



Tarot Association  
of the British Isles

# TABI NEWS

*Issue #8 21<sup>st</sup> June 2003*

Welcome to the Midsummer 2003 edition of the TABI Newsletter. In this issue we have a review of TABI's first ever Residential Tarot Weekend, which was a glowing success and greatly enjoyed by all participants!

We also have interviews with author Joanna Watters and tarot artist Ray Mallaney, more in our popular Going Pro series and a special offer on Tarot Pendants for TABI Members from those kind folks at New Moon!

We're also offering a prize draw to all readers who complete our feedback questionnaire, which can be found at the end of the newsletter - we'd love to hear from you!

Blessings of the Season to all our readers.

With best wishes,

**Shelley King**

Editor

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We do our best to keep the information in TABI News accurate. We send out notification of new issues 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. Should wish to be removed from our mailing list, please contact [newsletter@tabi.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@tabi.org.uk)

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)

# *Greetings from TABI*

The Who, What and Where...

## **WHAT'S NEW – TABI FORUM**

Are you aware of the fact that TABI has a forum feature at its website? Would you like to engage in discussion with fellow TABI members? Make a suggestion or two? Arrange a meeting? Read information on fayres? Swap tarot decks or books? Well, your TABI forum needs you!

As of May 2003 the TABI forums have been under new management and exciting developments are taking place! In order to participate in the TABI forums you will first need to visit the TABI website and register your details (<http://www.tabi.org.uk/forums/>). Once this has been done then you will be able to access the forums which come under the following main categories - General Tarot/TABI Information, Tarot Discussion/Reviews/Shopping, Associated Esoteric Disciplines, and TABI Administration (for TABI volunteers only). There are many forums included in each category and additional forums will be added over the next few months. Why not post an introduction as soon as you register and let other TABI members know who and where you are?

It is hoped that all TABI members will be regular visitors to the forums and that at some point over the next few months some members-only content will be provided. Until then we would encourage you to use the swap shop, post card descriptions, write some reviews, compile a wish-list, post tips, spells, links, exercises, and share some of your favourite spreads. Forums for other esoteric disciplines are also included so please feel free to share some information on runes, crystals, reiki etc and ask as many questions as possible!

If you require help or further details then please contact a member of the forum team (below) who will be happy to help. Suggestions are also more than welcome so please visit the forums today and let us know what you think!

Forum Manager - Bethan Arrowsmith ([bethan@arianrhod.net](mailto:bethan@arianrhod.net))  
Forum Assistants - Cougar ([cougargb@lycos.co.uk](mailto:cougargb@lycos.co.uk)) & Freespirit  
([webmaster@FreeSpiritTarot.co.uk](mailto:webmaster@FreeSpiritTarot.co.uk))

## ***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 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 implemented 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
- Discounts on Residential Weekends
- The chance to practice your skills and meet other like-minded people, in a fun and friendly environment

***\*\*\*\* We are pleased to confirm that Overseas members are also welcome – fees for outside the UK will be £20 per year to cover the increased postage costs. \*\*\*\****

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)

To apply to become a TABI Free Reader, send a blank email to [reading@tabi.org.uk](mailto:reading@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. For more information, contact [admin.shelley@tabi.org.uk](mailto:admin.shelley@tabi.org.uk)

**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!

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## *Stricly Private & Confidential...?*

*By Julia Clasby, 'shewhodanceswithtarot'*

In the increasingly litigious age we live in, even tarot readers need to consider the letter of the Law...

At first glance, the issue of “confidentiality” during a tarot reading or consultation seems pretty straightforward: the reader promises the querent that everything is completely confidential, that nothing discussed between them or divulged by the querent during the course of their time together will be shared with a third party, and the querent proceeds to “spill the beans” as to what concerns, issues or events have brought them to seek the guidance of the Tarot.

Suppose, however, one of the “beans” so spilled involves the declaration by the querent (who has perhaps been suffering unbearable heartache and stress lately) that they have decided to end it all the day after tomorrow, by walking under a bus? Or maybe, during the course of the reading, it emerges that the querent regularly engages in child abuse, or drug trafficking, or acts of terrorism, or intends to take revenge on his/her ex-lover by burning their house down while they're upstairs asleep? How about the embittered ex-employee, recently fired, who confides that they intend returning to the workplace canteen during lunchtime with a machine gun? At what point does, should, *must* the promise of “confidentiality” end? At what point does your duty towards your querent need to give way to your duty to the other parties, or the public at large, who may be placed at risk?

Individual rights (to take one's own life, for instance), legal rights, human rights – not to mention legal obligations (in the case of drug trafficking or terrorism), moral and ethical dilemmas, etc – are all tangled together here. A Nine of Swords situation or what?

Coming from a legal background, I know only too well that the law is seldom clear cut, even on simple issues, much less on “grey areas” such as this - and in any event, the law is a constantly changing and evolving field. Concrete guidelines are unlikely to be found there.

What about the field of counselling/therapy (to which non-fortune telling Tarot reading is, of course, loosely related by way of its “guiding and helping others to go forward in their life” nature) – surely they have a clear cut, well-defined *modus operandi* in such instances? Nope! The many books that I consulted during my counselling/therapy training obviously touched on this matter – many only briefly, a few in somewhat greater depth – but nothing is set in stone, and in certain cases, the decision (and legal responsibility) as to what to do lays squarely with the counsellor/therapist. An unsettling enough thought even for the trained professional having the benefit of both professional insurance and a professional body to help them out/advise – let alone for the average uninsured, sole practitioner Tarot reader, whose treatment at the hands of the legal system – and in the public eye - one can only imagine (ducking stool, stocks or burning at the stake, at a rough guess)!

By far the best reference I have come across to date is the Information Guide “Confidentiality: Counselling and the Law” available to buy from the British Association for Counselling, who are based in Rugby (website: [www.counselling.co.uk](http://www.counselling.co.uk)). Unacquainted as I am with copyright laws, I do not intend to quote or reproduce any part of that guide here, but it does touch on many areas and issues which I believe are equally relevant to Tarot readers, and you may think it worthwhile spending a few pounds to acquire a copy for your own information and guidance.

I appreciate that Tarot reading is not legally regulated or governed and that there are no stipulated rules to be adhered to, but in this increasingly “litigious” climate, it may be prudent to remember the old adage: forewarned is forearmed!

Please note: I am not legally qualified and the article above is intended for helpful guidance only.

*Julia Clasby (“Shewhodanceswithtarot”)*

## *Simply Abundant Tarot - Part 2*

*By Bethan Arrowsmith*

Following on from last issue, Bethan continues her exploration of the concept of Simple Abundance in a tarot environment.

In part one of the Simply Abundant Tarot series, I provided a short introduction to Sarah Ban Breathnach's [Simple Abundance](#) path. Part two will see us looking more closely at this method and we will learn how we can apply the [Simple Abundance](#) principles to our tarot studies. By the end of this series, we will have considered the six Simple Abundance principles (gratitude, simplicity, order, harmony, beauty, and joy) in greater depth and will have come to know our 'authentic' tarot selves. Once we have discovered our true tarot desires we will be able to work with tarot in a more productive manner - simply and abundantly. So let us begin.

We are first going to learn how to take the gentle path - not only in life but in our tarot studies as well. In order to this we will attempt to stop ourselves purchasing tarot decks and books compulsively and will learn to work with those tarot resources which we already have. Whilst purchasing decks and books may be difficult to give up, if we continue we will simply become swamped with information and find our purses empty. We all have decks that we have never worked with and books that we have never read. But why do we go on purchasing these things if in truth we don't really need them at this point in our lives? Why can't we learn to invite things into our lives only when we are ready to do so? If we concentrated on working with the decks and books we already have then we would find our knowledge increasing and our studies progressing far more than if we merely purchased books and decks only to have them sitting in their boxes for years. An occasional tarot treat is fine but before you hand over your credit card in future, ask yourself if you really need that new deck or book. More often than not the answer will be 'no'.

Having put a bee in your bonnet about compulsive deck and book purchasing then I'd like you to consider starting a tarot journal or notebook. Buy yourself a beautiful book in which to write in, some wonderful writing materials, and begin to make notes in earnest. Scribble down any tarot ideas, desires, quotes, musings, thoughts and doodles you may have. Record any readings given and frequently read over the notes that you have made. Take your time whilst doing this and savour the moment. Make it part of your daily routine.

One important aspect of keeping a journal such as this is that over time you will become better acquainted with your tarot likes and dislikes as well as your reading style. You will eventually come to know your 'authentic' tarot self. In order to do this then you may want to illustrate your journal with artwork you find pleasing, colours that speak to you, and pictures that are meaningful. In [Simple Abundance](#), Sarah suggests that you meditate on one image per day and that you visit an art store to pick up all the things you need in order to get started. Soon these images will give you the direction in which your tarot heart wants to go.

Before I sign off at this point, I would also like you to begin organising your life and your tarot resources more efficiently. Discard the things that you no longer need and try to carve out a special tarot place for yourself within your home. Choose a desk or table and decorate it with this in mind. Enjoy your own personal space and move forward in your tarot studies with the [Simple Abundance](#) path. Live with joy, gratitude, simplicity, order, harmony, and beauty.

*Simply Abundant Tarot (Part II) is the copyright of Bethan Arrowsmith (April 2003)*

## ***To Lick A Rainbow - A Tarot Poem***

*by Clare McHale*

From TABI's resident Tarot Poet, in homage to The Fool ...

Today, I walked down the street  
And winked at a handsome stranger,  
With my bag slung across my shoulder  
I forestalled the blush and smiled instead.

Tomorrow, I will wave and joke with  
The workers on the building site near by,  
And if it rains, throw off my grey coat  
And trot outside to lick a rainbow.

Next week, I'll take a day trip and  
Dressed in brightly coloured clothes,  
Chase butterflies round a meadow  
And taste the strange wildflower nectar.

*For more of Clare's poetry, go to the poetry section of <http://www.dodsleypages.com>*

## *Tarot and Art - an Interview with Ray Mallaney*

We've seen tarot used as inspiration for paintings and sculptures, but this is something new. Ray Mallaney, known to his TABI friends and querents as Tarotray, teaches Advanced level Art and Design courses at Richmond's sixth form college. He has successfully combined his love of tarot and design to create a series of beautiful ceramics based on the Major Arcana, and here he tells TABI News how it all came about.



I never intended to teach, I really just fell into it as a way of subsidising my ceramics. It has been a very rewarding career, although I do feel it may be time for a change as I am beginning to feel a bit like Mr. Chips, and have even started employing people to teach here that I myself taught when they were 16! Still, as a gay man without children of my own, it's a nice way to be involved in the 'making' of the next generations.

My astrological sign of Scorpio is quite accurate - outwardly sceptical yet inwardly very curious, but not really wanting people to know my interest. Around the mid to late 90s I became aware that a lot of people I knew (that didn't know each other) were interested in the Spiritual side of life. A friend who was into Tarot did one card readings for us at dinner parties, and after years of literally being terrified of them I became quite drawn to the whole idea of a western based set of visual symbols. A personal dilemma about work lead me to have a professional reading - which to be honest didn't help at all, but I bought a book; Alfred Douglas's 'The Tarot', and then another and another, then a set of the Morgan-Greer cards, and I was up and running.

Finally I did the Intermediate and then Advanced course in Tarot run by the local centre for Psychic Studies - all in all I've been studying Tarot for about 4-5 years. I don't use reversals, although I am beginning to get tempted to do so as an indicator of the focus of the message of the card - although with Tarot I always tend to follow instinct, and at the moment I don't feel I 'need' to. As to how the Tarot works, again I trust to instinct - the scientific part of me wants to say it's all poppycock - BUT - the intuitive part of me knows that it isn't so I don't think too hard about about it and instead just DO it.

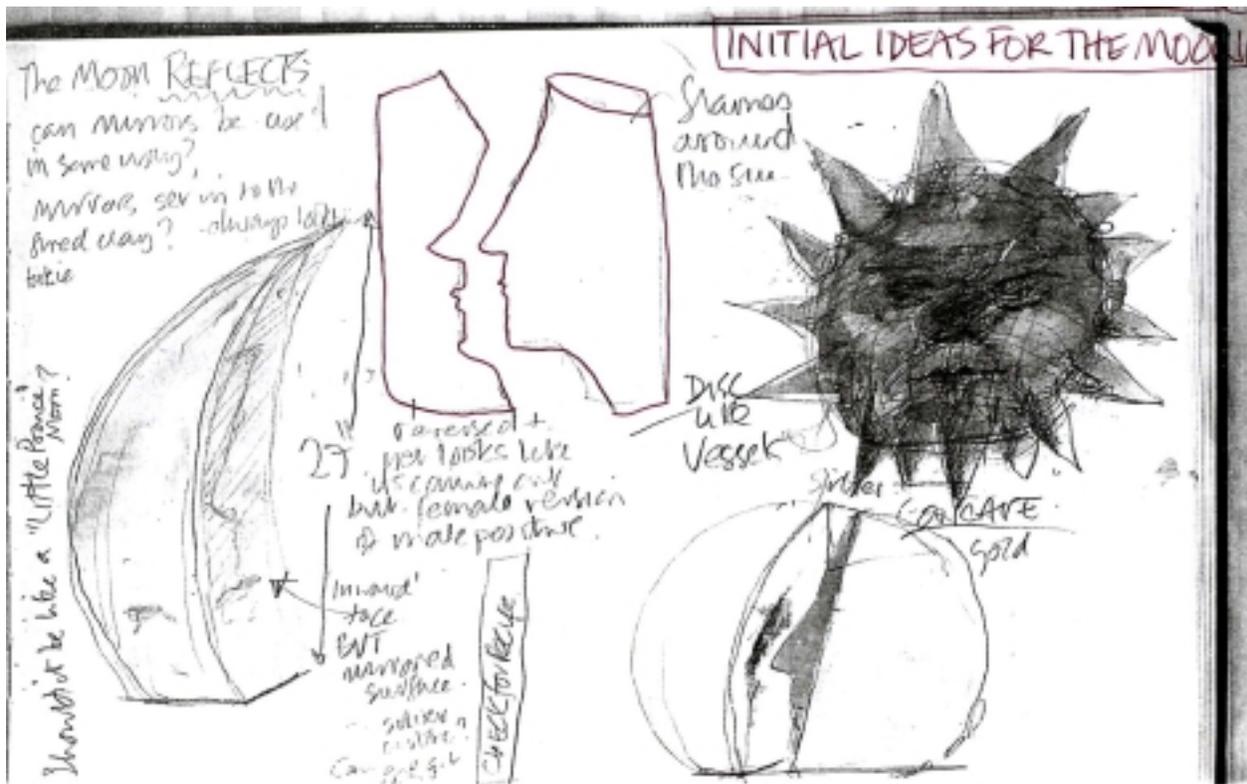
I've been reading for payment for about 2 years. I became a member of TABI which was brilliant - Ribbitcat was my mentor and she really 'brought me on'. These days I read for whoever but mostly it's to friends or friends of friends, so it is usually for a bottle of wine or box of chocolates. I tend to do a horoscope reading to get them loosened up and then go into question spreads, either 3 card or sometimes the Celtic Cross. I've advertised in shop windows, The Pink Paper and also I have my phone number and email addy on the TABI site.

In terms of my 'Art' it really happened organically - I tend to work in themes, producing about 20 to 30 pieces after a period of visual research. For example; we visited friends who live in Berlin and they took us to the Pergammon Museum. I stood in the centre of the room which housed the frieze from the altar which depicted the battle between the Gods and the Titans, many of

whom had wings - the nature of the Hellenistic sculpture meant one could almost hear the wings beat and feel the wind they created, and this lead to work on wings and angels.

Reading and studying the visuals on the cards really only meant it would be a matter of time before I felt compelled to explore them through MY visuals. I talked about using my instinct as far as working with the Tarot was concerned and in terms of my work what amazed me was the way it all felt SO RIGHT. I work in series of 20/30 pots and there are 22 Major Arcana cards.

Fig 1. Initial sketches for The Moon



As I planned ceramic responses to the cards it was as though all the pieces I had ever made had relevance to the shapes I could use for the pots showing the Major Arcana - it really was a visual counter part to bringing all your experience to bear when doing a reading.

I decided to explore the Major Arcana through the specific language of ceramics, for example The Magician - here we have a card dealing with the ability to create by acting as an intermediary, the way words are important - the 'naming' of this in religion and magic ('In the beginning was the Word.....' etc.)

Initially I thought of doing a very trendy pot with lots of words and phrases on it, but the more I thought it seemed to me that a teapot might fill the bill - water and leaves are put in, and out comes a new thing - tea. The Magician's number is 1 so I gave the piece only one edge which twisted the red and white form around (see Fig 2). I have tried to use the same principals with all

the other pieces, so there are bowls and vases - .whatever form I need to express the meaning of the card.

I tend to make my pieces by coiling, rolling sausages of clay and building up the shape - it's a slow process, even though I have a machine to make the coils, but I like the way the form slowly begins to emerge and the way you swiftly begin to have a dialogue with the piece you are making: "should you go out here? Or start coming in?" The colours I use are related to either the colours on the Universal Waite deck or the symbolic colour associations, and I might use as many as 10 firings to get the colours and textures right.

I have 6 more to do (The Tower, The Star, The Sun, Judgement and The World) and I hope to finish them in the summer holidays so I can then exhibit them as a complete set.



*Fig 2. The Magician – finished piece*

***See more of Ray's ceramics at his website:***

**<http://www.outoftheearth.demon.co.uk/tarot.htm>**

## *What is Tarot?*

A question which has many answers - here are a few from TABI

### *Tarot Is...*

'A tool to gain access to the unconscious, leading to self-awareness, confidence and insight into problems; cards suggest possible courses of action and nothing is set in stone'

*Clare McHale, FreeReading Monitor*

'The map used by your Inner Guide to take you on a journey to your soul'

*Ceaufumoon, TABI Researcher*

'A key to provide instant access to hidden thoughts and knowledge.'

*Maggie Elliott, TABI Student*

'Shining a light where there was only darkness. A wonderful way of connecting to the Divine within us all. A way to reflect on the opportunities that are opening up for you and the influences and challenges that you will face.'

*Freespirit, Forum Administrator*

'A deck of symbolic/archetypal picture cards whose use exercises our intuition - the bridge between our conscious and unconscious minds - enabling us to access information which might otherwise have remained hidden.'

*Julia Clasby, TABI Volunteer*

'Tarot guide me..... guide me true  
Let me see what I should not do  
Guide me..... when I need to know what's right  
Tarot.....let me see the light.'

*Deborah Mather, TABI member*

# *An A-Z of Tarot*

Our continuing journey...

## *C is for... Crowley*

*By Ian Stevens*

### **ALEISTER CROWLEY, THE MASTER THERION**

Edward Alexander Crowley was born on October the 12th 1875 in Leamington Spa, Warwickshire. His parents were members of the Plymouth Brethren, although interestingly, in spite of his strict puritanical beliefs his father's not inconsiderable fortune was made from brewing interests.

Like a lot of children of strict and devout parents the young Crowley grew up with an in depth knowledge of, and a thorough contempt for, Christianity. He was not the easiest of children; anecdotally at the age of 11 he was given a cat, which he promptly killed. Later, after his father died in 1887 he rejected his first name that they shared and called himself Aleister. In 1892 he was sent to Malvern School where he said he had homosexual experiences, which was very likely. He was later transferred to Tonbridge where he claimed to have contracted gonorrhoea, which could be true but which may be another of the many shock horror stories that surrounded him and which he actively encouraged. In 1895 he matriculated from Trinity College, Cambridge and at the age of twenty one he inherited his father's fortune.

Thus freed up from the constraints of earning a living he was able to indulge his interest in the occult and the esoteric side of life. In 1898 he joined the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn and rapidly worked his way into the inner conclave. About this time the order was split by quarrels over leadership as a result of which he was expelled and the order, permanently divided, never regained its former popularity.

He began to travel extensively, mainly in the east, and also started his career as a prolific writer - mainly of poetry and mystical themes. In 1903 he married Rose Kelly and went to Egypt where a year later he claimed to have had a vision prophesying a new era for humanity. Encouraged by his wife he would enter trance like states during which he wrote what was to become 'The Book of the Law', on which he worked and which inspired him for the rest of his life.

He continued to spend his time travelling the world, developing and promoting the 'Law of Thelema', soaking up local cultures and religions and outraging people every chance that he had. Without doubt he took his occult studies very seriously - he totally believed in what he was doing and produced volumes of work on the subject. On the other hand he never lost the desire to embarrass and humiliate his parents and all they stood for, even long after their deaths. The occult was an obvious vehicle to use, particularly when linked to the libertarianism and sensual and sexual excess that he also found so appealing.

As a rich man who was also well skilled in the art of self promotion he found on the one hand a ready supply of acolytes and on the other easy access to influential people, and he was thus able to set up groups and communes wherever he went. Back in England in 1906 he set up with George Cecil Jones a magical order to continue where the Golden Dawn had left off. They called this order the Astrum Argentium and it became the primary means for the transmission of his mystical and magical training system based on the principles of Thelema. He also forged links with the Freemasons through an organisation called 'Ordo Templi Orientis' eventually becoming it's head, reformulating its laws to conform to Thelema and opening its membership to women.

In 1920 he set up home on a hillside in Sicily declaring it a world centre for the study of the occult and sexual magic. The inevitable stories of debauchery culminating in the suspicious death of one of his followers resulted a year later in him being expelled from Sicily by Mussolini. His money was by now beginning to run out and he was forced to rely on his writing in order to make a living, but he had trouble persuading British printers to produce his work so moved to Paris and had them produced there. Unfortunately his reputation caught up with him again and he was deported back to England in 1929.

He went to Germany where he got married again, his first marriage having ended in 1909. By now he was addicted to heroin but he still continued to produce a series of writings moving regularly between England and Germany. Thanks to his reputation and promotional skills, he was able to secure one or two sponsors. Nevertheless, he was made bankrupt in 1935. He published several more volumes including in 1944 'The Book of Thoth'. He died in Hastings on the first of December 1947.

Crowley was not a great proponent of Tarot. In fact he is quoted as making some very scathing remarks concerning its use for divination. However, he did take great care over the cards, working with Lady Frieda Harris who did the design work and taking more than five years to complete the deck. Ironically the deck was not published until 1969, long after both his and Lady Frieda's deaths, the copyright is held by Ordo Templis Orientis.

Harris's designs are vivid and largely abstract, using much Egyptian inspired imagery. They have an art nouveau quality about them and to my mind anyway they are far from the dark and brooding images that I would have instinctively associated with Crowley.

Aleister Crowley is possibly the best known occult celebrity since John Dee, at least the best known in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is a pity that he is better known for his tabloid inspired notoriety than his serious attempts at understanding the forces that govern the universe.

*The factual content of this article was from the following web sites.*

[www.crystallinks.com/crowley.html](http://www.crystallinks.com/crowley.html)

[www.geocities.com/Athens/Acropolis/1896/actimeline.html](http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Acropolis/1896/actimeline.html)

*There is a lot more detail about Crowley's life and career on these sites.*

## *Meeting the Courts...*

*More from TABI Training's ever-popular Court Card Families exercise...*

*By Chris Keane*

### **The Wands**

Mickey Wands is a very successful music producer who has worked with bands such as 'the Salamanders', 'Fireball', 'Sparks' and even way back with the 'poptastic' 70's duo 'The Smoulder Brothers'. He is well known in the business as a forceful and inspirational character and is very much in demand. Samantha Wands is a soap star on 'Conflagration Street'; she plays the sultry, attractive and sexually energetic 'Queenie Rods'. She has had a succession of love interests, most notably Swan Vesta, who not being able to keep up the scorching pace became the first soap star in history to spontaneously combust. Wendy Wands is a rising star on the British Tennis scene. At 17 she is a supremely confident player although it has to be said a little hot-tempered. Blessed with a sizzling serve and a blistering backhand she recently won the prestigious 'Coalite Open'. Little Georgie Wands 12 is an accomplished arsonist, pyrotechnical genius and explosives expert. He is often seen enthusiastically setting fire to the neighbour's sheds and sending the odd incendiary device over into the Cup's garden. His hero is Guy Fawkes and he is currently working on blowing up the village hall.

### **The Cups**

Colin Cups is a music and dance teacher at the local school. He is an immensely caring and tolerant man, which is just as well having Georgie Wands in his class. Colin is gradually becoming adept at bomb disposal and fire fighting. Melissa Cups is a medium, spiritual healer and alien abduction expert. She has only recently returned from her latest extra terrestrial adventure. Colin had presumed she had been on another 24hour-shopping trip to Tesco's and had been unavoidably detained by the extensive wine tasting section. Tom Cups is 20 years old, and since dropping out of college, plays in a band called 'The Introverts'. He is a fanciful young man and is often seen running through the streets pursued by hordes of imaginary 'groupies'. Trevor Cups is 13 going on 35. He is already an accomplished 'romantic' poet and writer, as can be testified by the growing collection of sonnets in Pandora Pentacles' waste paper bin. He has already secured a publishing contract with Mills and Boon and his first novel is due to be released later in the year.

### **The Swords**

Steven Swords QC is a barrister to the rich and famous. They are in fact a regular source of work for him. He recently defended well-known TV personality Sly Slimes, against charges of walking out of 'Lushes Only' bargain booze store with a selection of their most expensive wines. Steven managed to 'discover' a medical condition of random memory dysfunction, which is

usually triggered in retail or wholesale environments and often confused with shoplifting. Celia Swords is a Freudian Analyst and sex therapist, - some might say these are the same thing really. To say Celia is experienced in such matters is a massive understatement; she is a witty, forthright woman with a 15-year waiting list of male clients. Sadie Swords is rather blunt for a Sword, but on the other hand can be extremely cutting. She employs these facets of her personality beautifully every Thursday night as the resident stand up comedian at the Hierophant & Chariot public house. Katrina Swords is 15 and although has much in common with her elder sister, prefers to use her inquisitive and enquiring mind in a different way. She is the editor of her school newspaper and intends to pursue a career in investigative journalism, much to the consternation of her parents who are now being much more careful and discreet within their respective careers.

### **The Pentacles**

Peter Pentacles runs the sophisticated and upmarket wine bar, 'Bladders', on the high street. In a former life, Peter made a small fortune in the city as a stockbroker; he now concentrates on his own stock, although usually to the detriment of his profits. Patsy Pentacles runs a little plant shop a couple of doors away called 'Get Potted'. In a way the shop is an unofficial confessional/communications HQ for Patsy's cronies. The amount of tea consumed on the premises is phenomenal and so Patsy is thinking of buying next door and opening up an official tea room, to satisfy a growing demand and making a couple of quid into the bargain. They are an enterprising combination that love and indulge themselves completely in the finer things in life. Percy Pentacles is 19 and in his first year as a medical student. Percy is a very cautious and serious young man who enjoys nothing better than reading a good medical textbook and playing with his stethoscope. Pandora Pentacles is 14, and besides being an object of desire for Trevor Cups, is actively involved in local environmental issues. She is much more interested in hugging trees at the moment than in hugging Trevor. However Trevor's sudden commitment to saving the whale and his brand new Greenpeace t-shirt may well change all that.

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*By Ceafumoon*

### **Family Profiles**

Name : King of Wands

Location : Large Victorian house in private road in ordinary suburb

Looks like : Steven Spielberg

Occupation : Film publicist

Hobbies : Ideas! And then persuading people how good they are.

I love : music, laughter, being in the front

I hate : stodginess, affectation, rigidity

Name : Queen of Wands  
Looks like : Nigella Lawson  
Occupation : Public Relations Consultant  
Hobbies : Entertaining, painting, yoga  
I love : Positive thoughts and people  
I hate : laziness and arrogance

Name : Page of Wands  
Looks like : Tracy Edwards  
Occupation : Sailor/adventurer  
Hobbies : Sailing, sailing and sailing  
I love : Sailing  
I hate : Couch potatoes who don't sail!

Name : Knight of Wands  
Looks like : Gareth Gates  
Occupation : Aspiring pop singer  
Hobbies : Extreme sports  
I love : fast cars and blondes  
I hate : anything that makes me bored

Name : King of Cups  
Location : 4 bedroomed house in leafy suburb  
Looks like : Philip Hodson  
Occupation : Psychotherapist  
Hobbies : home videos, meaningful music, live folk music  
I love : cosy theatres, travel  
I hate : greed and arrogance

Name : Queen of Cups  
Looks like : Cate Blanchett as Galadriel (Elf Queen in Lord of the Rings)  
Occupation : Tarot reader supreme!  
Hobbies : astrology, tarot, reading  
I love : psychology, studying body language, looking at people's aura  
I hate : intolerance

Name : Page of Cups  
Looks like : Woody Allen

Occupation : aspiring author/poet  
Hobbies : writing, watching old movies  
I love : people watching  
I hate : war

Name : Knight of Cups  
Looks like : King Edward VI (the `boy' King)  
Occupation : Published poet  
Hobbies : chasing dreams  
I love : my girlfriend  
I hate : her ex boyfriend

Name : King of Swords  
Location : rambling stone mini mansion amid lots of green but not too far from town  
Looks like : Bruce Willis  
Occupation : Leading Child Psychologist  
Hobbies : mind games, especially chess  
I love : getting it right first time  
I hate : failing in a task

Name : Queen of Swords  
Looks like : Kate Adie  
Occupation : journalist  
Hobbies : gardening (you get out what you put in!)  
I love : laughing  
I hate : deceit

Name : Page of Swords  
Looks like : younger version of Kevin Costner  
Occupation : student at uni  
Hobbies : cricket, rowing, surfing the web  
I love : writing programmes for my computer  
I hate : muggers

Name : Knight of Swords  
Looks like : young Michael Douglas  
Occupation : city analyst  
Hobbies : mountaineering  
I love : being No. 1  
I hate : being No. 2

Name: King of Pentacles  
Location : Town house (on the smarter side of town)  
Looks like : Prince Charles  
Occupation : Finance Director  
Hobbies : Trains the local cricket team  
I love : encouraging others to achieve their personal best  
I hate : loud noise and chaos

Name : Queen of Pentacles  
Occupation : Garden designer of distinction  
Hobbies : gardening, takes an interest in saving wildlife threatened with extinction  
I love : talking till late at dinner parties with good friends  
I hate : the thought of loneliness

Name : Page of Pentacles  
Looks like : a nice kind of guy  
Occupation : engineer  
Hobbies : DIY projects  
I love : walking/hiking  
I hate : drifters

Name : Knight of Pentacles  
Looks like : young man dressed in grey  
Occupation : Clerk at a firm of Accountants  
Hobbies : reading Naval books  
I love : Historical heroes  
I hate : impulsive optimists

**If you would like to participate in our free beginner's training course, please email [trainingadmin@tabi.org.uk](mailto:trainingadmin@tabi.org.uk)**

## ***Featured Free Reader: Troy Stephens***

Continuing our 'getting to know you' series with our Free Readers...

### ***Real Name/Reading Name:***

Brian Stevenson (Real Name); Troy Stephens (Reading Name).

### ***Area:***

London and Yeovil, Somerset.

### ***Age:***

52.

### ***Non-tarot occupation:***

Retired Government Press and Publicity Officer, now working as a part-time Information Officer for one of London's museums.

### ***Spiritual leanings:***

Although I am particularly drawn to Wicca, I acknowledge the basic truths of many religions.

### ***Astrological aspects and how you think this affects your tarot approach:***

I'm an untypical Sagittarian and I don't feel that this has had much influence on my Tarot work.

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

I first began to work with The Tarot over 30 years ago. Since retiring in 1999 I have studied the subject in depth, mainly at The College of Psychic Studies in London.

### ***What drew you to it?***

A benevolent spirit ?

### ***Do you read for yourself?***

Very rarely, as it is difficult not to let my own wishful thinking and ego get in the way of a truthful interpretation.

### ***What was your first deck and why did you choose it?***

I bought The Tarot of Marseilles back in the 1960s. Then there were not many packs to choose from and it was either The Tarot of Marseilles or The Rider-Waite. When I returned to Tarot several years ago I was pleasantly surprised by the wide variety of packs now available.

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

Seven.

***What is your favourite deck and why?***

The Golden Rider by the Swiss artist, Francois Tapernoux is my favourite. This 1990 re-working of the Rider-Waite is very colourful and attractive and I find it much more expressive than the traditional Rider-Waite.

***What's your most used deck for public readings?***

I use The Golden Rider for over 90% of my readings.

***Favourite book and/or author?***

Paul Fenton-Smith's books are amongst my favourites as I like his practical and anecdotal style. The unfortunately titled *Tarot for Dummies* by Amber Jayanti is another of my favourites as the author stresses that The Tarot is a system for understanding life and not a fortune telling game.

***Favourite or most used spread?***

As many of my readings are done over the telephone, I tend to use simple three card spreads. However, a more complex 9-10 card Past Life/Karma spread is becoming very popular with some of my clients.

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

I know that some readers take the upright card to be the positive meaning for the card and for the upside down card to be the negative meaning. My point of view is that this way of reading can sometimes take me away from the feelings of the cards. I turn all cards upright in a spread regardless of which way they are dealt. This draws me straight into what a card feels like instead of thinking about its orientation.

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

Not normally, although I occasionally draw on a basic knowledge of Numerology.

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

Definitely. The proportion of psychic information varies from reading to reading. Sometimes it can be as high as over 50% and sometimes as low as almost zero! When I do receive psychic information, it is as though the cards are acting as triggers so that the information can come through. The type of information received usually involves names, professions, addresses and personal facts that I would not otherwise have known.

***Do you rephrase? Why?***

I usually rephrase questions that can only be answered by Yes/No. Sometimes I also rephrase to make a question more sensible or realistic. For example, a telephone client asked me recently if the aircraft that she was due to travel on the following day was going to crash! I rephrased that to ask the Tarot to comment on her journey.

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

I always stress that the tarot is not a substitute for Financial, Medical or Legal advice.

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

I like the theory of synchronicity. This argues that the random patterns in which the cards seem to fall are part of a greater pattern within the cosmic scheme of things. Sometimes, though, I think that it works by 'Magic'. However, just as we don't need to have a detailed knowledge of the internal combustion engine in order to drive a car well, we don't really need to have a fixed view on how Tarot works in order to be a good Reader. An open mind is better than a dogmatic mind.

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

Honest, straightforward and helpful. My aim is to give my clients information so that they can take control of their own lives and destiny.

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

I have been a professional reader for about two years. I am available for face-to-face readings in the London area and I give telephone and e-mail readings via the KEEN international internet organisation. I also give readings at events such as conferences, psychic fairs and parties.

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

To arrange a face-to face reading or to discuss booking me for a psychic fair or party, please telephone me on 07944 061882 or send an e-mail to [TroyStephens123@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:TroyStephens123@yahoo.co.uk) For a telephone or e-mail reading, please contact me via my KEEN homepage at <http://www.keen.co.uk/TroyStephens>

If you would like to request a TABI Free Reading, please visit our site:

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

Contact details for Brian and our other professional Readers can be found at our UK Readers Listing: [http://www.tabi.org.uk/page.php?page=ukreader\\_listing](http://www.tabi.org.uk/page.php?page=ukreader_listing)

***Would you like to be a TABI Free Reader? For information, please send a blank email to [reading@tabi.org.uk](mailto:reading@tabi.org.uk)***

## ***Residential Tarot Weekend - May 2003***

During 23<sup>rd</sup> - 25<sup>th</sup> May, TABI held our first Residential Tarot Weekend at the Royal Oak in Swayfield, Lincs - providing a series of workshops, readings and fun! Here are the personal experiences of two of our attendees...

### **THE WORKSHOP HOST PERSPECTIVE**

*By Mick Frankel*

Well, I think it's safe to say that the first TABI residential weekend was a huge success. Seven of us travelled to the heart of England; myself, Shelley and two friends of hers Jo and Lou, Paul & Diana, and Ian who'd ridden up from Cornwall on his Kawasaki.

We were warmly welcomed by Ribbitcat and met her baby daughter Felita who seemed only mildly concerned by all these strange people suddenly appearing. Ribbit's husband Kyle made us a lovely meal and we all started to relax into the quiet, comfortable setting of a traditional English pub that felt cosy without being quaint. The accommodation was superb and Saturday morning we were all treated to a superb cooked breakfast by Marion, the tirelessly hard-working bar manager.

Saturday turned out to be such a full day - at least three days in one. Ian had said that he was worried that he wouldn't have enough material for his 2-hour Introduction to the Majors but in fact we only had time to get up to The Wheel of Fortune. It was a wonderful experience to share ideas with other people; some of us experienced readers, some of us total novices.

I especially got a lot out of the things that Paul noticed. Paul isn't a Tarot reader. In fact, he'd said that he isn't really interested in learning. Yet I found that his natural, instinctive comments were really insightful and fresh. I hope that in the next workshop, Ian will be able to take us through the second half of the Fool's journey.

Next up, I gave my 'Introduction to Astrology' workshop. This was the first time I'd presented it and I was really pleased with how it went. We got through a wealth of information and I think everyone took away plenty to work on - especially linking the planets and signs into their understanding of the Majors. I'd like to give this workshop again and I can also see that I could give a second, more advanced workshop including possible astrological correspondences for the Minors.

After lunch, Diana gave a workshop on the Court cards and this was the most practical session of the day. Using only the Court cards, we did some wonderful exercises with 2-card combinations. We also did actual 1-card readings along the lines of, "Which Court card's qualities to I need take on in order to...".

I'd never thought of doing this before and I found it very useful. Diana's workshop also got us into reading which made for the perfect blend after the morning which had been more full of theory and information.

It was a lovely day, so we sat outside in the sun for Ribbit's Ethics workshop. This was much more of an interactive discussion than the other sessions and it was extremely practical and comprehensive. I think it's especially important for new readers to attend this workshop and have the chance to ask more experienced readers how they cope with awkward questions.

To complete the ethics workshop Ribbitcat had prepared a very complete set of sample questions which made for a superbly professional ending to the day's sessions.

I think we were feeling the pace when suppertime came around and we were all silent for most of the meal. I think we were all enjoying the wonderful food which was so good that it managed to be traditional and gourmet at the same time!

There were notices up in the pub saying, "Tarot readings tonight from 9 p.m" and Diana and myself set up two tables for readings. We gave a handful of readings to the public but we had the most amazing time doing readings for one another.

This to me is the defining moment of the weekend. All of us sat around a spread, ideas tumbling out, sharing insights and making powerful connections. And as if that wasn't enough, there was a wonderful games room with a dartboard and pool table. Paul and I were playing pool well after midnight and Marion was still hard at work tidying up!

Sunday morning's breakfast was more leisurely and we had a very useful discussion about TABI business and plans for further workshops. As we got ready to leave around mid-day, I think we would have all loved to have had another day of workshops.

Many thanks to Ribbitcat and Kyle for their tremendous hospitality. I'm definitely looking forward to the next TABI residential weekend.

*Mick Frankel*

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## **THE OBSERVER PERSPECTIVE**

*by Paul Collis*

The UK road system has a language all of its own - "Congestion after next junction", "Queues ahead", "Stay in Lane", "Roadworks ahead, delays expected until hell freezes over". It is a language which will never guarantee serenity, however, I gained some comfort from the fact that whilst the journey to the TABI workshop at Swayfield would provide little serenity, the

destination, the workshop and the people involved would. I was not to be disappointed. In fact to serenity you can add informed education, a good sense of fun (the best antidote to any problem) and a genuine desire to continue the development of TABI in a positive and ethical way.

I had agreed to drive my wife, Diana, to the workshop and had expected to be no more than a distant observer. However, such was the enthusiasm and warmth evident from the first moment of our arrival at The Royal Oak that staying on the sidelines was never going to be an option. We had the perfect hosts in every sense. The venue was superb and the hospitality generous. An original "icebreaker" devised by Ribbitcat soon got everyone acquainted, an important first step for people who in most cases had until now communicated by e-mail only. Straight away, then, the assembled company had discovered the first item for inclusion in the workshop. The rest of the first evening was spent getting to know each other better and discussing matters spiritual, although some of us partook of a little too much of the more earthly based spirit in the bar!

The purpose of the weekend was to devise a workshop that could introduce total beginners to Tarot; from my own personal perspective this put me even more at ease. The basic idea, as I understand it, is to hold such workshops at fairs, spiritual gatherings and/or on a residential basis. In designing new courses there is always the danger of focusing too much on content and not on delivery. We have all been on courses where we have been subjected to tutors who are clearly very knowledgeable on their chosen subject but who have all the delivery and training skills of a frightened badger. In such instances students invariably reach for the Yellow Pages for light relief or start setting up their hammocks!

It seemed clear from the very beginning that Ribbitcat, Ian, Mick, Shelley and Diana had each focussed on their specific aspect of the proposed workshop from the perspective of the absolute beginner. They had paid due respect to the need to get the basics across in a powerful yet simple to understand manner. Ian's introduction to the Major Arcana even had an old cynic like me completely engrossed- the idea of using the Fool as the guide on a journey exploring each of the major cards was easy to understand. They say a stand up comedian coming on stage needs to get a laugh within the first two minutes or else he/she will "die" on stage. A similar scenario applies to a presentation. The first session must immediately grab the attention and Ian's introduction, when fully refined, will clearly do that.

Mick's section explored the connections/similarities between the Tarot cards and the various factors associated with the houses of the horoscope in Astrology. Again this seemed very original and an area that is bound to become highly topical as the profiles of Tarot and Astrology grow across the wider community.

I am bound to be somewhat biased regarding Diana's section on the Court Cards and not just because she is my wife. Having known her for nearly 10 years I have had a number of opportunities to see her presenting on a variety of spiritual/mystical subjects. She possesses a number of key qualities essential to a good presenter, namely the ability to put the audience at ease by engaging them in the subject, seeking feedback and generally encouraging discussion and delivering the key points in a relaxed way. The word empathy comes readily to mind when

seeing Diana present and this quality was apparent in all the sessions on that long, hard but rewarding second day.

As an observer of TABI's progress to date, I have been particularly impressed by the very strong ethical perspective that is applied to all that the organisation undertakes. Therefore, it was no surprise to see that the last section of the second day was devoted to ethical considerations and was delivered in a highly professional way by Ribbit. Newcomers to any organisation need to feel that they are joining a group that not only cares passionately about its subject but is also acutely aware of the ethical dimension.

The Saturday evening was spent in the bar where Mick and Diana undertook a few readings for some of the patrons of the pub. I don't think that the Royal Oak had ever advertised Tarot Readings as part of the list of events at the pub before, so it was not surprising to see a few bemused faces. Those who did come forward and "test the spiritual waters" appeared to leave as satisfied customers. From the perspective of an observer I found the Saturday evening the most enjoyable and I didn't even have a drop of beer, let alone the hard stuff! Shelley had brought two tarot-loving friends along on the weekend, Josephine and Louise, and all of us got together to discuss the days events and do Tarot spreads for each other. Shelley's boundless enthusiasm and energy had been a positive feature throughout the day and such qualities were clearly on display in the evening. Even Josephine, Louise and I felt compelled to offer our interpretations on the various spreads that were produced - not bad after only 24 hours exposure to this level of the Tarot. The evening created a tremendous forum to emphasise the critical features of the day and proved to be a great deal of fun. It even distracted me from my desire to play pool, although Mick and I did manage a few frames, which confirmed that neither of us poses a threat to the current world champion!

In undertaking such a task as this workshop, a golden rule always applies – get the basics right, do the simple things well. By this measure the weekend was an undoubted success. Even I will be getting my hands on a Tarot Deck and doing a great deal more than perfecting a Las Vegas Shuffle!

A big thank you to all involved.

*Paul Collis*

***TABI is planning a regular series of Residential Tarot Weekends – if you would like further details please contact Ribbitcat: [ribbitcat@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:ribbitcat@yahoo.co.uk)***

## ***THE FUTURE: Always in Motion?***

*By Brian Stephenson*

An exploration of tarot and fortune-telling

Last year the Soho branch of a well-known chain of Sushi restaurants started to employ Tarot Readers to entertain and amuse their customers who were waiting in the restaurant's bar. Although all of the Tarot readings were free, customers were advised that they should tip their reader and that *'the better the future predicted, the bigger the tip should be'*.

From the client's point of view, there is something quite attractive in wanting a guaranteed prediction of future good fortune, because all they have to do is put their feet up, sit back and wait for all the good fortune to happen. However, the prospect of anything less than 100% guaranteed happiness is not so attractive and I expect that any Tarot Reader who told the whole truth when working in Yo Sushi's bar would probably find themselves receiving very small tips.

Sadly, The Tarot is still seen by many clients as a simple 'Fortune Telling' system and not as a method of understanding our situations, actions and options. But, can the future be examined and predicted with any real certainty? It depends of course how far into the future we are looking. For example, I don't need to be a Tarot Reader, Astrologer or Psychic to predict that in 10 minutes time I will be sitting here at my desk typing this article. As it is now 3 p.m., I can predict with some certainty that in 10 hours time I will be asleep. However, it is a little more difficult to predict what I will be doing in 10 days, 10 months or 10 years time.

This is all very obvious. However, it is amazing how many clients blindly hope that we can predict their long-term future with the re-assurance that everything is absolutely set in stone and completely unchangeable. Such predictions can be very comforting for a while as they absolve the client of any responsibility for their own actions. However, the truth is that the future is not firmly set in stone and we do have a great deal of control over our own lives. How much control we have and how we react to the future is another story!

Many clients want to know about the future when they are at their weakest and most vulnerable. They may be in the middle of a crisis and want to know if they will make it through to the other side, so they ask questions such as, 'Will I ever be happily married?', 'Will my boyfriend leave his wife?' or 'Will I be wealthy?' In asking these types of questions, clients are really devaluing themselves as the answers are usually in their own hands. This is because there are no absolutes in life and although an outcome may look extremely likely at a certain time, it is rarely completely cast in stone.

Clients should always be re-assured that they decide their own future, not the Tarot Reader. A good Reader may use their cards tell the client what seems likely to happen. However, every change that the client makes to their personality and their life can affect the prediction made. The further in the future the prediction, the more chance the client has to change things for the better or for the worse.

Another way of looking at this situation is to see the future stretching in front of us in a triangular shape, with us at the apex of the triangle. The further into the distant future we peer, the wider the triangle and the more fluid and changeable the future. Rather than finding this uncertainty unsettling, I find it comforting to know that our futures are not pre-ordained and that we do have the free will to control our own destiny and future.

*Brian Stevenson first began to work with the Tarot nearly 30 years ago. However, after a few years he stopped practising and rarely picked up his cards. In 1997 he developed Gout and ME and had to take early retirement from his job as a Government Press & Public Relations Officer. It was while he was studying Reiki at Claridge House Healing Centre in Kent in 1999 that he decided to return to Tarot. He later studied the subject at The College of Psychic Studies in London and in 2002 he became a professional reader. He joined TABI in 2002 and is one of our Endorsed Readers under the name of Troy Stephens.*

***See Page 21 for an interview with Brian!***

# *The TABI Interview: Joanna Watters*

*by Diana McMahon-Collis*

Diana talks to Joanna Watters, author of *Tarot for Today* (due out July 2003 from Carroll & Brown) about her new book and her esoteric work in general, encompassing her wide-ranging experience as a teacher, reader and writer in tarot and astrology.

***I understand your first book is about to be published and it is on the use of tarot today. How did the book come about and how did you choose the title?***

The book has rather a long story behind it. Basically I started by writing about astrology and then set about finding a publisher. I then discovered that no writer gets anywhere without an agent – and getting an agent is an achievement in itself. I've got the rejection slips to prove it! Many agents will like the material and say lots of flattering things about it, but they are simply overloaded with writers and hardly ever take on anyone new. I was lucky that a colleague, Elisabeth Brooke, gave me a personal introduction to her agency and they liked my material enough to take me on. Then followed a couple of years of setbacks on both sides, I lost heart, and then started afresh on a Tarot book. Finally I started working with a new associate editor, Annie Tatham Mannall. She turned out to be my fairy godmother and made everything happen – she is a wonderful, steady Taurean! Last May she rang to say that Carroll and Brown were interested in the Tarot book and within a couple of weeks she had negotiated the contract and it was all systems go!

Finding a title for a book is actually quite difficult. What can you use that hasn't already been used a hundred times before? I originally called the book "Talking Tarot" which I loved – it wasn't my idea, it came from well known American astrologer Michael Lutin who I met at a conference some years ago, but the publishers specialise in the modernisation and illustrated presentation of arcane subjects and they wanted to rename it "Tarot for Today". At the time I said they could call it Jack and Jill if they wanted to, I was just so pleased that it had been accepted, and I am actually very happy with the title.

***How do you see your book fitting into the existing tarot literature? Is it suitable for beginners?***

One of the reasons I started on the Tarot book in the first place was that I felt that there was a distinct gap in the market, especially with regard to combining Tarot and Astrology – which is what this book does – and especially with regard to explaining how Tarot and astrological symbolism actually works. I wanted to explode all the myths about having to be clairvoyant and show how the Tarot and astrology inform each other. The book is perfect for beginners because it starts from the very beginning in terms of explaining the symbolism of each card and is very

accessible – beautifully illustrated and clearly laid out – the art team did a fantastic job and my editor kept saying that she hoped I liked it as much as they did! I do! The book is also crammed full of examples and anecdotes from my own practice which I think makes it highly readable – it is very “hands on” rather than theoretical.

***You have a background in astrology as well as tarot, don't you? Do you find these can work together or are they better kept apart? I gather you are writing a companion title to the tarot book, on astrology – when is that due to be published? Is it for beginners or more advanced?***

Yes, I am first and foremost an astrologer, and studying astrology led me into the Tarot. As I said above, tarot and astrology can work perfectly well together. I have done charts followed by Tarot readings – sometimes on the same sitting but more usually a few weeks apart – and it's amazing how the same story unfolds through the two different formats. One can confirm the other in a really magical way sometimes. Yes, I am now completing the sister title “Astrology for Today” which is due out in October, and I have written this in the same style and spirit as the Tarot book. It's ideal for beginners, again, because it starts with the basics but doesn't fob the reader off with keywords – which any practising astrologer/reader knows just don't work. I have explained why pre-assigned meanings don't work at the same time as teaching how to stay true to the symbolism. The book will also definitely appeal to the advanced student because it takes the reader all the way through – from Sun signs to working out and interpreting progressions and, again, there are lots of examples and case histories from my own practice showing astrology at work.

***What is your personal tarot history? How did you first get involved in tarot? Is it true that you managed to set up doing readings for tourists on the beach abroad? How did this all work? Did it involve tarot?***

When I moved out here to Greece in May 95 I wanted to set up a desk on the seafront – alongside the other desks already there, selling jewellery, doing portraits etc. I got clients immediately but horoscopes had to be booked and done the next day. On the other hand Tarot is so immediate that people could just sit down straight away and have a reading on the spot. I had studied Tarot in some depth before moving to Greece but I was largely self taught and hadn't practised it to the same extent as astrology, but then I found myself doing 5 or 6 readings every evening – and there is just nothing like that kind of experience to hone your craft! It really took off and the readings from the first 2-3 years, and all the questions I was asked again and again, generated the material for “Tarot for Today”.

***What sorts of questions do you get asked by people seeking tarot readings? Do they tend to differ from when you give astrology readings?***

No, the questions that people want to ask are absolutely the same regardless of whether you are doing their horoscope or a Tarot reading. If I had to boil it down I would say that the most

common question is, simply, “What’s going to happen?” People have always been fascinated by what the future holds in store for them. More importantly, people come along for a reading because, nine times out of ten, they are struggling with a problem. And nine times out of ten that problem is a relationship. Love and romance are definitely at the top of the list of personal issues. In both books I try to show that readings are not just about divination but also about counselling – working things through, discussing options and coping strategies in the light of what is unfolding in their lives. The reader can of course just give a yes or no answer – but that is no where near good enough. Clients want details, information and discussion, something meaty to take away with them.

***What formats do you most prefer for giving tarot readings, e.g. face to face, telephone, post or email?***

I personally only ever do face to face readings. I am very much a consultant because I believe that the dynamics that come into play between the client, the cards or the horoscope and then myself are pivotal in any reading. Written horoscopes especially are so time consuming and so often fall short of the real demands of the client. This is not to say that other formats don’t work for other practitioners but the face to face setting for me is vitally important. There is a limit to what you can say without the context of a reading – and only the client can provide that context.

***What advice would you give anyone wanting to work as a tarot card reader?***

First and foremost – ethics. You are dealing with the fragility of human lives and you simply have to acquire at least some basic counselling skills or you could do a lot of damage. We have all, sadly, heard stories of people having bad or upsetting experiences with so called professionals. You basically have to wear the therapist’s hat as well being a reader. Secondly, you have to understand your limitations – no reader has a magic wand and you can’t “fix” things in an instant – and I think it pays to remind clients that this discipline is not the same as clairvoyance or being a medium for example. This is not to say that some psychic element is not in play – it often is – but mostly it is all about having a sound grasp of symbolism. Thirdly, practice makes perfect – do as many readings as possible and keep on learning. Learn to stay open to symbolism, let it speak to you and learn to say what you see, even if it sounds ridiculous. You’ll be amazed how often someone might look puzzled or downright disbelieving and then some time later they will come back to you and tell you that you were right after all.

***What would you say is your secret recipe to earning a living from this sort of work?***

It is very difficult to earn a living from this work unless you have a huge client base, and that takes a long time to build up. Word of mouth has always been very effective for me, and this goes back to the ethics issue, making sure that you keep your reputation squeaky clean and letting the word spread. Basically you have to put yourself where there are lots of likely clients to be found – which is why the seafront desk worked so well. If I were living back in London I expect I would advertise, as you would in any business, but out here I have never had to do that.

I think things changed for me from the day that I decided that I was an astrologer – not a teacher doing astrology on the side, so to speak. I made a conscious decision because I just felt that this was what I was supposed to be doing – and if you take your work seriously then others take you seriously too. If there is any secret recipe I would have to say that it is belief in yourself and in what you do, feeling that you have something to offer and that you really can make a difference for others. Paradoxically it's all about putting your own ego aside and taking up that place for others – it's not the reader that counts, but the client – and when we understand that we then discover that clients have a way of finding us rather than the other way around.

***I know you have a background as a tutor in astrology and have offered some classes abroad, where you are based. Do you teach tarot, too? And do you have a preferred format for the esoteric teaching that you do?***

Yes, I am still a registered tutor for the Company of Astrologers in London, but of course living out here means that I no longer really take an active role in the Company. Last year I decided to put that right and I offered a summer school – a week's course for intermediate astrology students, under a franchise for the Company. It was all a bit rushed in the end, to be honest, but four people booked up and we just had the most fantastic week at the beginning of September. The small group, as it turned out, worked so well and I will definitely be sticking to that format for future groups. Everyone felt that it was intimate and that they got plenty of individual attention. We studied for two sessions a day with a gap for siesta time and the "classroom" was my huge terrace, covered with an awning, and the five of us really gelled. I also made plenty of time for excursions, including an evening boat trip called "Sunset and Stars" which takes you to a deserted beach so that you can look at the heavens as the guide takes you through the constellations with a huge searchlight. We had some group dinners and just lots of fun and some wonderful astrology. All four students booked private tuition and readings with me throughout the week too – so it was very full on but so well worth all the time and effort.

***What tarot deck(s) do you favour?***

There are simply loads of decks to choose from but I think you always favour the cards you first learnt with – for me that was the Rider Waite deck, which I love, and all my colleagues use the same. It was because of this deck being the most widely used that I insisted that we use it in the book – the publishers originally wanted to use a different deck because of copyright problems but thankfully we overcame these in the end. The result is a highly illustrated book with a deck that is immediately recognisable, easy to use and understand, and is widely available.

***Could you cite any special influences on your work?***

I would have to say that the directors of the Company of Astrologers – Geoffrey Cornelius and Maggie Hyde – have both been the main influence on my work. When I first started studying with them I was in awe – they knew so much – and the way they taught me to look at the world, and how to approach my work, has never left me. The late Derek Appleby, another Company

astrologer, was also hugely inspirational at a “hands on” level, and at a time when I was losing direction with my studies, so he really put me back on track. During last year’s summer school I was forever quoting him, which made me realise just how much he had taught me. He is a great loss to the astrological community, especially as he never wrote up the bulk of his knowledge. Maybe that is partly why I felt the compulsion to write – so much of my own knowledge has come about through discussion and practice, not from any particular books.

*Do you have any future plans with regard to tarot, short term or long term?*

I haven’t worked on the seafront for the last couple of years because of problems with Greek bureaucracy and paperwork. But I would love to get back to doing some summer readings and intend to do so this year, time allowing. I have plans for another book and I also want to offer courses out here again in September and October, on astrology and tarot – all levels welcome and catered for. I will invite other tutors to participate if the courses really take off. In the meantime, having just written two books back to back in less than a year, I am planning to take all of May off and recharge my symbolic batteries.

*How can people contact you if they’re interested in your courses?*

They can email me on [curtis@otenet.gr](mailto:curtis@otenet.gr) or telephone 0030 26450 92943 (please note that this is an overseas number).

*Thanks for telling us about your work, Joanna. We wish you success with all your new ventures!*

**Go to page 48 to read Diana’s review of Joanna’s new book ‘Tarot for Today’**

# ***Planet Ruled Pip Cards - The Book T Correspondences Part 2***

*By Mick Frankel*

Following on from last issue, Mick now presents the remaining planets...

## **Mercury**

Mercury is the messenger of the gods. A symbol of communication, he was also a bit of a trickster. The Tarot trump corresponding to Mercury is I the Magician.

On the zodiac wheel, these are the cards before the Moon-ruled pip cards.

### **Mercury in Taurus - 5 of Coins**

People with Mercury in Taurus are pretty clear-minded and down-to-earth I think but they tend to take their time about thinking things through. Solid, reliable, stubborn at times. Maybe this lack of flexibility is reflected in the 5 of Coins? Difficulty adapting to changing circumstances perhaps?

### **Mercury in Cancer - 3 of Cups**

Kind, thoughtful, loving, gentle. Seems to fit with the 3 of Cups.

But Mercury in Cancer can mean someone who lives in the past a little bit. Nostalgia and reviewing the past maybe? This is an aspect of the 3 of Cups that I hadn't seen before.

### **Mercury in Virgo - 10 of Coins**

(This is the card before the Moon-in-Libra 2 of Swords)

Well this is definitely the world of the accountant! Mercury in Virgo has such a wonderful mind for detail and precision. The financial mind is well suited to the 10 of Coins don't you think? The negative side is that Mercury in Virgo people can be deathly boring and dull at times. Down-to-earth and straightforward though.

### **Mercury in Sagittarius - 8 of Wands**

The blunt, tactless, feet-first Sagittarian mind at work! 8 of Wands is perfect, isn't it?

Knowledgeable and wise and with such charm that you get away with the things that you say and everyone still loves you!

### **Mercury in Aquarius - 6 of Swords**

I like this a lot because both the 6 of Swords and Mercury in Aquarius have a sense of forward movement about them for me. Forward-thinking, looking at the latest advancements, finding new solutions. Maybe the negative side is that if you don't move on, you can get stuck in a rut.

## Venus

Venus is the goddess of love. She represents beauty and sensuality. She's also art either creatively or appreciating beautiful works of art. Venus is relationships, serious relationships. Venus is also money. She's linked to trump III the Empress.

### **Venus in Aries – 4 of Wands**

Aries is cardinal fire. The initiating force that's self-expressive, confrontative and good at kicking things off with a lot of energy. Venus in Aries is an uncomfortable and slightly awkward combination. Venus rules Libra so she's in detriment in Aries which is the opposite sign. It's as if the Feminine has to try to find expression in a very masculine way.

For me, this card represents the completion and successful establishment of an idea that's been put into practice. It's also an elegant solution so maybe 4 of Wands represents a practical application of beauty?

### **Venus in Cancer – 2 of Cups**

Cancer is cardinal water so Venus in Cancer is the perfect expression of the first stages of love and affection. It's all about a loving relationship full of emotional warmth, mutual appreciation and love for another person.

I think Venus in Cancer fits really well with the 2 of Cups.

### **Venus in Virgo – 9 of Coins**

Virgo is mutable earth. The grounded power that can move with the changes and adapt to maintain momentum.

Venus expresses herself easily in Virgo and since Venus also represents money, Venus in Virgo fits perfectly with the idea of building financial success and material security represented by the 9 of Coins.

### **Venus in Scorpio – 7 of Cups**

Venus rules Taurus so she's in detriment again in the opposite sign Scorpio. It's awkward for her to express herself fully here.

Scorpio is fixed water. Intense emotions, transformation, death and re-birth are all Scorpio stuff. So maybe the 7 of Cups with its sense of emotional choice and commitment takes on a quality of transformation and growth with the assignment of Venus in Scorpio?

### **Venus in Aquarius – 5 of Swords**

Aquarius is fixed air so this time the intensity is in the world of ideas, creativity and invention.

Venus in Aquarius is again slightly awkward. (Béatrice Dalle as Rosalind Franklin anyone?)

A very positive interpretation could be that the 5 of Swords represents the struggle to create something new and beautiful by going through conflict.

Venus in Aquarius has a kind of forward movement for me and overlays the 5 of Swords with a sense of positive momentum towards a better future.

## Mars

Mars, the god of war, is a bit like a "warrior without a brain". He represents aggression, individuality, strength and courage. In mythology he definitely wasn't a thinker but he did know how to give Venus what she wanted, when she wanted it (round `bout midnight when her workaholic husband still hadn't come home yet).

So it sounds to me like Mars is your typical blockhead bloke who thinks with his "lower chakras" and talks with his fists. Makes me think of Russell Crowe.

Mars is the only planet to rule 6 cards. On the Zodiac wheel, the Mars-ruled cards are before the Sun-ruled cards with the exception of the extra 6th card, Mars in Pisces for the 10 of Cups. Mars corresponds to trump XVI the Tower.

### **Mars in Aries – 2 of Wands**

Mars rules Aries and is quite at home in the sign of cardinal fire. Kicking things off and generally jumping in with flying fists, elbows and knees. He's not interested in look-before-you-leap and Aries suits him just fine.

So, this seems to connect pretty well with the initiating power of the 2 of Wands. No messing around here, this card for me is about a project that's on the move. Energy's flowing and things are booting off big-time.

### **Mars in Gemini – 9 of Swords**

Gemini is mutable air. The constantly adapting flow of ideas and communication. This is not really a comfortable place for Mars at all. Poor bloke can barely string a sentence together!

The 9 of Swords is my "woe is me" card. So it does make me smile to think of our brainless warrior struggling to make a go of things in Gemini and despairing of his lot. "I coulda been a contender".

### **Mars in Leo – 7 of Wands**

This is the first time Leo's appeared in the Book T assignments. Leo is fixed fire. The creative, powerful energy of fire in full flame.

Leo is a wonderful constellation which dominates the night sky in March/April time in the UK. Mars in Leo then is larger than life.

This can be totally creative and self-expressive or a domineering, egotistical pain-in-the-neck. Maybe both at the same time?

The 7 of Wands is certainly about self-reliance, perseverance and stamina. It asks you to rely on your own abilities and to trust yourself and your inner strength above all else. I think it fits well with Mars in Leo.

### **Mars in Scorpio – 5 of Cups**

Here again Mars is in rulership but this is very different from Mars in Aries. The brainless but hunky warrior has to try to express himself through the passionate intensity of Scorpio.

I'd say this was a sexual combination. But Mars isn't sumptuous and gorgeous like Venus. He's hot and sweaty.

Scorpio adds the idea of death and transformation as well. Sex as "la petite mort"?

I find this a very useful connection to the 5 of Cups with its sense of emotional loss and pain. The transformational energy of Scorpio gives the 5 of Cups the idea that the sadness and tears are very necessary if you want to move on emotionally.

### **Mars in Capricorn – 3 of Coins**

This time Mars is in exaltation. (He generally does alright in these Book T assignments doesn't he?) The cardinal Earth sign prevents him from getting out of control and lets him channel his energies into something practical.

Mars in Capricorn sounds like a very hard-working, successful combination. Definitely a combination that understands material things and knows how to work to achieve what you want. Perhaps a little bit workaholic and ultra-serious?

3 of Coins fits well I think. The realisation of material success. Practical success achieved through work. I think III Deniers would be a pretty auspicious card to represent the near future in a reading about a business venture.

### **Mars in Pisces – 10 of Cups**

This is the extra assignment because there are 36 decanates and 36 pip cards but the sequence of 7 planets cycling 5 times gives 35 assignments through the Zodiac.

In Pisces, mutable Water, even the most brainless of warriors has to start to feel some emotions. Pisces is psychic and sensitive. Pisces is the 12th house energy of dreams and the unconscious.

I'd normally take the 10 of Cups to mean complete happiness and fulfilment. For example, a family home filled with joy.

The assignment of Mars in Pisces seems to add the sense that there may be times when the 10 of Cups means that it's all a bit too much. Too idealistic, too dreamy, too unrealistic perhaps?

### **Jupiter**

Jupiter is Zeus the ruler of the gods of Olympos. He's "all-knowing, all-powerful and arrogant". He rules by thunderbolts and the other gods are afraid of him. Hera could only get the better of him by borrowing Venus' belt of desire.

Jupiter represents the urge to satisfy your desires and areas in your life where you tend to go completely over-the-top. But Jupiter is also often defined as the planet of good luck. He represents expansion and growth. Jupiter corresponds to trump X the Wheel of Fortune.

### **Jupiter in Gemini – 8 of Swords**

Jupiter rules Sagittarius so he's in detriment in the opposite sign, Gemini. This is an awkward place for Jupiter's wish to expand and go over-the-top. The duality of Gemini and the constantly changing flow of ideas in the sign of mutable air might well confine Jupiter and his big ideas.

This fits so well with the 8 of Swords which often represents a restrictive situation where it feels like your hands are tied. Jupiter can't expand and grow in the way that he'd like in the sign of Gemini. But this assignment gives another nuance to the 8 of Swords which is about the desire for communication.

### **Jupiter in Leo – 6 of Wands**

Jupiter in Leo is a very happy combination. Jovial expansion in the sign of the Lion? Leo is fixed fire. Creativity and self-expression. Jupiter is growth and expansion.

This fits really well with the 6 of Wands I think. Tremendous power and ability to put ideas into practice.

Maybe the negative side is that if you don't keep your discipline then Jupiter and Leo could lead to completely out-of-control ego-mania. Does that fit with the 6 of Wands at all?

### **Jupiter in Libra – 4 of Swords**

I really like this Book T assignment. In the fair-minded, even-handed sign of the Scales, Jupiter can't go overboard in any one direction. Libra maintains a balance above all else.

So Jupiter has keep himself in check somewhat. That fits so well with the uneasy truce represented by the 4 of Swords.

This is also Jupiter in the 7<sup>th</sup> House. Relationships and partnerships. So could the 4 of Swords represent good fortune in partnerships? I can see how this card could reflect the ability to compromise and work with others in spite of your differences.

### **Jupiter in Capricorn – 2 of Coins**

Jupiter is in exaltation in Cancer and so he's in fall in the opposite sign of Capricorn. This means that doesn't function well here.

Jupiter in Capricorn would be held firmly in check and forced to channel his energies into practical affairs such as making money.

Does this fit with the 2 of Coins? The choice represented by this card could be Jupiter's desire to expand and grow as opposed to Capricorn's desire to work and maintain discipline.

Jupiter in Capricorn means success in business and I can see how the 2 of Coins could also be an auspicious card in reference to a business venture.

### **Jupiter in Pisces – 9 of Cups**

Here's a nice place to end the Jupiter cycle! Traditionally, Jupiter rules Pisces and he's delighted to be here.

All his desires for sensual pleasure and happiness are quite delightfully acceptable in the mutable water sign of the Fishes. The dreamy, psychic energy of the 12<sup>th</sup> House gets the full benefit of Jupiter's power and this is a splendid combination.

Perhaps the negative side is Jupiter in Pisces is the risk of never actually doing anything other than trying to satisfy your insatiable appetites? Fits with the 9 of Cups I think.

### **Saturn**

Saturn was traditionally the outermost planet and Saturn is all about limits and boundaries. Saturn is Kronos the Titan in Greek mythology. Kronos challenges the limits by bravely confronting his father. Then Kronos sets limits by ruling over a peaceful time with great anxiety and devouring his own children. Among other things then, Saturn is challenge, Saturn is structure, Saturn is the passage of time.

Saturn was traditionally bad news. Death, decay and conflict. Saturn's influence was known as Malefic. And when you look at the 5 Book T Saturn-ruled pip cards (The Kronos Quintet?), I think you can feel the dead hand of the Master at work. Saturn corresponds to trump XXI the World

### **Saturn in Taurus - 7 of Coins**

Erin Sullivan says that Taurus "exemplifies the Reluctant Hero". Taurus loves the good things in life, Taurus loves satisfying Taurean appetites and the danger is that with Saturn in Taurus, the Hero will refuse to rise to the challenge.

I think this is a very good match with the 7 of Coins whose message is often, "Don't fall asleep". Stay vigilant, stay focussed and you can get through this awkward time. Also, I think there's a sense of "pay attention to detail" with the 7 of Coins. Perhaps this also fits with Saturn in Taurus where the temptation might be to try to cut corners.

### **Saturn in Leo - 5 of Wands**

Traditionally, Saturn rules Aquarius so Saturn is in detriment in the opposite sign of Leo, the Lion.

There is such conflict in this pairing. Saturn has no imagination. Saturn wants to define a structure and challenges Leo to change. But the Lion loves to express itself and receive praise and so perhaps the dramatic influence of Saturn can drive Leo to act in search of the reward of achievement and recognition.

Is that 5 of Wands? I think so. Conflict out in the open. Struggle and challenge. If you don't take up the challenge and try to avoid conflict, things will get worse. The 5 of Wands urges you to accept that sometimes conflict is unavoidable and however painful, it can be the only way for you to move on.

### **Saturn in Libra - 3 of Swords**

Saturn is exalted in Libra and here Saturn is like the General, planning and implementing the strategy of conflict.

The danger is that Libra might be so involved in listening to every opinion about the strategy that it might not actually get around to taking on the challenge of conflict.

This is totally 3 of Swords isn't it? Unavoidable conflict again. A tough, tough challenge that has to be taken on because not acting will only lead to more pain.

### **Saturn in Sagittarius - 10 of Wands**

Sullivan calls the Mutable signs "the Hopeful Heroes". Well, Sagittarius is traditionally optimistic and adventurous but Saturn leans heavily on the Centaur.

If free-wheeling Sagittarius can take on the responsibility of Saturn's challenge then a real inner journey can deepen. But if not, then the image of Sagittarius as one of life's lost souls seems to take shape.

Does all this fit with the 10 of Wands? Well there's certainly a powerful sense of the burden of responsibility and how you deal with it.

Sometimes, I think the 10 of Wands is about an abuse of power. Is this reflected by Saturn in Sagittarius at all? Sagittarius can be hurtful at times.

### **Saturn in Pisces - 8 of Cups**

The planet of boundaries and structure in the sign which is no good with boundaries and structure. Adhering to a structure can be hard work for psychic and intuitive Pisces. (You ever tried to have a straightforward conversation with someone who has Mercury in Pisces?).

So can Pisces get past the desire to avoid conflict and go on to meet Saturn's challenge? If so, then inner boundaries can become more defined and Pisces finds out that the other fish that they've been looking for out there, has been sitting on their own back all the time.

I think this is a fantastic correspondence to the 8 of Cups. Moving on to something deeper, crossing the bridge to new inner territory. And making progress on the journey towards self-discovery.

# *The Adventures of Madame Fifie*

TABI's interactive tarot story - where you play the title role...

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

Your querent was a strange little fellow with large, hairy feet who was on a dangerous Quest with his devoted friend Sam...

## *Reading by Fairy Hedgehog*

I shuffled the cards with the querent's question in mind and drew three cards, using a modified version of my "daily advice draw" as the spread:

**The Heart of the Matter:** Ten of Pentacles. This card shows a settled community where all the members matter to each other.

**What is going on beneath the surface (unseen factors):** Eight of Cups. This shows a robed figure setting off on a journey. The figure holds a staff and is heading for a stone circle. It is night.

**Advice from above:** Eight of Swords. A Japanese woman is held captive in her house by swords. In the distance the sun rises but she is held by convention and cannot escape.

"The central issue for you Frodo is the security of your home and community. You have a very settled home and extended family, there is prosperity and comfort with everyone relying on each other. Yet what no one knows yet is that you are thinking of leaving it all and going off on a journey. Initially the journey will be towards greater spirituality and wholeness but there are more difficult times ahead and you will feel trapped or even imprisoned. But even in the darkest moments, hold on to hope and realise that you have it in your power to escape.

"Although I can't tell you what the final outcome of your journey will be, it looks to me like it is now inevitable and that forces are working that will compel you to leave. But remember, always at the heart of the matter is the reason for your going: the safety of all you hold dear."

The deck I used was Ancestral Path - I considered Universal Waite but it didn't look dark enough for this mysterious querent.

*And now – the new Adventure...*

*Scenario by Ania*

It has been a quiet day. The late autumn mists have settled on the field and there is a chill in the air. A gust of icy wind plucks at your tent flap and for a moment you glimpse two solemn young men hovering indecisively outside. You shiver in the sudden chill and throw another log on your brazier, watching the sparks fly up as it shatters the glowing remnants within.

One of the young men enters and stands blinking; his eyes seeking you out in the gloom. He is richly attired in black robes and his purse moves with a comforting chink as he approaches. You motion for him to take a seat.

"I need some advice, old krone", he opens, betraying the hint of a Northern European accent.

"Yes...", you prompt calmly, suppressing irritation at his address. Old, indeed!

"My father died and my mother has remarried...my uncle", he says flatly.

"It is natural to feel a sense of betrayal to your father's memory, but you must not expect your mother to mourn forever", you venture gently.

"No, you don't understand", he says vehemently, "...He only died a couple of weeks ago!"

Drat...jumped in too soon. That's what comes of having no one to talk to all day! Must remember to listen more and talk less. "Oh...I imagine that this has caused you a few sleepless nights", you say, registering his drawn features and tired eyes.

"Yes. I feel haunted...my father... My mother...my girlfriend...my friends.... They're all out to get me...", he gibbers, with rising hysteria.

"Easy...Calm yourself. No-one can harm you here", you soothe.

"To sleep...perchance...", he murmurs, staring and wringing his hands. Then, suddenly drawing himself up, "Yes, of course", he says, levelly, looking at you. "I do apologise. You must think me quite mad."

"What is it that you want to know?", you ask gently.

"I can't get over my father's death. He seemed so well, when last I saw him alive...it must have been murder most foul! Are they plotting against me too? Am I going mad? What does the future hold?" There is real desperation in his eyes now, but he seems sane.

You reach for your deck and shuffle the cards...

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

# *Going Pro - A beginners guide to Web service*

*By Ania*

Professional reader Ania talks us through the basics of getting your reading service online...

I first decided to “go pro” when two of my TABI Free Reading clients asked for paid readings the same week. The first, I referred to the UK Tarot Readers page, but the second, I thought “why not?” and utilised the Paypal account I operate for my Ebay purchases to take payment and complete the reading. Naturally, this got me thinking about setting up a web-based service, which would make it easier for any clients to request a paid reading.

## **Setting up a Website**

Although I actually work in the IT industry, I had no previous experience of setting up a website, or even web design. However, having spent much time on the web (since it’s relatively early days) I do know what I like and what I don’t.

### **Things I like:**

- **Easy navigation**  
You need to ensure that your visitors can find their way around and get to the bits they are interested in – and back again! Don’t get too carried away with lots of different pages – often one longer page with internal links to different points will do just as well.
- **Being given a clue**  
It’s all very well coming up with clever names for your pages, but if it doesn’t describe what’s there, your visitors are likely to get bored and go away before they find what they are looking for. Make your headings and links meaningful.
- **Readable pages**  
Staring at computer screens is hard on the eyes – lime green text on an orange background may stand out, but it will make your visitors’ eyes water! Similarly, having to peer at long passages of text in a small or hard to read font will be equally off-putting.
- **Fast loading**  
Nice graphics look great, but if your page is going to take 5 minutes to load over a modem link, no one is going to hang around long enough to see them! Keep the graphics as small as you can (in terms of file size) and don’t go overboard.

### **Things I don’t like:**

- **Popups, adverts and new windows**  
Sometimes these are unavoidable and come with the service provider, e.g., geocities, but personally I get quite annoyed by sites that spawn new browser pages all over the place. Sometimes it is useful to open a new window, but most of the time it is better to provide a good means of navigation rather than plastering your pages all over the visitor’s screen, unless being able to switch between active pages is useful.

However, advertising popups are better than adverts embedded in the page – at least you can close the offending window.

- **Flashy graphics and tunes**

On the whole, I dislike things that flash or dance about the page. I daresay it seems like a nice gimmick, but if you expect the visitor to linger and actually read your page, flashy things will become annoying very quickly.

Tunes are also pointless - I have my speakers off usually as I have occasionally and embarrassingly been caught out by unexpected (and usually awful) loud tunes when I have been looking at a site at work!

- **Violent clashing/flashing colours**

Urgh!

These are just my opinions though, and some people love all the flashy graphics, swirling cursors, dancing hamsters and tinny tunes – the choice is yours.

Think about what you like and dislike about your favourite sites. It's up to you how you want to present the site, but bear in mind that others may not appreciate your love of gimmicks, so it's usually best to keep it simple.

### **Getting Started**

The first thing was to sort out the basic design – the look and feel of how I wanted to present the site. I decided that the best way to do this would be to dummy up some pages in MSWord - this being an application with which I am familiar and one that makes it fairly easy to play with fonts, backgrounds and graphics as well as text.

Dummy up your site in a package that you are familiar with and don't worry about the HTML code to begin with.

Create all your pages in a separate directory. This will make it easier to maintain and load the site.

### **Content**

Obviously, the key thing was to think about all the things that I needed or wanted to include in the site:

- a little information about myself;
- plenty of information about the service – what was on offer, how much it cost, how to get it and my terms/ethics etc;
- a means to request a reading or contact me
- a means to pay
- any other information that I might want to include
- navigation

I decided that I would also offer the querent the opportunity to choose the deck they would like me to use and so, it made sense to include links to images of those decks. Similarly, the querent

can choose to have an image of the spread sent as part of the reading. I have a digital camera, so this is not a big problem for me to do.

I also had a look at similar services on the web for ideas on what to include and to see what I did or didn't like about them. I also decided that I was not going to go in for the "witchy/psychic/spooky" thing, but rather aim for the down-to-earth approach.

**Think about what you need to include, what you'd like to include that would make your site different or appealing to the others and what your "pitch" is going to be.**

### **Coding the Site**

I pretty much did the whole site in MSWord initially and saved the pages as HTML. This would have given me a website that I could then upload to my service provider.

However, MSWord does not generate very good HTML code – it's repetitive, inefficient, messy and makes your pages considerably larger than they need to be. It will do the job if that's all you have, but fortunately for me, my lovely hubby (who also works in IT) had recently been playing with HTML and rewrote the first incarnation of my pages in good code.

I didn't need to worry about finding a host for my site, as my cable package also includes web space, so it was just a case of finding out how to load up my pages. There are plenty of reasonably priced packages available and many of them offer helpful applications, advice and assistance with setting up a website for the first time.

Do seek experienced advice if you can – your site will load faster, be easier to maintain and use up less of your web space. Failing that, find a good professional site and use the View Source option to look at or copy the format of the code.

However you plan your site to look, don't forget to give a lot of consideration to how the visitor is going to find their way around it. Make sure there are plenty of links to get to other pages and especially back to your home page. I use frames for this, which allows me to retain a navigation frame on each page, but you could also use a navigation bar on each page, as not all browsers respond well to frames.

### **Refining the site**

Once I had the first draft, I started tweaking and refining the site using an HTML editor called HTML-Kit, which can be downloaded free from <http://www.chami.com/html-kit/>. It has lots of useful help features for the beginner and experienced alike, but the best is that you can instantly preview your changes.

Another invaluable resource is Sizzling Jalfrezi, <http://freespace.virgin.net/sizzling.jalfrezi/iniframe.htm>, which is nothing to do with curry, but is a really good HTML guide with lots of tips and examples on all aspects of coding a site. An absolute must!

Once I was happy with the basic site and had checked that all the links between pages worked, I started to think about enhancements, like adding a counter and guestbook. I found some free links on the Web to allow me to set up these features without having to code them myself. Similarly, you can get links to internet payment services like Paypal and Nochex from their respective sites.

The icing on the cake was my hubby buying me (a very reasonably priced) domain name. My website is actually a personal site hosted by my ISP, but the domain diverts to the real location without displaying the actual address. This looks much more professional and the address is a lot shorter than the “www.blah blah blah.com/homepage/username/etc etc” style of address. The other advantage is that some of the search engines ignore personal homepages like Geocities.

Test the site thoroughly and ideally get feedback from others before unleashing it on the public. Although you can knock something basic up in a couple of days, expect to spend several weeks until you are happy with the site.

Consider investing in a domain name to make your site look more professional if you are going to use it to run a business. This need not be expensive.

### **The Outcome**

So far the response from visitors to my site has been very positive - they seem to like what I have done. The problem seems to be with getting my site noticed by the search engines, so that the big wide world is aware of its existence.

Again, I have used free services found on the web to submit my site to various search engines, but this seems to be taking a long of time to take effect. Paying for search engine submissions would yield faster results if I were serious about this as a business, but it is more of a sideline for me. The search engines will find pages eventually as they trawl around the Web building lists periodically, but this can take a couple of months or more.

The other difficulty is that the domain redirects to the actual site and therefore the search engines may not be able to see the final content, hence may reject the entry. Using frames can also cause similar problems with search engines, which try to find the page content on the index page and then look to ensure that the keywords listed actually appear in the body text. Since the index page for frames is often just a pointer to various other frames, this causes the search engine a certain amount of confusion and may result in the site being rejected for inclusion.

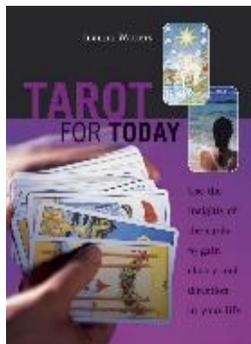
So now I am playing a waiting game to see if and when my site will start to appear. Meanwhile, feel free to visit me at [www.gwiazda.me.uk](http://www.gwiazda.me.uk) and spread the word!

## ***Book Review: Tarot for Today***

By Joanna Watters

*Reviewed by Diana McMahon-Collis*

ISBN 1-903258-57-X; published 2003 by Carroll & Brown, 20 Lonsdale Road, Queen's Park, London NW6 6RD. Tel: 020 7372 0900. RRP £12.99 (please see below for a special reader offer!)



**“Use the insights of the cards to achieve clarity and direction in your life, in this thoroughly modern approach to the Tarot”**

Some books on divination are theory based, with examples provided that will help to prove the theory. Some are primarily research-based, covering perhaps the history or traditions of a specific subject area. Others are more “hands on”, like work manuals and these are usually the ones that are written from real-life experience and years of it. Tarot for Today is the third kind of book and anyone turning its pages will begin to get a real taste of what it's like to give face to face tarot readings for other people.

The book has a visual vibrancy through a strong inclusion of colour and lively layout, which makes it fun to approach and interesting to read. In an initial mistaken moment, I have to admit, I thought I was flicking through a coffee table book. However, the inner message of Tarot for Today is a very long way from this, so do not be deceived by its prettiness. This visual vitality is in fact a welcome change from some of the cool, clinical, black and white texts that still seem to take up a lot of the space on tarot book shelves.

The six chapters of Tarot for Today are neatly divided into pertinent subsections covering issues that will be of interest to many tarot readers and would-be readers. Three chapters cover the essence of tarot in detailing the Major and Minor Arcana and Court Cards. The rest are given over to information on areas such as symbolism, astrology, tarot consultancy and readings in practice, including specific spreads used. The visual layout per page is refreshing because, as well as plenty of colour plates, here we have information given in boxed sections as well as across columns. It is a lot like looking at a rather colourful magazine, featuring a variety of interesting articles and snippets that you can casually dip into in a spare moment.

This fresh-faced book from new author Joanna Watters is not pretending to be an academic tome or a formal dissertation on tarot. Yet as soon as you get into the text, you can tell that it has been written by someone who knows her business and who has a wealth of experience in reading the cards for herself and for others. If older writers such as Sasha Fenton began a trend of relating a few details from the experience of real-life readings, then newer authors such as Joanna Watters are going on to share and describe a great deal more in this vein. Here we learn a storehouse of information about Joanna's practice as a reader and her approaches to dealing with the demands of modern-day clients.

A quick look at the bibliography at the back of the book will also tell you that, where needed, the author has consulted various outer sources. You may be reassured by the familiarity of names such as Rachel Pollack and Juliet Sharman-Burke but I do not think you are going to notice a lot of regurgitated information in *Tarot for Today*. What is so appealing about it is that Joanna has established her own style of delivery for conveying the meanings and relevance of the tarot cards plus a great deal more. In the three chapters devoted to the cards alone she starts with a simple but succinct and relevant description of the scene on each card. Then she expands with very clear suggestions of what the card traditionally indicates and, wherever possible, shares an example from her experience of reading for herself or others. This is about as good as it gets when it comes to presenting this kind of tarot information!

At the same time the author warns you, in the broader theoretical chapters, against the danger of learning tarot as a rigid set of meanings. The book list at the back of the book is by no means indicative of an attempt to establish a new overview of the academic subject of tarot. Indeed, the author commences in her introduction in *Tarot for Today* by making it clear that she is not coming at her subject from an academic perspective but that she considers tarot to be a craft, an acquired skill, first and foremost – and one that anyone can learn. Perhaps more to the point, she is referring to the magic of the connection made between tarot reader and querent/client and the need to be able to respond in a fluent, alive and authentic way in a reading. Hence she talks about the nature of symbolism and its fluidity, along with the importance of understanding the querent's context when you carry out a reading for someone.

Of course not all tarot readers or diviners work in exactly the same way. But it is evident from this author's writing that this is an approach that she fully believes in and which produces successful results for her. Perhaps tarot readers who are used to giving online readings should bear in mind that this book is focussed first and foremost focussed on the face to face consultation, since the two areas do to some extent have different demands.

Every tarot reader is however likely to come across the experience of receiving feedback from a client or querent who thought they were going to get something different from the card reader. And one of the benefits of this book is that the author takes pains to define a few terms that can easily be misleading in the world of divination and which can lead to popular misconceptions. In fact Joanna devotes a whole chapter to the subject of "Divination Versus Clairvoyance", in an attempt to put a few myths to rest!

There is also a welcome chapter entitled "Becoming a Consultant" which includes "The Consultation in Practice". Here we are given food for thought about whether to enter into tarot as a hobby or a profession. And how we should deal with issues such as confidentiality and ethics. This is all very practical stuff and covers issues that are hugely relevant to modern tarot readers and those interested in doing more with tarot. I therefore have no hesitation in saying that this book lives up to its title. Because of the author's own preferences, it does appear to be focussed primarily on one facet of tarot reading (that is the face to face consultation) and not every possible way of using the tarot. But then it would be a tall order to ask for every tarot book to cover every function.

What really matters here is that the author has taken pains to share such a lot of her experience and the value of such information cannot be underestimated. At times it is rather like the equivalent of reading “the memoirs of a tarot reader”, if you will, whilst also reinforcing accepted understandings of the cards. Whilst this is not just a subjective output of information gleaned in practice, there are many examples of how cards reflect the real-life issues and concerns of the querent and therein lies its great achievement.

It is however also an important book for the tarot reader today because it incorporates a closer look at the subject of astrology in relation to the cards— which seems to be an ever-increasing sphere of interest in the tarot world these days. In this area of the book there is quite a varied approach with regard to the astrological correlations of tarot cards as well as some basic information on astrology and the value of charting the everyday movements of planets (planetary transits).

For anyone already familiar with certain tables of correlation between divinatory systems, be aware that you are not going to find here the Golden Dawn approach or any other established procedure, although you may well find some connections that you have come across before. This author has a strong astrological basis to her life’s work in divination and, in being someone who shares this propensity, I have to applaud the approach of matching tarot and astrology according to her own system and experience.

This is in fact a procedure that seems to be at the centre of tarot debate and learning at the current time and no doubt we are having this discussion in tarot circles because we do indeed need to look at redefining tarot/astrology connections. Being someone with a fondness for the tarot’s Court cards, I was especially glad to see that the author had made an attempt at doing more with them astrologically. Here she has pinpointed certain planets per rank, alongside the relevant Suit elements, which I am sure is in tune with the best direction for future definitions to be developed in our tarot communities. It was also something of a relief to finally see another astrologer stand up and say that, to her, the tarot Tower relates to Uranus and not to Mars!

Let us not get overly side-tracked by card-to-astrology-feature correlations though; the author does make it clear that her intention is to “show the nuts and bolts of the craft” (of astrology). If you can grasp from this book the relevance of a planet in exaltation or fall it may help to move your tarot understanding along. Similarly, if you can appreciate that when a planet is in a certain sign it expresses more easily or less easily, it can give you a feel for the general conditions surrounding the client at the time of a consultation. Some tarot readers may prefer to glean this information from the cards alone, of course, but the approach of this author is to give you an extra tool, which you can incorporate if you want to.

As I was reading through this book I did ponder on exactly who it was aimed at. To say it is a book purely for beginners might be underestimating its scope. But it is certainly accessible to the new reader to tarot and will no doubt take some intermediate readers beyond their immediate experience, especially through the astrology and the sharing of so many wonderful anecdotes relating to querent’s lives. At the same time it is always refreshing for even a seasoned reader to come across new versions of card interpretations, or anecdotal cameos – this is the stuff that tarot

communities thrive on! So it is probably fair to say, therefore, that there is something here for everyone.

I would not want us to lose sight of some of the features that make this a special and different book though, from every other book on the typical tarot shelf. An issue that Joanna covers on several occasions in these pages is the one of whether to assign pre-determined meanings to the cards or to work in a more fluid way. This is a scenario which anyone really working to master tarot card reading will come across at some point and the author's encouragement for you to learn the basics but then trust that the "latent content" of the card will come out in the reading is sound. It is good advice for anyone who is new to tarot or who is struggling with trusting how the process of reading will work in a real life situation. Again, you will need to bear in mind that this author specialises in face to face readings and these may pose different issues to those encountered by readers who are providing readings by post or email. But moving from "just learning" the tarot to reading for anyone else in any context is always a big stretch and any help from someone experienced can be valuable.

What you will not find in these pages is a variety of tarot decks under discussion, nor pictures of lots of different artistic version of the cards. The Universal Waite is the deck of choice here. Personally I think it works well because of the brightness of its colours and because it is based on a deck that most tarot readers will be instantly familiar with. Whether you love or hate the Rider-Waite-Smith tarot, it is arguably one of the easier decks to learn tarot on. I also really like the way that specific facets of the cards have been picked out to further illustrate the pages on the Major Arcana. And in the rest of the book you will find lots of lively, modern colour photographs of people and objects, which give the book a visual lift.

Another feature that strongly defines this book is the focus on relationship questions. Many tarot readers will be familiar with the relationship area as one of the central concerns of the querent/client. There are many examples here of just how this can pan out in reality. This includes, for example, painful marital issues, the problem of geographical distance for couples in love, the misery of the love triangle, the issue of boundaries in partnerships and the joy of meeting the right person after leaving a dead-end relationship. There are numerous additional examples of course, just as there are many more issues of life covered in this book. But it is clear that the author is seasoned in giving readings concerning matters of the heart.

There is a lot else that makes this book interesting, including the author's approach to the subject of prediction. And, on a more general level, the simple clarity of the way that the book is written, which makes it a joy to read. I certainly cannot finish without recommending the seven-card Relationship spread at the back of the book. But a tarot book review can only go so far, so I will leave it here, wish the author good luck in all her ventures and hope you will enjoy her book as much as I did! Please see below for details regarding buying the book at a discounted price and meeting the author via her summer school courses.

**\*\* Reader offer \*\*:** TABI News readers may order a copy of Tarot for Today by Joanna Watters from the publisher at a special, discounted price. The book is normally priced £12.99 but to order a copy for the **special offer price of £11, p&p free**, simply **call 020 7372 0900** and quote the TABI newsletter.

*Courses by the Author - as part of the Company of Astrologers Summer School, Joanna Watters is teaching a range of astrology and tarot courses on the Ionian Island of Lefkada including "Talking Tarot" (Monday 29<sup>th</sup> September - Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> October), level beginners to intermediate. The course will discuss and explore the symbolism of all the 78 Tarot cards and its aim is to discover how the Tarot really works and how to conduct and interpret readings, at a general level and for specific questions. If you would like to book a place or wish to find out further information please use the following contact details:*

*In Greece: Joanna Watters, tel/fax 0030 26450 92943 or email [curtis@otenet.gr](mailto:curtis@otenet.gr)  
In the UK: The Company of Astrologers 01227 362427 or email [admin@coa.org.uk](mailto:admin@coa.org.uk)*

## The Company of Astrologers Greek Island Summer School September 2003

The Company of Astrologers invites you to their Greek Island Summer School on the beautiful island of Lefkada in the Ionian Sea. The courses are organised and taught by Company tutor Joanna Watters, author of "**Astrology for Today**" and "**Tarot for Today**", both published this year.

Monday 1 September – Friday 5 September AND  
Monday 13 October – Friday 17 October

From Information to Meaning – Bringing  
Astrology to Life

Level: Intermediate

These courses are designed to bridge that all important gap from technical astrological knowledge to meaningful interpretation. When we look at a horoscope for the first time, how do we "move" on it? The aim of these courses is to bring the chart to life, to translate information into meaning, to explore the nature of astrological symbolism and to introduce guidelines to client work.

Monday 15 September – Friday 19 September

### **Introduction to Astrology**

Level: Beginners

This is a fun course designed to lift astrology out of Sun sign columns and into the realm of horoscopy. You will learn all about the signs, planets and houses, and how to calculate a horoscope – and you don't have to be a brilliant mathematician! The aim of the course is to discover how astrology really works and how to approach chart interpretation. Includes work on your own horoscope.

Monday 29 September – Friday 3 October

### **Talking Tarot**

Level: Beginners to Intermediate

This course will discuss and explore the symbolism of all the 78 Tarot cards. The aim of the course is to discover how the Tarot really works and how to conduct and interpret readings, at a general level and for specific questions.

### **All Courses:**

Forget classrooms! All courses are held outside on a large vine leaf covered terrace. Morning sessions 10.00 – 13.30, reconvening for evening sessions 17.00 -19.30. This allows for siesta or beach time, whichever you prefer!

Sunday flights from Gatwick, Heathrow or Manchester to Preveza. Transfer time 40 minutes.

Cost: £125 exclusive of flights and accommodation, which can be organised on your behalf.

## ***Book Review: Supertarot***

By Sasha Fenton

*Reviewed by Shelley King*

ISBN 0-9533478-9-3; published 2002 by Zambezi Publishing, PO Box 221, Plymouth, Devon PL2 2YJ Tel: 01752 367 300, Fax 01752 350 453 , <http://www.zampub.com> RRP £10.99

This is a new edition of the book, revised and re-issued by Zambezi Publishing in 2002. Sasha notes that the previous publishers used non-traditional decks as illustrations which didn't match the text, whereas this version features cards by Jonathan Dee in the Marseille style. They are clear black and white line drawings and quite attractive, although I did find that the Wands reminded me rather disconcertingly of parsnips.

The book is aimed at students who have got beyond the initial stage of learning meanings for the individual cards, and are now looking to find ways of putting those meanings together to make an interpretation which is more than just the sum of its parts. It's arranged in workbook style, with a series of exercises and games designed to be completed in sequence in order build up knowledge and skill.

I came to the book with a little trepidation, considering the subtitle is 'How to Link the Cards to Reveal your Future.' The fortune-telling aspect is one that has never really held that much appeal for me, and in my experience the perception of tarot as a method of seeing into the future, while still common among the public, is losing popularity with modern readers. Certainly a lot of the readers I know are becoming less and less comfortable with readings of a predictive nature. It is, however, still what a lot of querents expect, and I believe it would be a good thing for students to see this side of tarot explored so that they can decide how they want to approach it. If you're going to continually be asked about the new job/house/lover, it can't be a bad thing to take a look at what combinations of cards may suggest these things.

The reading style presented here is easily accessible, with example interpretations that are very practical and down to earth - concerned with events and life situations that are immediately recognisable, rather than the more abstract or philosophical concepts which can be harder for the novice to incorporate into readings. It would also be beneficial for anyone who is finding the idea of the deeper, esoteric aspects of tarot overwhelming, and wants to gain experience in more prosaic applications first.

Although the fortune-telling slant won't be to everyone's taste, I didn't find it intrusive or distracting, and this is still a fun and useful book with games and exercises that would easily be adaptable for use with any kind of deck or interpretative style. The back-to-front exercise, where the object is to choose cards that match a given story, is a particularly good way of coming to appreciate the connections between cards – and helping the student to personalise those connections rather than being spoon-fed them.

There are other fun games, such as snakes & ladders, some good spreads – including ones based on other disciplines such as numerology, astrology and qabala – and a chapter on timing with the cards, which is something you don't always see addressed but is often asked about.

A lot of the ideas would be a useful springboard for further study, such as the way that the Minors are introduced by concentrating on the elements and suits before the actual card – a good grounding for later working with elemental dignities.

There's an interesting section on reading as a profession, which has a lot of practical advice on areas such as using your home, how much to charge, and what to do when it goes wrong. It is obvious that the author has a wealth of experience which she draws upon here. It's always both fascinating and useful to see another reader's thought process in action, and the tale of Sasha's live 'Talk Radio' readings is a great example. Even if you don't agree with her interpretations, it's always compelling to see how she arrived at them.

There isn't a huge amount on the subject of ethics which, like reversals, is an area of increasing importance to readers these days, although there is an interesting section on readers' responsibility and personal bias. This section also includes guidance on reading for yourself and some sound advice about how to prepare and protect yourself when starting to work psychically.

This is a good 'second-level' book, and I think it would be enjoyed by the student who is looking for a little more than is normally found in standard entry-level beginners' books. It would also be handy for those who want to work with the older-style 'pip' decks such as Marseille or IJJ Swiss, as the work on Minors here is done without asking the reader to use the card image. Whilst that technique is of course a valuable one, it is also useful to be able to do without it – similar to being able to drive a manual car as well as an automatic. It all adds strings to the readers' bow.

*For more information about the author, visit her website: <http://www.sashafenton.com>*

*Zambezi Publishing have a selection of other tarot, psychic development and divination titles, including the author's novice book 'Fortune-Telling by Tarot Cards' and new books on astrology and palmistry to be released in the Autumn. For information, visit the website at <http://www.zampub.com> or email [info@zampub.com](mailto:info@zampub.com)*

# ***Oracle Deck Review: Medicine Cards***

## **- The Discovery of Power through the Ways of Animals**

Created/illustrated by: Jamie Sams & David Carson

*Reviewed by Heather K Ward*

Description: 53 card Oracle deck    Publisher: St Martin's Press    ISBN: 0312204914

There are many divination card/book sets available on the market today, and it can seem overwhelming for those who would be interested in a more somewhat simpler method than tarot.

Go into any shop dealing in this sort of thing and you'll be faced with decks of dragons, unicorns, angels, dolphins... But here is a deck which is as useful as it is visually stunning. The Medicine Cards draw on the ancient wisdom and tradition of native Americans, and their belief that each animal has a lesson to teach and a part to play in Life's Medicine Wheel. Easy to use - simply choose a card for a daily meditation or use a spread, such as the Butterfly Spread, to determine the outcome of projects and enterprises. A few pages in the accompanying book are devoted to each card - telling the legend about that particular animal and its meaning to the grand scale of things.

For example, the Wolf is known as the Teacher, the Pathfinder: "If you were to keep company with Wolves, you would find an enormous sense of family within the pack, as well as a strong individualistic urge. These qualities make Wolf very much like the human race. As humans, we also have an ability to be a part of society and yet still embody our individual dreams and ideas." The cards represent a number of different animals - my original deck has 44, but a revised deck is now available with more - from mighty Whale to tiny Mouse, and there are also some blank cards upon which you can add other species. The only downside is that the cards are rather large and can be difficult to handle. Despite that, the deck is beautiful and well-presented, and encourages you to turn to Nature when you are troubled - She will guide you.

*This review first appeared at The Pathway -*

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

*Reprinted by permission of the Author.*

## ***Deck Review: Tarot of a Moon Garden***

Created & Illustrated by Karen Marie Sweikhardt.

*Reviewed by Brian Stevenson (Troy Stephens)*

Description: 78 cards with small booklet      Publisher U S Games; ISBN: 0880797053

Card dimensions: 120 x 70 mm

This pack is beautifully illustrated by Karen Marie Sweikhardt. Her gentle cards illustrate a mystical world inhabited by butterflies, dolphins, unicorns, dragons and birds. These fantastic creatures are shown living in a whimsical enchanted garden with exotic flowers, castles, and hot air ballons.

Writers such as Edgar Alan Poe, H. G. Wells and Jules Verne have speculated about the enchanted terrain that might exist on the moon. These cards take that speculation a stage further and illustrate creatures, such as unicorns and dragons, inhabiting lush jungles of vegetation. Deep valleys undulate across the entire surface of the moon and castles perch on top of lofty mountains. Beneath this lunar garden lies an underground world of deep, mysterious caves where butterflies flutter over exotic lunar flowers. The seas contain creatures ranging from serpents to dolphins.

To quote the artist:

*"From these magical images, the symbols used in The Tarot have emerged. The dragonfly forms the hilt of the swords. Unicorns act as guides through the wonderland of the lunar landscape and dragons indicate areas of transformation and warn of temptation. Butterflies hover near wild mushrooms and lush ferns in the dense lunar forests. Hot air balloons are sometimes sighted in the gardens of the moon bringing visitors from other worlds. Castles serve as welcome hospitality to those seeking shelter. The moon herself appears in many cards, representing the triple goddess – maiden, mother, and crone in her waxing, full, and waning faces."*

I feel that this is one of the most beautiful and imaginative packs ever produced. It graphically illustrates an entirely new and original fantasy world of fairytale and mythical creatures. After studying the cards I felt that they were illustrating a story that had not yet been written. (Maybe a future project for J K Rowling?)

Although the cards may not be suitable for complete beginners, I have found that the beautiful, non-threatening images are ideal for giving readings to clients who are concerned that some of the more traditional Tarot images may seem to be rather threatening. In particular, these cards have been very popular with young women, actors and musicians. Even if they are not used for giving readings, I can recommend that you buy them simply for their beautiful artwork.

# *Places to Go, Things to Do*

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

## **Fayres/Festivals/Conferences**

Big Green Gathering, July 30<sup>th</sup> - August 3<sup>rd</sup>, Cheddar

<http://www.big-green-gathering.com>

## **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

## **Resources**

<http://www.tarottotes.com/item.asp?iid=42>

Interesting site listing films which have featured tarot

Tarot Insights - <http://illuminationtarot.com/insights/>

Queen Of Pentacles Tarot - <http://www.queenofpentacles.com>

<http://www.themysticeye.com/software.htm>

Tarot Software

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

Baphomet Tarot - <http://www.baphomet.com/us/cards/fr-cards.htm>  
The Celtic Tarot - [http://www.demon.co.uk/celtia/celtic\\_tarot.htm](http://www.demon.co.uk/celtia/celtic_tarot.htm)

## **New Decks**

<http://web.vip.hr/davor.planinec.vip/>

The Soul Radiance Deck

<http://www.zianet.com/maria/tarot/fracsplash.htm>

The Fractal Firebird Tarot

## **Tarot Deck Images/Reviews**

Wild Moon Tarot Deck Reviews - <http://www.wild-moon.com/passions/tarot.htm>

Tarot Deck Reviews -

<http://www.angelfire.com/la2/tarotdeevah/tarot/tarot.html>

## **Shopping**

Tarot Jewellery - Created using the imagery from the Rider-Waite Tarot, these solid sterling silver pendants, some set with gemstones, are a beautiful way to express your love of tarot. Available in a small version suitable for earrings, a delicate pendant or charm bracelet for £12.95 (including shipping) and in a large version set with a semi-precious stone in heavy solid sterling silver £39.55 (includes shipping) **FOR TABI MEMBERS ONLY** - get a \*free\* mini Universal Waite Tarot deck and keychain worth £7 with each large tarot pendant purchased.

<http://www.newmoon.uk.com/divination/jewellery.htm>

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Dave's Tarot Emporium - <http://www.astroamerica.com/t-menu.html>  
eBay UK - <http://www.ebay.co.uk/>

## **Automated Reading Sites**

Webpress Tarot Readings - <http://www.webpresspro.com/tarot/index.html>  
Free Tarot Reading - <http://www.tarot.com/tarot/index.php?>  
TarotAdvice.com - <http://www.tarotadvice.com/home.asp>

### **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 forum:*  
<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.

## *Reader Feedback Questionnaire*

As we'd like to get to know our readers better, we'd be grateful if you would spare a few minutes to email us your responses to the following questionnaire. All respondents will be entered into a Prize Draw to win a FREE full-length reading, so please email your answers to the Editor at [newsletter@tabi.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@tabi.org.uk)

1. Where did you hear about TABI?
2. Where did you hear about TABI News?
3. Are you a tarot reader?
4. Are you a TABI Member?
5. What is your geographical location?
6. Do you read the newsletter online or download it?
7. Would you prefer to receive a hard copy in the post?
8. Do you have any suggestions for articles or improvements?
9. The newsletter is currently issued quarterly – would you prefer a different schedule?
10. What are your favourite/least favourite parts of the newsletter?

We hope you have enjoyed reading TABI News. Please address all enquiries to the Editor  
We wish to thank all of our writers and volunteers for their input and all of our members for their interest in TABI.  
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