

The White Moon Goddess Gallery Presents Elen of the Ways

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"Oh lady of the moonpath bright,
and Sea-lanes laid by sun's fair rays,
the Dragon paths from height to height,
and all the hidden holy ways
Oh Lady Elen of the Ways..."

In Legend and Landscape She has Many Names.

In ancient Britain She was Elen of the Hosts. She lives on British Tradition as Elen of the Ways. She is Protectress of the Pathways; whether they are physical, mental, or spiritual paths. She is Guardian of all who journey.



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Photo courtesy Robert Emmott ©



Maen Madog
Courtesy of John Harding

Elen's influence on present day Wales is evident by the still existing roads marked with ancient stones like Mean Madog that bear Her name.

She was the patron Saint of travelers long before St. Christopher.

On present day survey maps 'Sarn Elen' is clearly posted.

It is said that Elen is responsible for the building of these roads which, in ancient Britain connected strongholds. Some of these roads are associated with ley (energy) lines.

Elen of the Ways: Myth, Legend, History

Through the ages, several Elen's, Helen's, and Helena's have been combined. In myth and legend Elen is a representative of the land of Britain itself, marriage to whom confers regal status. Most likely a Goddess from a much earlier time who presided over the dream pathways; Elen of the Ways is a culmination of legend, myth, and history.



St. Helen of Caernarvon

The mother of Constantine the Great, born about the middle of the third century, She became the lawful wife of Constantius Chlorus. Her first and only son, Constantine, was born in the year 274.

On the death of his father, Constantine, who succeeded him, summoned his mother to the imperial court, conferred on her the title of Augusta, ordered that all honor should be paid her as the mother of the sovereign, and had coins struck bearing her

effigy.

She lavished on the land her bounties and good deeds, she "explored it with remarkable discernment", and "visited it with the care and solicitude of the emperor himself". Then, when she "had shown due veneration to the footsteps of the Saviour", she had two churches erected for the worship of God.

According to tradition, the Empress Helena discovered the cross of Christ on September 14, 320

She was revered as a saint, and the veneration spread, early in the ninth century, even to Western countries. Her feast falls on 18 August.

Elen Luyddogg is best known from Welsh legend in the Mabinogion. In "The Dream of Maccsen Wledig", Elen is discovered by Maccsen in a dream. Her beauty is compared with that of the Sun: She is radiant and Queenly.

When Maccsen finds the vision of his dreams on the real plane, he finds the woman of his dreams. Maccsen and Elen meet, embrace, and marry within a day.

As his Empress, she requests the land of three chief cities as her bride-gift. She then supervises the building of roads from one cities fortress to the next, to assist in their protection. It is in this tale that we come to know her achievements as Elen of the Hosts [legions].

The Welsh Saint day of Elen of the Hosts is May 22nd, connecting her to Spring, around the time of Beltane.

Elen also been associated with Olwen of the White Track, She was a beautiful woman of high degree. When she married, her father's power (and life) was transferred to her husband.

She has been associated in recent times with Nehallenia, a Celtic-Norse Goddess whose attributes mingle very closely with her own.



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Through the novel; Priestess of Avalon by Marion Zimmer Bradley and Diana Paxson; Elen of the Ways has made her presence known in modern day.

In their novel, Elan, a Priestess of Avalon (whose Matron Goddess is Elen of the Ways) leaves Avalon after falling in love with a Roman.

This story is an intricate weave of St. Helen and Elen Luyddogg, with the essence of the enigmatic Elen of an earlier age.

In Priestess of Avalon she is described by a bard-priest. She was said to have been tall and strong, having a love of dogs, and the elder tree was sacred to her.

It is also written in the novel that all roads are under her protection, both paths that cross land and the sea. Ancient traders prayed to her for protection. She also seems to have had effect on agriculture (perhaps a fertility Goddess also).

The bard-priest relayed that she may have been the one that showed the way across the sea to Avalon. The places where the waters meet with the land are special to her. She maybe called upon when we seek to go between the worlds, because she is also Mistress of the Hidden Ways.

The Goddess Nehallenia is introduced in Priestess of Avalon to Eilan and she can't help but notice the similarities of Elen and Nehallenia.

Sacred to Elen

Color ~ Red
Season ~ Spring
Holiday / Feast Day ~ Beltane, May 22nd, August 18th
Talismans ~ comb, mirror, shell
Direction ~ Southeast
Aspect ~ Lover, Virgin Goddess
Animals ~ Dog, Mare, Horse, Dove, Swan
Region ~ Ancient Britan
Food ~ apple
Tree ~ Elder
Gaurdian ~ of all who journey



Rituals are not the path; they are a reminder that there is a path. –Judith Stanton

Personal Journey Ritual

This ritual is best done at the waxing of the moon.
A time that beginnings are best, and journeys reveal themselves.
Your intent may be to find your way through a 'lost' feeling, or time. on your path.

Gather the following ritual items and place them upon your altar:

(their placement in the ritual is listed with them)

1 small bowl filled with soil ~ placed in the North

1 small bowl filled with water ~ placed in the West

1 small mirror ~ placed in center, next to white candle

1 white candle ~ placed in the South

1 candle (color is your personal choice) ~ placed in center

Please keep in mind that you will be reaching across a flame, so dress accordingly.

Create a scared space in whatever way you are comfortable in doing.

Cast Circle: You are creating a circle of power and acknowledging the Elements with this circle chant

Circle your space three times chanting the following words, light the white candle on your first pass.

“By Earth
By Air
By Fire

By Water
Elen of the Ways
Please Come To Your Daughter."

Once you have made three passes, go to the center and close your eyes. Visualize the Essence of Elen of the Ways. Bring her essence into you through your breath. Breathe in through your nose- straight into your belly and hold it for a moment, then release the breath slowly through your mouth. Visualize her guidance, her guardianship, her strength, and wisdom of life's journeys. Breathe these qualities into your being and let them mingle with your own Goddess qualities. Know that Elen of the Ways is walking the path with you. When you are fully aware of her essence, open your eyes and light your personal candle.

Now it is time to bless your self in the following manner.

As you say the following, first light dip your finger into the water and then into the soil.

Using your finger, draw on your forehead this symbol O

(This symbol represents the journey you are on, the path that you seek. Sometimes we may be inclined to think that we go from one place to another; when perhaps it is that we go in a circle but with each pass we grow the things that we need or weed the things that we no longer find useful (in ways we are much like a garden). We are never the same as we were before.)

Hold the mirror up so you can see your symbol. Notice how each pass around may darken, lighten, or smear it. Notice the path it takes.

"Here in lies
The Garden of Me
I shall
Nurture
Cultivate
Explore
Weed
and then Revel
in the Intricacy
and the Beauty
of My Garden.
Long may I reap!"

(Speak this last sentence with a strong voice, letting the energy of Elen that you breathed in earlier flow back from where it came).

Thank You Elen of the Ways, I thank you for your guidance, guardianship, strength, and wisdom of life's journeys.

Thank you for walking the path with me. Hail and farewell.

Open Circle in the manner in which you are most comfortable.

Ground and Center

Extinguish candles. You may make an offering of the soil and water in honor of Elen of the Ways and yourself, if you wish.

Bibliography

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4. [King Arthur and the Goddess of the Land: The Divine Feminine in the Mabinogion](#) by Caitlin Matthews; 2002: Inner Traditions Intl Ltd
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6. <http://www.moonspeaker.ca/hera/helen.html> ; accessed in May, 2004
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9. <http://www.pantheon.org/articles/o/olwen.html>; accessed in May 2004

Literary Links

The Dream of macsen Wledig, trs. By Lady Charlotte Guest, is on the web at <http://www.zinescene.org/mabin/maxen.html>

Helen Links

Dr G. R. Jones: The cult of St Helen is at <http://www.le.ac.uk/elh/grj1/helen.html>

Graphic's Links

Elen as Archangel of the first Ray is at

http://www.spiritsongs.org/Archangels_Archangel_Elen.htm

Kinuko Y. Craft's phenomenal art can be viewed at <http://www.kycraft.com>

Robert Emmott's amazing photographs can be viewed at <http://www.rollei-gallery.net/rje/folder-4344.html>

J. Harding's spectacular graphics can be viewed at

<http://www.jharding.demon.co.uk/maenmadoc.htm>

Patrick Keith's digital artwork may be viewed at

<http://digitalart.org/artwork.php?ID=1793>

Nehallenia Links

Temple of the Ways, a Nehallenic Wiccan Tradition

<http://www.electricapocalypse.com/wicca/>

Nehalennia (historical) <http://www.livius.org/ne-nn/nehallenia/nehallenia.html>

View ancient votive altars to Nehalennia (the visuals are striking)

<http://www.devrijedomburger.nl/files/nehallenia2.htm>