

I LOVE PLANTS - a Journey with Essences

Susan McCrone, An-Grianan Essences

Early memories

Some of my earliest memories are of my Dad tending the garden, or taking me for walks along the mill burn¹ across from the house where we lived. I remember him cultivating the wee vegetable patch in the back garden, cutting the grass, or tending the roses out front: showing me what was safe to eat and what wasn't: telling me about the way the foxes would put the foxglove flowers on their paws so they could move around in stealth.

Having been born deep in the Galloway countryside of southern Scotland, he instilled in me the deep love and respect for Nature which he had grown up with. I loved it when he would take me and my brother for long walks at the weekend – climbing hills, wandering in woodland and over moor, discovering the area I grew up in. I realised within myself a deep appreciation for the land, its flora and fauna, and I felt nurtured, held, and alive. I would also learn later that I came from a line of keen gardeners and those who knew the old traditional ways of healing with plants.

We moved home and town when I was five, and my bedroom was at the rear of our house overlooking the back garden. I would often sit at the window watching the birds that came to visit, and the subtle movement of energies amongst the trunks and branches of the Rowan trees which lined the garden wall. I learned early on to keep these more subtle observations to myself though – adults and school mates not necessarily resonating with my 'flights of fancy'.

Finding the Gardener Within

The years moved on and in my mid 20's I found myself living in a little country cottage with my then husband. We bought the cottage along with an acre of land and a large front garden. The garden was just rough grass, and having previously been a rental property had been little tended. "At last, my own garden". I was thrilled with the challenge and very quickly started to create borders which I filled with all manner of plants. Soon I was hooked! Every day I would come home from work, and the first thing I would do was to walk around my new creation and revel in what was changing, growing, decaying, and the full cycle of life. Then, to support my growing passion I started to propagate extra plants to sell at the local farmers markets.



After some years we bought a small farm and sold the cottage. Soon we were moving into our new abode and I quickly moved my plants to their new home. Here I opened a specialist hardy plant nursery. However, a couple of years into our time at the farm my mother passed away. We'd been estranged for a long time but her death triggered a steep decline in my health and a period of depression. Being outside with the plants, the land, and the company of my dogs helped me through. I started a regular meditation practice and felt balance return bit by bit. I noticed my already sensitive attunement to the plants deepen even more. Then one day something happened completely out of the blue.

Portal to Deepened Awareness

It was springtime and I had decided to do a day of pricking out and potting on of seedlings. I had my work bench set up at the southern edge of my propagation shed looking out over the fields and hills

across from the nursery. Settling into a very rhythmic flow, I lifted the delicate seedlings from their seed trays into their own little pots. The day was gentle, flowing, and meditative. Then, suddenly, it was as if a portal opened up and my whole awareness deepened. I could see the energy of every plant in the nursery and garden. I 'knew' the properties of each, as if Nature had placed a book in my hands explaining how each plant affected those around them, and the mind and emotions of those who encountered them. Nature 'showed' me that I could invite the essence of each plant into water and use this as a tonic. I was captivated, thrilled, and astounded. I had no awareness of this level of relationship with plants and nature prior to this moment.

I started to consciously spend time around the plants, testing out my new found awareness, sensing their subtle properties and relishing their company and support. Speaking to a confidant a few days later about my experience and what I'd been shown, they said: "Oh, do you know about flower essences?" Then someone I barely knew unexpectedly gave me a book on 'The Spiritual Properties of Herbs'². I devoured the book, learned all I could about flower essences, and started making lots of them to use myself and to share with others. I would gaze deeply into the material and subtle levels of the flowers to get to know them better and my love and appreciation for the plant kingdom flourished.



Life Shifts Direction

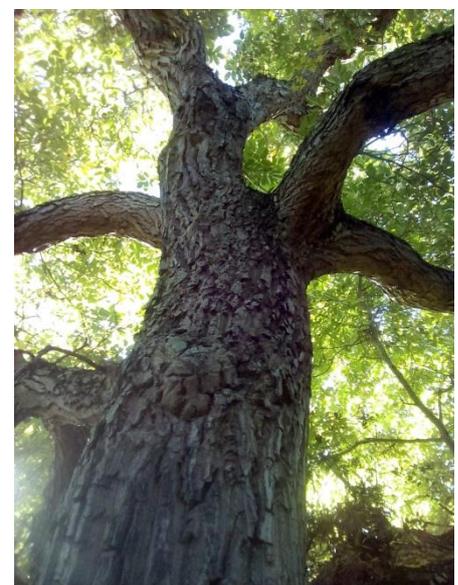
Some time later my then husband and I came to a parting of the ways and I closed the nursery. Life moved on. I explored Buddhism deeply and continue along the Buddhist path to this day. My connection with Nature travelled alongside me, keeping me nourished and connected to the earth and cycles of time and seasons. I continued to make flower essences to support my journey, knowing that some day they would call on me to share their beneficial energies further abroad.

In 2012 I came to live in Moray in the north of Scotland. Here I connected quickly and deeply with the land, the rivers, the sea, the mountains, the flora and fauna, and I could hear the call to start working more deeply with the nature of the area and the world of essences. A few months later I met my lovely Howard and we quickly set up home together, bought An-Grianan³, and got married. Here we have a large garden with herbaceous borders, orchard and vegetable plot, as well as meadow and woodland. The wilder areas of the garden are abundant in wild flowers, as is the countryside around us. It is my great delight to work with the huge variety of trees and plants which grow around us and to deepen my relationship with these wonderful friends.

An-Grianan Essences

In the four years that we have lived here at An-Grianan I have been blessed to formalise and further develop my collection of essences. Initially I extended the Flower Essence collection which presently stands at over fifty single essences.

I then felt a strong call from the trees to work with them in a different way and started to develop the An-Grianan range of Tree Spirit Essences. These are whole tree essences, created by intention in co-operation with the Over-lighting Spirit, or Deva, of each tree species. Once the Mother Essence is created I incorporate the 'song' of the tree by singing it into the bottle, before then blessing it further with mantra. The Tree Spirit Essence collection continues to grow, and I have now added the An-Grianan Plant Spirit Essence range, which is made in this



same way.

Finishing with Gratitude

I am immensely grateful for my relationship with Nature and the Plant Kingdom. I love plants, and I love making essences and sharing them with others. They have supported me through the years and the ups and downs of life. They have assisted in my pursuit of insight and self-understanding, and helped me appreciate how deeply connected I am with all things. And, it's always a delight to hear from clients and workshop participants about the benefit and support they too receive from Nature and the Essences.

Susan

Susan is a keen gardener and plantswoman, and lives in Moray, northern Scotland with her husband and their dog. She is a member of the BAFEP (British Association of Flower Essence Producers) and is the producer of An-Griannan Essences. She offers workshops and talks on such topics as Nature Communication, and Making and Working with Essences. She is a member of the INEH (International Network for Energy Healing) and runs a healing practice from her home.

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1. Burn – Scots word for stream.
2. Gurudas. (1989) *The Spiritual Properties of Herbs* Cassandra Press
3. An-Griannan –from the Gaelic, meaning ‘a sunny place’.

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