

had been to Girona and copied details of the Torre Magdala on the side of The House of the Cannons that stood behind the cathedral. He then built another at Rennes le Château, Le Tour Magdala in 1901, re-establishing the northern end of the energy line.

The appearance of the Magdalene had apparently been manifested by an ancient society in Girona, which was privy to the secrets of its subtle energy for thousands of years. They originally performed their rituals close to the southern tower which, together with the house, had been taken down in 1964. The knowledge held by this hidden group was solely kept by the society's present guardian and locally respected protector of Catalan independence, José Tarrés.

His connection with Chaplin is a constant thread running through her life story. This began on the night she first met him, as a romantic, bohemian, 15-year-old girl, arriving 'accidentally' in the magical ancient city of Girona. She describes how, through all the long years of their friendship, the secret remained with José until in 2004, when he became seriously ill, he thought it was wise to share his secrets with the person to whom he was closest and who he trusted, knowing that she had the skill to share his story with the world, should it become necessary.

The sacred mountain of the Catalans, 'Mount Canigou' in the Pyrénées, lies in Golden Section proportion between the two towers. At Canigou's summit is a portal, which can only be safely accessed by those who have made an initiatory pilgrimage through 11 sites, positioned over the landscape to mirror the constellation of the primal Mother Great Bear. Tarrés encouraged Chaplin to undertake this pilgrimage and to enter the portal, which she did in 2006.

All of this, together with knowledge held by the hidden group, leads to further revelations which surface in *The Stone Cradle*. These are to do with the mind-bending knowledge of multidimensional realities that start to emerge when modern science begins to 'interface' with the wisdom of ancient initiation. Here the synchronistic connections between Chaplin's unravelling of Girona's secrets and her own biography once again coincide. Long after her first meeting with José Tarrés, Patrice married into the Chaplin family. Charlie Chaplin, her father-in-law, was a friend of both Albert Einstein and Salvador Dali. Einstein's preoccupation with time and space began to lead us near to what has remained hidden by the group in Girona for thousands of years, while

Dali's close connection to this initiation knowledge emerges in his art.

The Stone Cradle describes Patrice's further remarkable experiences of crossing the threshold between two worlds. We then learn how this is related to both the mysterious 'Child of Light' and its relationship to the planet Venus.

Her story keeps us captivated and the author's infectious, dry humour often shines through, in contrast to the darker, more disturbing episodes in a series of events to which I can personally vouch. Chaplin has switched around all the names of the characters and disguised their personalities to protect the identities of those involved, to such a degree that, if any of the real individuals complain, it is a case of 'if the cap fits wear it!'

Sylvia Francke, is author of the *Tree of Life* and the *Holy Grail*, published by Temple Lodge, 1996 (revised 2007).

Re-enchanting the Forest: Meaningful Ritual in a Secular World

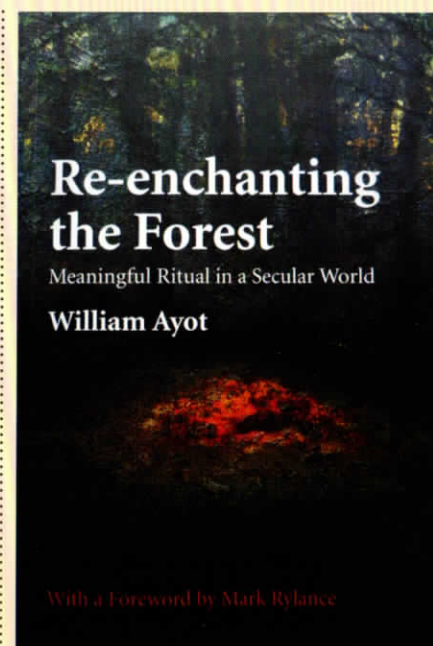
by William Ayot

Vala Publishing, Bristol, 2015. Pb, 195pp, £12.99. ISBN 978 1908363145 (available from www.williamayot.com)

Reviewed by Peter Taylor

As an ecologist with an interest in rewilding, I approached this book with some trepidation. Seeking enchantment in Nature has become fashionable, but often that romance simply means the same jaded minds seeking an excitement or magic missing from humdrum existence. I have been waiting for a book that starts with re-enchanting the person – without which no re-enchantment of Nature can begin. This is such a book.

The author begins with his own personal, honest story and it resonates with everything I know of true magic – not the wand-wielding fantasies of modern fiction, but the alignment with the magic of what *is* and just how hard that is to achieve in our modern world. Alignment always begins with ritual and Ayot's awakening to ritual begins with an initiatory Rite of Passage for men at Cae Mabon in Snowdonia – by his time then 'well established'. I know Cae Mabon – helping in those early times nearly 30 years ago to build the Celtic roundhouse and participating in the establishment of the male-mystery rites. A group of 14 men, most of us teachers of a kind, all closely connected to Nature and the forest, began inventing the rituals we



had sorely missed in the teens of our own magical education. Only then could we begin to teach our own sons now pressing at the gates of manhood.

However, this awakening to ritual and the necessity of alignment is preceded by the author's personal story of an abusive childhood very far from enchantment and followed by some dysfunctional attempts at the adult world where any awakening came quite late. Eventually he finds his way to the acknowledged shamanic healers and teachers of the West – Native American and African medicine men and women dedicated to sharing their techniques of tribal initiation – ritual techniques that open up the damaged western psyche by *feeling* the reality of Nature – which is to say, to the web and flow of life, of power and mystery, and to honour it with gratitude and humility. Words cannot convey the full meaning of this story and for a writer to achieve much, he or she needs to tell personal stories right from the heart. Herein there are plenty – carefully leavened with philosophical reflections on the nature of initiation and ritual.

I like the balance of story and reflection. There is little new for me – I have shared much the same journey, though with far less damage during childhood. As a kid, I could feel the magic but there was no reference point in my culture. Eventually, my very good biology teacher converted me to the beautiful symmetry of biochemistry. My own awakening came only after break-up of a marriage and breakdown of the unfeeling self that a decade of scientific consciousness had fostered. Unlike Ayot, and a good many who now follow the Western shamanic path, I first turned

East for healing, to Himalayan masters, equally shamanic in their ways, but with a deeper relation I have found, to love and devotion, to the divinity they perceive at the heart of the natural world. I doubt I would have made it through some of the shamanic initiations that Ayot has followed in traditional North, Meso or South American teachings, nor through the 'witchcraft' of shamanic Africa, all with their 'hungry ghost' perceptions of the Otherworld, without that grounding in the unity consciousness brought to us from the East.

By the time I arrived at Cae Mabon, I was part of the shamanic revival that began with the neo-Druid Oak Dragon teaching camps where we started to integrate the teachings of eastern yoga, African dance and Native American vision-quest into the Celtic heritage, such as it was. It is not a criticism of this book, more a lament, that there is not more of the forest that we all became enchanted by! The great beauty of the modern British awakening, which is a human rewilding, is the awakening to the power of forest animals – their mythic past and their archetypal qualities. Ayot has some encounters with Crow and Badger; I would have liked more such stories, and of plant-spirit-medicine, so dear to the Celtic heritage.

Ayot's great strength lies in his understanding of the male psyche and its needs for challenge. There is little here of the feminine, both inside and outside of the man. Little then of the serpent and the dragon – and of yoga tantra! Little also of the Underworld part of the Otherworld – the world of archetypes and the emotional shadow-play of western repressed and damaged psyches. These elements are not entirely absent; they are reflected in the stories of those who come to him late in his life for rituals, for healing and alignment.

I am heartened that this lovely book

Continued from page 11

exists. It is the fruit of two or more decades of an elemental growth for the British psyche in particular – a catch-up to a women's awakening and enchantment of the forest that began a little earlier. Ayot may not reflect a mainstream

shows that something much bigger was afoot, not only concerning Oak Island but whose mysterious frontiers extend to Tintern Parva in Wales and many other sites where Bacon has left either his subtle or his encrypted mark. Evidence from further Baconian coding points to the year 2017 as the year of revelation – the Great Enlightenment. 'Shakespeare' himself seems to be telling us that affairs are now about to go global. We shall see.

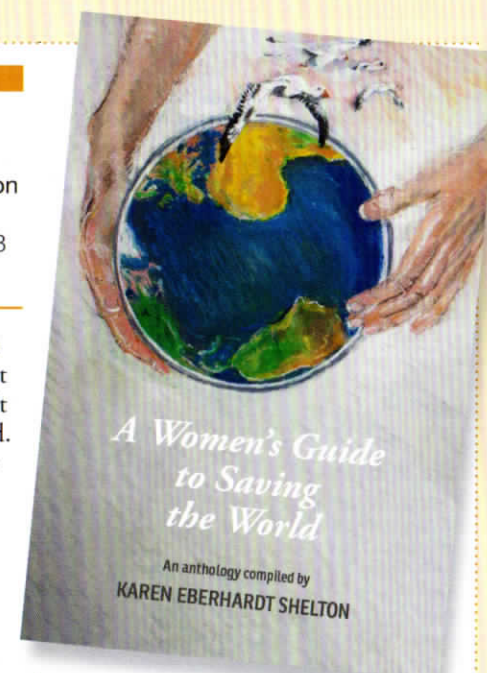
A Women's Guide to Saving the World

Compiled by Karen Eberhardt Shelton
Austen Macauley, London, 2016. Pb, 362pp, £8.99. ISBN 978 1785544118

Reviewed by Marina Cowdray

When we are passionate about what we believe in, it cannot be contained nor hoarded. It cannot lie stagnant; it has to be shared. It is rather like a smile; once someone smiles at you, you cannot help but smile back. This book is full of wisdom and compassion from women who feel passion, care deeply and want to make the world a better place. You cannot put this book down without discovering within yourself the empathy and love you share with all forms of life.

Shelton has chosen a wonderful group of contributors from all walks of life who have turned this book into a rich tapestry of thought-provoking ideas and initiatives. For example, journalist and feminist Rosie Boycott recognises that we have all played our part in climate change; she says, 'We need to tread lightly on the Earth and urgently look at how we can be part of this community of change.' Peace campaigner Scilla Elworthy gives some inspiring pointers on what we can do to restore the balance on the Earth, while permaculture pioneer Maddy Harland shares her views on the importance of deconstructing, in order to live in a more ecological sharing



environment. The reader will gain plenty of insights as to how they can make a difference and help the world to be a better place, for right now and for future generations.

Lady Cowdray lives on the Cowdray Estate in Midhurst, West Sussex. She has a strong ethos on sustainability and caring about the land and has opened a centre of wellbeing at Cowdray Hall (www.cowdray.co.uk). She is also an International Advisor to the Oxford Centre of Mindfulness (www.oxford-mindfulnesscentre.org) and Live 2 Love Charity initiated by His Holiness the 12th Gyalwang Drukpa (www.live2love.org).

growth of consciousness but he has certainly laid part of its foundation.

Peter Taylor recently published *The Spirit of Rewilding, Ethos*, 2016. www.ethos-uk.com

and his Mother in the Lichfield Chapter House. Self-published, 1924 (reprinted by Kessinger Publishing, 2010).
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Claire Nahmad is the author of 27 books on esoteric subjects and has written extensively on the Holy Grail, Mary Magdalene and the links between Rosslyn and Iona. Peter Welsford is former Baconiana editor and President of the Francis Bacon Society. A mathematician, researcher and writer, his essay Codes, Coding and Synchronicity appears in *The View Beyond, a collection of writings on Bacon* (Polari Publishing, 2011).