Winter.....	Knight of Swords
12 March.....	13 <sup>th</sup> week of Winter.....	Queen of Swords

**Seasonal Crossover Winter to Spring..... King of Pentacles**

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## The Adventures of Madame Fifie

Roving tarot reader Madame Fifie will be familiar to members of our discussion group UKTarotTalk, who vie to be the first to work out who her mystery querents are....

### *Previously on The Adventures of Madame Fifie...*

Your querent was a young lady who'd met a handsome prince at a ball...

Reading for **Cinderella** by TABI member Louise Green, who wins a £10 Amazon voucher. Congratulations, Louise!

\*\*\*

You hand over the cards and ask the girl to shuffle them. While she does so, you observe her. She'd be a bonny thing if she would scrub off some of that soot. She has a mannerly air about her for a kitchen maid....

The lass hands the cards back and you deal three, face down.

"The first one is to times past, the middle to that which is happening now and the last is a possible outcome". You turn the first card over to reveal the Nine of Pentacles. Well, you think: that explains a bit.

"It seems you have known better times, m'dear. A time of culture, gracious living, refinement."

"Yes", says the girl. "You can call me Cindy, by the way, everyone does... Yes, I fear hard times fell on my family and I had to give up certain comforts. It didn't come easy I can tell you. But", she continues, "I have not forgotten the deportment and elocution classes my father paid for. You never know when you need them. There isn't a lot of call for it though, in a kitchen..."

You smile and turn over the middle card. The Seven of Cups.

"Ah, now Cindy, you do feel in a bit of an emotional state. You don't know if you are coming or going. You met this young man, you say you have tender feelings for him. Yet, though, you feel you have other choices to make. You mention your father..."

Cindy picks absently at a loose thread on her apron. "He is old now and a bit frail. I can't leave him on his own. He was so good to me as child and I love him so."

"Have you other family? You ask, your stomach growling in anticipation of supper.

"Only my two sisters - well, step sisters actually. They have their own lives to lead, they are not so interested in my Pa. I want a home and family of my own, my father provided for too, but it's a lot to ask of a man you just met...."

"Mmm, yes, take your point" you say, and turn over the last card... The High Priestess!

"Cindy, what does your intuition tell you about this young man?"

Cindy smiles and looks dreamy. "I think he is interested." Then her expression changes as if a cloud has crossed the sun "But how's he going to find me?" she almost wails, and once again the tears well up.

"Did you tell him where you lived?"

"No," the lass hiccups. "All I left with him was a shoe... it fell off as I ran home....what am I going to tell my fair, er, fair friend!!"

"If she's your friend, she'll understand - unless they are Manolo Blahniks in which case you're in trouble."

"He might be able to trace me from the shoe?" the girl asks, clutching at straws. "My feet are tiny."

You look under the table - yup, they are tiny feet all right. The leather on the shoes is worn thin, almost glassy with wear. Perhaps if the lad is worth his salt he *will* endeavour to trace the shoe's owner.

"This f..friend of yours. Do you see her often?"

Cindy looks furtive. "Um, she appears now and again, she's my Godmother you know. She has a way with things, almost magical."

You smile gently at the young girl in front of you. "Well, Cindy, best have a word with her. Firstly, you might want to 'fess up about the shoe and then ask her how she can help find your young man. She sounds like a woman of infinite wisdom to me...."

Cindy springs up, her eyes alight and dancing. "Yes, she'll know what to do...I'd better go now.....my sisters will be waiting. Thank you, Thank you,!" She turns and speeds out, leaving only a gust of air to say where she had been.

You reach for your drink under the table, and chuckle. *Young love* you think. *What a hassle!*  
*Give me a fine supper any day...*

***And now - the Adventure continues...***

*Scenario by Clare McHale*

What a hectic day, pulling yourself together you take out a flask of lukewarm tea, just glad to have something handy to quench your thirst and almost drop it on your foot as a quiet voice says, 'May I help you with that?' A small, plainly dressed young woman takes the flask and cup from your shaky hands and pours the tea, placing it on the table in front of you.

She gives a slight smile of understanding, 'I have come at a bad time; I do beg your pardon.' She turns to leave, pulling her meagre wool shawl more tightly around her small frame.

'Wait, you don't have to go.' You surprise yourself by saying. 'Is there something I can do?' Looking at the pale unassuming young woman you can tell that she's struggling with some strong emotion she's desperate to hide.

'Please, stay. I admit I'm tired, but I can manage three cards.'

'I-, thank you.' She sits in the chair opposite, her back straight, hands clasped together in the lap of her plain grey dress.

'What would you like to know?' You ask as you start to shuffle your deck.

'I have fallen heart and soul in love with my employer. He is a man of the world, a world of which I know little, yet he talks to me as an equal and has confided many things that you would only tell a person you care for and trust, including how he came to be responsible for my young ward. I so enjoy our talks, yet there are other secrets he will not reveal, why a strange woman lives in a part of the house I am forbidden to explore, why he cannot bare to stay at home for any length of time, nor why he feels so bitter and angry. I worry he will do something terrible. And now there is a woman, she is beautiful and clever, while I am plain, and she is his equal socially. He seems to delight in making me witness this spectacle, insisting that I remain in the drawing room while they sing and play games to entertain his guests, but the more I see the more convinced I am that she is not genuine in her affections and my heart aches for him. Please, please tell me how I can help my Master?'

You look up in surprise; it seems as if a dam has broken. 'You want to know how to help him? What about you?' you ask, somewhat indignant, on her behalf.

'I wish only to help him if I can.' She looks up at you catching your worried expression and reaches out, placing a cool capable hand on your arm. 'Do not worry; I am stronger than I look and very sensible with it, though my dilemma would seem to belie this. I know I must not let my heart rule my head. Please, draw the cards for me.' ...

***Can you guess the identity of Madame Fifie's mystery querent? Will you read for her? Send your readings to [newsletter@tabi.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@tabi.org.uk) and we'll update the Adventure next issue...***

***Once again a £10 Amazon voucher is up for grabs for the best submission!***

## The TABI Interview : Paul Hughes-Barlow

*By Chris Roberts*

**Paul Hughes-Barlow, professional tarot reader, public speaker, mainstay of international tarot conferences and now (if the highly favourable reviews are any guide) with recent publication of "Tarot and the Magus" successful author! How does this feel?**

A relief! People who had seen glimpses of the content, and had given me feedback during the writing were convinced that it would do well, but you never really know until the book is published.

**Even a cursory glance at "Tarot and the Magus" suggests significant departures from the usual format of Tarot books. What was your intent here and how did this come about?**

I was the first author to be signed up for Aeon Books, so the slate was entirely clean. Established publishers of tarot books expect the same old format of 22 chapters (will it start with zero?) or 78. I was determined not to go down that path, and fortunately my publisher agreed. Having said that, structure was still incredibly important, so we agreed on 11 chapters, which happens to be my favourite number of change and magick. The first half of the book was to be on the basics of card counting, pairing and elemental dignities, while the second half was to be more advanced and philosophical. This was a book about reading the Opening of the Key Spread, and it was made quite clear to me that it was not to be a book of magick, which could go in book two.

My publisher suggested the idea of pairing the Major cards at the beginning of each chapter, which I thought ludicrous, and only went along with the idea under duress. The bits of the book that were written first (and barely changed throughout) were the gematria analysis of the paired cards, and that was the first clue that something special was happening. I chose gematria because we did not know what deck would be used to illustrate the book. As soon as I did the sums, I realised something interesting - the last two paired cards had the same value, 50. Then it occurred to me that the originators of the Golden Dawn had swapped the Strength and Justice cards, for reasons that never made much sense.

Transposing the cards did make sense with the pairing system. Of course, the next thing to do was look at the Star and Emperor cards, which are already paired, so transposing makes no difference. In the meantime, the first version of the book based upon Supertarot was awful, and I spent a month wondering how on earth I was going to write this book. I had just done a full reading for a client, and it occurred to me that I could base the 'lessons' on strings of cards rather than the triplets found on supertarot.

That was the breakthrough, and at last I could get on and write.

**In writing your book, who was your designed audience? What was the level of reader you hoped to attract? Is it suitable for beginners?**

I wanted to write a book that would appeal to all levels of ability. I was trying to emulate the unwritten social rules that we all adopt in life. For example, when we walk into a room of strangers, we automatically adopt our behaviour, scanning the room for people we might like or dislike, are attracted to, or avoid at all costs. We do know any names, but that does not matter. Different people will of course get a different view of that room too, which is important. That is what the rules of Elemental Dignities are about - they are strict, but gives loads of room for interpretation. Crowley gives a similar example in the Book of Thoth.

The book contains no formal divinatory meanings for the cards, which is quite deliberate. There are several reasons for this.

- 1: Every tarot book has them
- 2: There is little variation between the DMs
- 3: Most people have the little white book
- 4: After all these years of reading tarot, I am as superficial with the DMs as I was when I started.
- 5: In-depth memorising of the DMs is not necessary.

At the other end of the scale, I wanted to write about the things I wanted from a good tarot book, but rarely get. The more sophisticated tarot readers will get stretched too, I hope. Tarot is not taken seriously as a magical system, so I wanted to correct that bias, although when the project was started I had no idea just how important the magical side was to become.

**Many of us will be familiar with your "supertarot" website. (I am a particular fan!) How does this work fit in with the book?**

The book and website should complement each other. If you get stuck on EDs in the book, I would hope there is an answer of sorts on the website. Only the shamanic chapter comes directly from the website, slightly edited. There are a few other sections, but mostly the material is new.

**You are an acknowledged authority on certain aspects of Tarot, notably the use of Golden Dawn techniques e.g. Card counting, pairing, elemental dignities etc. Yet it is still somewhat of a "Cinderella Science"? Do you think this should not be so?**

People seem to be wedded to the comfort zone of looking at the pictures. Algebra is 'harder' to learn, but it is infinitely more powerful. There are lots of good tarot readers who read the traditional way, and that should continue, but as I hope the book illustrates, there are other, more interesting ways of doing things.

**The Golden Dawn seemed to be quite keen of their use of court card signifiers as people. What is your viewpoint on this?**

I do too, but with strings of cards, and the relationships between the cards, it is much easier to

place a court by the cards surrounding it, rather than the card itself. Also, with card counting the reader is free to explore how two or more court cards interact (or not), and it is fascinating to see the process reflected in real life.

**You seem very familiar with correspondences, qabala and notably astrology? Do you see these as very important to Tarot?**

Astrology will be for another book. Of more interest is the downgrading of the Tree of Life, which gets a small diagram. (in the book) I analyse card counting in terms of the Paths etc, but I am moving away from this system.

**Esoteric societies are often the home of strong personalities, yet your work seems to gain wide acceptance among initiates. Are you (if you can say!) a member of any organisation or an initiate/adept yourself?**

I have never been a member of a Masonic Lodge or Secret Society, so I am free to give away as many secrets as I like. My teacher Punditt, who 'tricked' me into reading for the public, never discussed the tarot.

**What do you consider the role of the Spiritual to be in Tarot?**

I consider the Tarot to be the most powerful system of spiritual development currently available, as it encompasses so many other magical and spiritual systems, such as Enochian magic and the Kabbalah.

**Do you have a personal belief system?**

I do, but it can be somewhat vague, even to me. I place a high regard on personal experience rather than being told, so as I learn new things, my belief system gets modified accordingly.

**Guides?**

Much of the book was written by Guides, particularly when they lead me on the aspects of Liber 231. I take full responsibility for the writings.

**Are you Psychic?**

Yes.

**Some groups are wary of "High Magic" as complex? Have you also interests in more**

**tradition methods? You mention Shamanism?**

I have never done ritual or "High Magic". There are no rituals in T&TM, except for the ritual of cutting, laying out the cards and interpreting. The level of interpretation will of course vary. My teacher Punditt is a Sufi, but the methods I learnt from him are shamanic (Carlos Castenada's books are vaguely analogous).

**Now questions everyone asks: How long have you been involved in Tarot?**

20 years.

**What drew you to Tarot?**

I had no choice - reading palms is too difficult, especially on the 'will I meet a man this weekend?' type of questions.

**Who (if any) were personal influences?**

Crowley's Book of Thoth is at the top of the pile. Dion Fortune is vastly under-rated as a writer on the Tarot, which I tried to remedy in my book. The entire Golden Dawn system is suffused with the Tarot, so Israel Regardie's books get re-read. A friend of mine is translating Papus' Tarot Divinatoire for Aeon Books, which is a treat.

**Do you have any favourite Tarot decks? Do you teach?**

I own one deck, guess which! I should get out and teach - this is an area I need to address.

**You have developed a whole new outlook on e.g. Crowley's spirits of Liber 231. Only Kenneth Grant mentions them at any length. What of these?**

Kenneth Grant invoked the Liber 231 Spirits using Goetic invocation techniques, which are forms of coercion, akin to Gestapo tactics. For me, they appeared spontaneously as a result of spending three months analysing the same four strings of cards for the book. Studying EDs and the Tarot seems far easier and much more satisfying. Linda Falorio has written the full 78 Shadow Tarot for Aeon, which will be very interesting.

As a result of the interaction with the Spirits of Liber 231 I was able to gain some insight into their nature, and to the meaning of their sigils. It was a fascinating and exciting time.

**Your collaborator Tim Rifat (RV-Magick) described their appearance as "monstrous". Are Liber 231 & the Goetic Daemons my friends? <G>**

Diligently study EDs and card counting etc as described, and I am sure you will find out!

**What of the everyday World of a Professional Tarotist in Brighton?**

Being a professional tarot reader was never ever my intention. I thought tarot readers were the lowest of the low - and then I became one! Being where I am on the seafront, I am on the spiritual frontline, so I get to deal with the highs and lows of tarot reading on a daily basis. Tarot readers working in Psychic and Therapy shops have it easy believe me.

**Do you consider yourself a bearer of tradition in "End of Peer" tarotists?**

I hope not. I do fulfil a role however, and I am not sure how I would have met my good friends who are magicians otherwise.

**Do you have strong views on professionalism, ethics etc. ?**

I tried to cover this in one of the chapters of the book in a pragmatic manner rather than be high-handed. I have my way of doing things, which a lot of people like, but there are plenty of people who probably would not approve.

**You appear to be someone who embraces new (e.g. web) technology and the more technical and "scientific" aspects of Tarot. What do you see as the future of Tarot?**

I have so many new ideas on tarot I don't know where to start! Working on this book has opened the floodgates of creativity, and I keep on coming up with new ideas on an daily basis.

I am working on 'new' concepts that put the Tarot at the forefront of technology in terms of magic, consciousness and spiritual development.

**What of your own future? Research? Any more books in the pipeline?**

I have only done half of the first stage of the Opening of the Key Spread, so I started on the second half but... Several days after the book was typeset, and had gone to the printers, I realised that the pairing of the Major cards in the book was based on the Atbash code. Although I knew about the Atbash code, it never entered my head during the writing, which was fortunate, otherwise the concept would have 'contaminated' the writing. The Tarot unlocks the Atbash code, so I am researching new lines of enquiry.

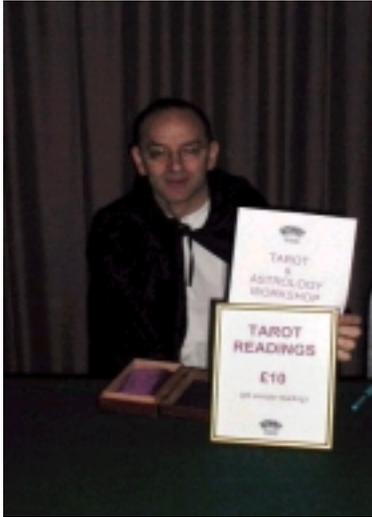
*Many thanks to Paul for his time! Visit his website at : <http://www.supertarot.co.uk/index.htm>*

Tarot and the Magus is available at Amazon - click on the link from TABI's home page :

<http://www.tabi.org.uk>

## TABI at The Witches' Ball

TABI were pleased to have a presence at the Children of Artemis' popular event, held at Farfield Halls in Croydon on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2004...



# Tarot - the quest for the Holy Grail of automated Tarot programs

*By Ian 'Uther' Lawson*

Before I start, a disclaimer..... In the immortal words of Homer Simpson, I have a history of missing the point. The stuff I mention in the article is 100% my own thoughts, therefore there is a 40% chance that I am completely wrong, another 40% chance that I am right by accident and another 40% chance that I may have misunderstood how all this mathematic stuff works anyway. What I am trying to say is this – all of this is supposition mixed with technical knowledge, and is completely my own opinion. If anyone feels I'm completely missing the point, you're probably right....

I love Tarot. There, said it. Its probably the only thing in my life (aside from the sellophane wrapping on DVD's and CD's) that I think is genuinely unexplainable. When I do a reading and draw a card it always feels right for the situation, and, interpretation aside, the card's meaning always has some relevance to the question asked.

So where does this power, internal intuition if you like, come from? I think it comes down to two very basic, completely opposing reasons. Number one, the power that allows us to read Tarot comes from within, via a spiritual guide, internal sixth sense or channelling of some unknown energy. And number two – it's a simple matter of determination of meaning based on our own previous experiences.

If you subscribe to the first meaning then Tarot is mystical. I want to subscribe to the first meaning, I truly do. But something has been nagging me about the possibility of the second meaning being some, if not all, of the truth. This nagging thought comes about from the work I am doing for a PhD. My PhD is based around the concept of machine learning – specifically it is related to something called Learning Classification. At its most simple this is a process by which, if you feed enough pertinent information into a computer in a format that it can understand and manipulate, then allow the computer to make statements based on what it thinks of the data and then reward it appropriately (kind of like the 'here's a doggy chew for being good' or slapping the computer on the nose with a rolled up paper when it says things like 'the sky is green'). Sounds complicated? Well its not – in fact it's the way that all creatures actually learn – by attempting then being rewarded. The actual description of this is something called 'reinforcement', and it is this reinforcement of concepts that people often label 'intuition'..

But what has this got to do with Tarot? (I hear you all groaning). That's the crux – I've been obsessed with seeing if I could design (in my head) an automated Tarot reader. Any reason why would you want to? (I hear you all groan again). Well, call me a twisted individual but I'd love to be able to prove that, even given the most cutting edge of computer learning techniques the automated reader will still not be able to make the connections that we Tarot readers can. As I said, I'm a reason number one kinda guy.

So, where to start? First thing to think about is the deck of cards. You want to read Tarot, you grab your Tarot bag (or in my case my slightly dog-eared Rider Waite box, you draw your 78 or so cards from the deck (yes, one of my cards of the day was in fact the instruction/publishers details card – guess my message of the day was ‘today you will be made from 100% recycled materials’). Lets say you want to draw a single card of the day – you relax, you meditate, you try desperately not to think of the chocolate bar in the fridge, and you shuffle and draw a card.

So what have you just done? You’ve taken a probability of  $1/78$  (one card from 78) and satisfied it for a single occurrence (the card you just drew). Draw another card and the probability of getting the one you’d be holding in your hand after is  $1/77$ . But is it that simple? I had a chat with my PhD mentor about this (partly to distract him from the fact that I had managed to do about 0% of the tasks I needed to do. In fact I’d gone backwards because I had had a brainflash about changing some of my code and consequently broke it), and he asked a very interesting question – when you draw a card where do you draw the card from? Or more mathematically, what is the distribution of the cards drawn with regard to the pack – do you draw more from the front, more from the back, or do you cut the deck in half and take the card there? Its an interesting question and if I wasn’t so confused about everything else I’d probably follow it up, but I thought it was a very interesting point – I now make an effort to fully shuffle my deck and draw from wherever I feel is right now.

Anyway, I’m straying again. My point with mentioning the drawing of cards is thus – it is very simple to write a computer program that will produce random cards from a Tarot deck. In some ways the computer program actually becomes a Tarot deck – some people feel that the Tarot is the tool and we are the builders, and in this case the computer program has become the tool. But that is all that it could ever be from that perspective – a tool. My interest is more at an interpretational level.

How a Learning Classifier System works is very like teaching a child the idea of concepts. You teach an LCS how to recognise patterns in data by feeding loads of examples in and rewarding the system in a positive or negative way as to the correctness of its attempt to classify what it sees. After it has seen enough data it can make very precise guesses (call them ‘educational guesses’) as to the classification of the data. The down side is that you have to feed in a lot of data for the computer to make anything other than a completely random guess.

So, lets pretend that we have a huge computer with oodles of memory and storage, and processing power that would make NSA weep. We want it to recognise the concept of ‘Death’, so we show it every single card in the Tarot deck, and when it asks ‘is this a Death card’ we say yes or no. After (at least) 78 cards the computer can now say categorically what a Death card is. Sounds contrite, yes? But the beauty of it is thus – when the computer started up it had no determination of what a death card was. Now it does, and we haven’t had to change the actual programming of the computer in order to get it to recognise the card. Trivial example, but it shows the basic of what you can do with an LCS. There is actually a hell of a lot more to LCS in that we also train LCS’s to recognise data they have never seen by using algorithms that mimic the genetic learning process. Its all spanky and new and techie and really the same as rolling a very, very big dice.

So, wot about this Tarot stuff then I hear you cry. Well, believers in reason number 2 would have us believe that a Tarot reading is based on the following prerequisites – a learned understanding of what each card relates to in a positive or negative way, a learned understanding of what the querent wants to know from the cards and an essence of interpretation. None of these are mystical – all three are evolutions of pre-existing knowledge. In the same way that the fictional computer in the example above learned the death card by being shown all the cards, a reader has learned the interpretations of the cards and their relevance to the querent’s question by evolution of existing social skills. If this is true (and please, I don’t personally subscribe to this reason so put down the stakes, kindling and matches!) then there is no reason why, if we could reduce the meanings of the cards down to a number of discrete, disparate definitions, a computer could learn to make the same interpretations.

So, how would we quantify what a card ‘meant’. My initial thoughts were to reduce the questions that an automated Tarot reader could respond to into a number of distinct categories (i.e. relationships, careers, lifestyle, health), and then to allocate to each card a ‘potential’ for each of the categories – for example drawing the Knight of Wands – I would give that card a negative potential for relationships, a positive potential for careers, a slightly positive potential for lifestyle and a zero potential for health – this is a crude and contrite example, but it shows how a card can be categorised in terms of a response to be drawn in a given situation. By enlarging the number of distinct categories and carefully building the potentials, a drawn card in a given situation can then be interpreted by the program as a positive or negative effect on the question.

So where am I going with this? My analytical mind reckons that it should be possible, with enough forethought, to produce a classification system for Tarot cards that would allow an automated reader to make an intuitive, educated statement as to the relevance and impact of a card on a reading. This is just scratching the surface – along with giving cards potentials with regard to distinct categories the concept of spreads could be represented in the same way. As with all computer systems, the more precise you define the bounding parameters, the better the program would be. Or more crudely, crap in = crap out.

But as I said, I’m a reason number one man. I love Tarot because I feel something when I read Tarot cards that I haven’t felt since I was a child, and that is a warm, fulfilling connection with the cards and the question I am meditating on. By reducing the concepts of Tarot to classifiers and other spanky new technologies, what have I factored out? What core, essential attribute do I have that my computer does not, nor ever will have? And that, dear readers, is the million tarot decks question...

***Watch TABI News for further updates on the Great Project!***

## Book Review: Pictures from the Heart, A Tarot Dictionary

Written by Sandra A Thomson

*Reviewed by Vivianne Kacal*

Description: 466 pages  
Publisher: St Martins Griffin  
ISBN: 0-312-29128-0  
£10.30 at Amazon

The book is divided into two parts: Power Tarot, which covers history (briefly) – accurate and current, as it has been credited to James Revak; the importance of symbolism; the concept of 'good' and 'bad' cards – and how to overcome that; the importance of myths, numbers and colours. Alchemy is defined, but not numerology or astrology – which makes an immediate assumption about the reader's knowledge.

Highly interesting is the section called 'Decks: Twenty-Five Top Gateways' in which the author says that "The RWS and Thoth/Crowley decks are the two most popular decks sold, according to Los Angeles booksellers". This implies that the other twenty-three decks are listed in some kind of order of popularity, but the author does not state her sources for this somewhat surprising list – the Light and Shadow deck at No.7, for instance. She also does not include any 'fantasy or magical decks' as "they are sometimes difficult for a beginner to use". There are two problems with this rather arbitrary decision: firstly, the fantasy and magical decks are amongst the most popular – check out Aeclectic's forums; and secondly, this is not solely a beginner's book, according to the blurb on the back – "For both the experienced and knowledgeable practitioner as well as the tarot neophyte". As it does actually appear to be aimed primarily at the 'neophyte', there should be some consistency: if magical and fantasy decks are difficult, how do the Haindl and Songs for the Journey Home merit inclusion? In addition, the Osho Zen is included, although Thomson does say it is "definitely not a deck for beginners"; is this a sop to the "experienced practitioner"?

Part One also includes a section on spreads. As one would expect from the co-author of 'The Heart of the Tarot: The Two-Card Layout', the 'situation and challenge' layout is detailed, but other spreads get a mere mention in passing – including the classic Celtic Cross, dismissed as difficult for beginners, and not mentioned in the dictionary section.

As expected, the author takes the modern and fashionable approach, ie. tarot is best used for insights and greater "personal understanding" rather than prediction; in discussing LWBs, she states "unfortunately, most of these terms have to do with prediction".

Part Two is 'The Tarot Dictionary' – and it isn't quite what it says on the tin. It gives definitions of 'normal', psychological and oriental terms in relation to tarot, for example: amplifying, mask, chakra etc., and tarot-specific terms such as querent and significator. It covers certification, but – a surprising omission – not ethics or ethical codes. Noted occultists/tarotists are included – as long as they are dead; the same goes for deck artists. Where are Gray, Greer and Pollack? Where is Williams? No deck publishers are mentioned either.

As usual, it is very US-centric; for example, the ATA has an entry; there is passing mention of Europe and none at all of the UK. Perhaps the author has made the common assumption that they are one and the same. In retaliation, I shall assume that all North Americans are Canadians: after all, they're not separated by anything more than a line on a map, whereas we have the sea. But I digress.

This book is very heavily based on information garnered from, and people active on, a few sites on the world-wide web. Also, it certainly could not have been written without Mary Greer, who appears as a source on countless occasions. It is therefore odd that the internet/web reference section at the back is so brief. As a "modern" tarot dictionary so reliant on cyber-information, perhaps some noted (and alive) cyber-tarotists deserve entries in the dictionary and not just the end-notes, for example: James Revak, Mark Filipas et al.

As a dictionary should, it avoids commenting on controversial matters/people, for example: Crowley; and the ATA, TCBA etc; presumably Jess Karlin gets no mention anywhere because of the author's decision not to include cyber-tarotists.

Considering that the dictionary gives methods as well as definitions, for example: meditation methods; on other entries it skirts the issue; for instance, temporal readings are "complicated" and "vary considerably depending on the reader" (as do readings!), which is true - but the beginner hoping for tips might be justifiably disappointed.

More than once the author describes the difficulty of defining symbols; and makes some curious omissions when describing specific cards – armour has an entry, yet she does not mention that the skeleton in the RWS deck wears it – "The RWS portrays Death as a golden skeleton", a misleading description for those who have never seen a RWS (a rare breed).

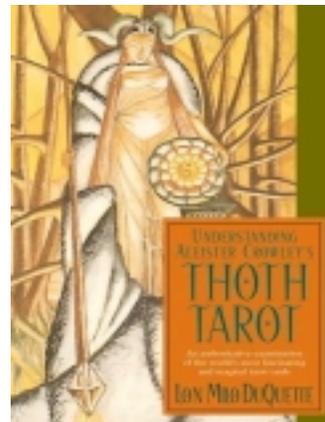
On the positive side, this book is far more comprehensive than, say, Porter's 'Tarot Companion', and beginners would find it easy to use. Old hands might find the comparative deck aspect mildly interesting. However, this book simply cannot overcome its main failure and flaw: "Because of space and publication constraints not every symbol on every card could be mentioned". Just as well Messrs. Webster and Chambers didn't take this restrictive view when compiling their respective dictionaries. This could have been addressed by removing the comparative tarot element - even the whole of Part One - and replacing it with an exhaustive listing of symbols from the RWS; it is better to do one thing well than to be mediocre at several.

# Book Review: Understanding Aleister Crowley's Thoth Tarot

Written by Lon Milo DuQuette  
*Reviewed by Brian Stephenson*

Description: 330 pages  
Publisher: Weiser Books  
ISBN 1 - 57863 - 276 - 5  
£11.88 at Amazon

The Thoth Tarot is the second most popular Tarot deck in the world. Although the cards can be appreciated simply by looking at them, the book that Aleister Crowley wrote to accompany the cards (*The Book of Thoth*) is not so straightforward to understand. Most dedicated Tarot readers will probably have glanced at a copy of *The Book of Thoth* and decided that it was almost incomprehensible without a detailed knowledge of Crowley and his complex teachings and beliefs.



Lon Milo DuQuette is an expert on Crowley and on the Tarot. For over 30 years he has studied and practised Crowley's magical system. He is also a Certified Tarot Grand Master and creator of the Tarot of Ceremonial Magick. In short, when discussing Tarot and Crowley, Lon Milo DuQuette knows what he is talking about.

Just as importantly, the author is an excellent communicator and in this book he sets out everything you need to know about Crowley's fundamental principles so that you may get the most out of using the Thoth deck. He begins with the historical background to the creation of the Thoth Tarot before providing background information about Alchemy, Astrology, Gematria, Magick, Numerology and Qabalah. This background information helps the reader to put the contents of the deck into perspective.

Chapters then follow which give in-depth descriptions of each card, from both a Tarot perspective and from a magical point of view. Each card has one or two pages to itself, including a black and white print of the card. There is even a chapter about The Hermetic Rose Cross design that decorates the back of the cards. The book concludes with a chapter on Divination followed by a detailed Glossary of Thelemic and Tarot terminology.

A book of this nature could have been a dry and scholarly textbook; however, Lon Milo DuQuette succeeds in making the book interesting by including many amusing anecdotes about Crowley, Lady Frieda Harris and others.

Compared to some of the Tarot Made Quick & Easy books that have been appearing recently, this book was a joy to read and I'm looking forward to reading it again!

## Book Review: What Tarot Can Do For You

Written by Barbara Moore

*Reviewed by Shelley King*

Description: 192 pages softback

Publisher: Llewellyn

ISBN: 0-7387-0173-4

£4.36 at Amazon

This is very much aimed at the newcomer to tarot, but is definitely a superior beginners' book. It opens with a basic description of the structure of a deck and a brief but down-to-earth look at tarot history, and then goes on to address what I imagine in the most common issue in a beginner's mind: divination. Despite the book being subtitled 'Your Future In The Cards', there is no fortune-telling bias: Moore looks upon the tarot as a tool for information-gathering, and states that most readers are now "adopting the idea of personal responsibility and empowerment... allowing people to take a more proactive approach to their lives than a reactive, passive one."

This attitude is reflected in a very good 'Asking the Question' section, which would actually be just as useful to a querent as a student: the author deconstructs 'bad' questions such as 'Will I / Should I marry Joe?' in a very clear and easy to follow way, showing how a little more thought can "show you as much about the situation and yourself as the oracle can" - and lead to a question that can actually provide the information the querent really wants. Although the assumption is that the querent and reader are the same person at this point, the lessons learned here will be invaluable when the student comes to read for others, as it provides a sound, logical basis from which to later tackle the sometimes thorny issue of rephrasing. The focus here is on the need to change a question in order to get to the necessary details, rather than the 'some questions are unworthy of the tarot' attitude that is sometimes seen - and which can come across as rather high-handed or patronising to a querent. Throughout the book we meet Tom and Leslie, who use the cards for various purposes, and in one reading Leslie reads for herself with the question 'What are the ramifications of staying in the relationship as opposed to ending the relationship because it isn't quite what I want?' Lovely. We see clearly how much more she gets from her reading than if she'd asked the simpler 'Should I leave Tom?' I wish there were more querents like Leslie - and maybe there would be if they read this book.

The examples of spreads are also good - a basic Celtic Cross is described, although its limitations are pointed out and just as much emphasis is given to self-designed spreads as pre-designed. A three, a seven and a one card spread are all shown as an actual reading, illustrated with different decks and very nicely done: the readings are based on a mixture of traditional interpretations and insights drawn by both querent and reader based on the individual images. The card meanings in this book is deliberately sparse and students would need another source for these, but the interpretation *process* is very well done and would be an excellent basis to work from once some basic meanings are under the belt.

Encouragement is also given to working out individual and intuitive meanings - which the author points out will take time and effort, and explains how it is grounded in the image, the suit and the number of the card. I liked this approach, as I have an issue with the idea sometimes implied; that it is enough to turn a card and pronounce its meaning to be the first thing that enters your head, regardless of whether that bears any relation to anything, and simply call it 'intuition'. There's more to it than that - more work to be done - and it's nice to see this acknowledged.

Following on from the reading/divination chapters comes one on problem-solving, which also stresses that tarot involves work. Again, there are illustrated examples given and these demonstrate how well tarot works with the querent/reader, leading them to question themselves as well as the cards. I liked the emphasis on reading for yourself, as this can be a stumbling block for many beginners. By showing the thought-process and conclusions the readers draw about themselves, the book helps the fledging reader to understand how to go about applying the cards to their own situation - and this of course translates easily into doing the same thing for other people.

Next come chapters on meditation and journalling, both very succinct and clear with good practical exercises and examples. Our friend Leslie has an uncomfortable but productive encounter with Fortuna when meditating with the Wheel of Fortune, and we're also given other games to try: storytelling, dream interpretation, letter-writing. There's a lot here to occupy the students' mind, other than simple readings, and is a good introduction to wider uses of tarot.

Magic is also covered, in a straightforward and practical way, with simple rituals, affirmations and spells. The chapter is quite brief but informative about the basics, and suggestions are made for further reading. The focus is again on the work and development required on the part of the practitioner rather than just a 'recipe' approach, and while the issue of ethics is not separately addressed, it is woven throughout the text as a whole in a clear and thoughtful manner.

The Self-Improvement section shows Tom and Leslie working through their Life and Year cards - and again it's nice to see these concepts in action rather than just be given the 'how-to.' The Fools Journey is briefly explained, and then used in a large spiritual journey reading, which is a nice showcase of how the cards can be used for more abstract ideas.

The final chapter gives advice on selecting a deck, and includes some good advice - card size being one point that I personally never gave enough thought to in the early days! - and looks at how different decks can be appropriate for different uses. There are some overviews of decks such as the Celtic Dragon, the Witches Tarot and the Legend, but these are very sparse and the pictures are only of the box covers. A little more detail here, and possibly some actual links to online retailers in the shopping section could have made this more useful.

Overall, this is a very well-written and engagingly-presented book which would be marvellous for beginners. If you're already reasonably familiar with tarot, however, you're not likely to learn much new here - although I think it would make a great textbook for courses or workshops. As it is so easy to understand and non-threatening without being overly 'fluffy bunny', it would also be a very good book to give to anyone worried about what scary business their loved ones were getting into!

## Deck Review: Aquarian Tarot

Created/illustrated by: David Palladini

*Reviewed by Troy Stephens*

Description: 78 cards with 16-page booklet

Card Dimensions: 75 x 118mm

The 19th Century artist Aubrey Beardsley may have influenced David Palladini when he devised this interesting and unusual pack. However, the bold and sensual lines used by Beardsley have been softened by the use of autumnal colours such as rich reds, browns, dark oranges and muted yellows.

Some of the designs, such as the 4 of Wands and the 9 of Cups, are obviously heavily influenced by the Rider-Waite. Other cards are entirely new and original. Most of the people depicted in the cards wear large and very elaborate flowing costumes. The Lovers are a good example of this as their Japanese-style robes almost seem to overwhelm the people wearing them. However, if you look beyond the drapery, you will see that the faces are finely drawn and full of expression, meaning and life. There is a feeling that all the characters have their own hidden story to tell the reader. The manner in which the faces have been drawn and partially hidden by hats and clothing means that the exact story being told will vary from reading to reading. A good example of this is the King of Swords, where the King's face is partially obscured by his crown, headdress, sword and shield.

Many of the cards have a theatrical feel to them as they are reminiscent of theatrical posters and costume designs. This will give readings an added dimension as the reader will be subtly influenced by these theatrical references and concepts.

The cards do have something of a 'male feel' about them and readers might like to use them for giving readings to men. The deck should appeal to beginners who are searching for an alternative to the more traditional Rider-Waite. More experienced readers will also appreciate them, particularly if they are drawn to a 19th/20th Century view of the medieval era.

## Places to Go, Things to Do

*The latest offerings from the esoteric community...*

### Fayres/Festivals/Conferences

#### March 2004

#### **TAROT & THE GODS & GODDESSES, with Rachel Pollack and Caitlín Matthews**

This FíOS Masterclass explores how the tarot can show us how we inter-relate with our gods and spirits, and how we can honour that sacred relationship. With new spreads, rituals and readings this is a unique opportunity to work at the cutting edge of divination with humour, joy and passion.

This course will run at two locations in U.K. in March 2004:

19-21 March at Hawkwood College, Stroud, Glos. Contact 01495 759034 or [info@hawkwoodcollege.co.uk](mailto:info@hawkwoodcollege.co.uk) FEES: £184-£204.

26-28 March at Hebden House, Hebden Bridge, Yorks. Contact Jane May 01865 407680 or email her on [jdmay@masdafish.com](mailto:jdmay@masdafish.com). FEES: £215-£245

For more details of course content contact Caitlín Matthews on [tigerna9@aol.com](mailto:tigerna9@aol.com) or see [www.hallowquest.org.uk](http://www.hallowquest.org.uk)

#### **Inanna's Festival**

11 Pottergate  
Norwich  
Norfolk NR2 1DS  
tel: 01603-626133 (with callminder)  
[inannamagic@ntlworld.com](mailto:inannamagic@ntlworld.com)

#### April 2004

The 14th Norwich Mind, Body & Spirit Festival will be the 17th, 18th & 19th 9Fir/Sat/Sun) April 2004 at the huge central city-centre venue of The Forum, Norwich - FFI Inanna's Festival

### Regular Meetings

**Nottingham - Astrology Group** meets monthly every 2nd or 3rd Wednesday for talks and practical work. Further details from Gill on 0115 970 3051

**Manchester - Turn of the Cards** - a Tarot discussion group on the third Thursday of every month, hosted by Madame Estelle in New Aeon Books upstairs meeting room. Starts 7pm and the cost is £2.50 (£1.50 concessions). Phone 0161 232 0934

### **Theme/special interest/fun decks**

<http://www.beertarot.com/>

The Alcohol Tarot

### **Shopping**

*Eternia - the new age shop*

<http://www.eternia.co.uk>

UK Online shop for mystic and spiritual items. Buy Crystals, candles, essential oils, jewellery and many other perfect mind, body and spirit gifts. Includes a tarot reading service.

### **TABI's Own Links**

***The Tarot Association of the British Isles Web Site***

<http://www.tabi.org.uk>

***Past issues of the Newsletter:***

<http://www.tabi.org.uk/page.php?page=newsletter>

***To request a Free Reading:***

<http://www.tabi.org.uk/freereading/freeread.php>

***Discussion forums:***

<http://www.tabi.org.uk/forums/>

***UK Tarot Talk - our General Discussion List on Tarot, for readers of all levels, hosted on Yahoogroups.***

<http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/UKTarotTalk/>

Our lists for volunteers and students are available from the site and/or when you sign up for volunteering, reading or learning the tarot. See the TABI web-site for details.

We hope you have enjoyed reading TABI News. Please address all enquiries to the Editor

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