

# The Joy Bringers

Karin Celestine. Publication 23 May 2024. £12.99.

**Have you ever been taken by surprise by an idea? Or a long-forgotten memory that brings a sudden smile to your lips?**

**A moment of wonder, a recognition of beauty, a spark of inspiration; we've all enjoyed the magic that comes with the unexpected.**

**But where does that magic come from?**



**Author** Karin Celestine  
**Format** Hardback, 200 x 200mm  
**Pages** 48  
**Publication** 23 May 2024  
**Price** £12.99  
**ISBN** 9781802586626  
eBook available

## GRAFFEG TRADE AI

### Content:

Have you ever been taken by surprise by an idea? Or a long-forgotten memory that brings a sudden smile to your lips? A moment of wonder, a recognition of beauty, a spark of inspiration; we've all enjoyed the magic that comes with the unexpected. But where does that magic come from? Who hides it for us to find, and puts it where we least expect it?

*The Joy Bringers*. A book of hidden delights.

### About the author:

**Karin Celestine** lives in a small house in Monmouth, Wales. In the garden is a shed and in the shed is another world. The world of Celestine and the Hare. It is a place where kindness, mischief and beauty help people smile. Karin is an artist and author who creates needle felted animals of charm and character, including the stars of their story books published by Graffeg.

### Key themes:

- Folklore
- Joy
- Summer solstice

### Selling Points:

- The third in the Tales of the Turning Year series based on the seasons, nature and folklore. The Joy Bringers is the summer story.
- A short story about finding small beauties in our day and being joyful to allow others to be also.
- Suitable for readers of all ages.
- Made up of two key parts, this book contains the story of *The Joy Bringers* and a brief introduction to the myth and legend surrounding the season and festivals of the summer solstice.
- Featuring notes on British traditions by Pamela Thom-Rowe.

### Karin Celestine books:

- Small Finds a Home ISBN 9781910862391
- Paper Boat for Panda ISBN 9781910862377
- Honey for Tea ISBN 9781910862384
- Finding Your Place ISBN 9781910862421
- A Small Song ISBN 9781910862414
- Catching Dreams ISBN 9781910862407
- Bertram Likes to Sew ISBN 9781912213610
- Bert's Garden ISBN 9781912213627
- Helping Hedgehog Home ISBN 9781912213634
- The Wish Gatherers ISBN 9781802581874
- The Lightbringers ISBN 9781913634193

**Publisher: Graffeg Limited** 24 Stradey Park Business Centre, Llanelli SA14 8YP Wales, UK. Tel:+44 (0)1554 824000 sales@graffeg.com www.graffeg.com.

**Rights:** peter@graffeg.com Tel: +44(0)2922404971 **Sales: Compass** sales@compassips.london, <http://www.compassips.london/index.html>

**Distribution: Books Council of Wales** Tel: +44 (0)1970 624455 www.gwales.com



As spring gives way to summer, the bluebells ring in the foxgloves.

At the midsummer solstice, as the Earth dances and laughs flowers, folk gather to feast, and dance and sing. Some light fires to jump for courage. Young ones play games: hide and seek and swim and run and jump. Their laughter floats across the bright skies.



11



Others take sparks into the world of folk. They bury them in bags and books and teapots. A small kindness, a cup of tea with a friend, a thoughtful deed to spark a dream, a keepsake to remember.

Sometimes they sneak a bit of treasure in return, because that is the way of the tricky ones.

Wise folk know to leave them a gift.



35

And so, my dears, all summer long, you must dance and sing and play and be joyful to create sparks for others to find.

If you can't seem to find any small beauties in your day, take a walk to the hedge by the woods with a quiet heart and look for Grandmother Badger who will show you the way.



44



## Summer Customs

*Kindled by thy bonfires, and from the same A thousand sparks dispersed throughout the sky Which like to wandering stars about did fly*

**John Brand**  
Midsummer bonfires, London, 1666

For hundreds, maybe thousands of years, people have gathered at Midsummer to celebrate long sunny days and the prospect of harvest. Midsummer Day falls on the 24th June, a few days after the summer solstice signals the slow shift back towards winter.

Midsummer Eve has long been considered a magical time, good for dreams and divinations. It was once a great, lively affair with huge bonfires and all sorts of merrymaking.

### Of Pageants and Parades

In the Middle Ages great fairs were held at Midsummer. Huge pageants and parades wound through the streets sometimes consisting of thousands of people. There were dancers, acrobats, actors, knights and their horses, all dressed in dazzling finery accompanied by music and song. Green Men and Woodwoses ('wildmen'), children, some dressed as angels

and others dyed green or black to resemble demons, wandered alongside fantastical creatures such as serpents, unicorns, giants and fire spitting dragons carried high on platforms to the delight and alarm of the crowds.

### Of Dancing

The 'Summer Lords', or morris dancers, were popular additions to many summer festivities, but changes in religion and politics meant music and dancing were discouraged. One sixteenth century account refers to morris dancing as the 'Devil's dance', the dancers most inappropriate with their tumbling and twirling. Their cheerful costumes of bright coloured scarves, ribbons, gold rings and bells were also considered highly inappropriate. Thankfully morris dancing was revived in modern times and some still dance a dawn welcome to the sun on Midsummer morning.

### Of Fires

Great bonfires were lit on Midsummer Eve throughout the British Isles, often on hills and commons. In the 14th century Gloucestershire wheels were set alight and rolled down hillsides, perhaps a reference to the sun (the wheel is an ancient symbol for the sun). Later, when the

flames had died down, people might leapt over the smoking remains. Sometimes cattle were driven through the smoke of the fires to cleanse and purify. During the years of the Great Plague smoke was thought to purify and drive away pestilence.

Midsummer Eve was also known as St John's Eve. A 14th century Shropshire monk, John Mirk, described three different types of 'St John's Fires': a bonnyfire (made of bones), a wakefire, (no bones), and finally a St John's Fire (bones and wood). Mirk wrote that the stink of the bones kept dragons away, perhaps a referral to the fear of plague and disease.

### Of Food and Feasting

A sixteenth century account of St John's Eve in London paints a vivid picture of the celebrations describing bright bonfires burning alongside tables laden with food, waysides lit by many torches and tiny oil lamps. People dressed doors and windows with garlands of flowers, birch, fennel, St John's Wort and other seasonal greenery while minstrels wandered through the streets playing songs of summer to children carrying posies of wildflowers.

By the 17th century changes in religion and politics meant many Midsummer traditions were disappearing. Some survived and today remnants may be found in the guise of carnival processions and summer festivals.

So remember, when the days are long and the earth pauses just before the slide towards the dark of winter, you may still find a place where fires still burn and voices rise in celebration of life and Midsummer.

**Pamela Thom-Rowe**

Pamela Thom-Rowe's blog:  
[myblog.moonbrookcottagehandspun.co.uk](http://myblog.moonbrookcottagehandspun.co.uk)



47