



# Ordo Templi Orientis Daughter of Sunset Lodge Monthly Calendar

July 2017 e.v.

Anno Viii



Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

The Daughter of Sunset Lodge's schedule for July 2017 e.v. :

- **First Degree Initiation** - Sunday, July 2nd, at 10:00 am  
(Attendance open to members with 1st Degree and higher only - details to follow)
- **Gnostic Mass** - Sunday, July 9th, at 7:00 pm (open to the public)  
The members will meet at 6:00 pm to set up the Temple, guests are welcome to arrive at 6:30 pm, and the Mass will start at 7:00 pm. It will be held at 202-1814 Pandora St.
- **Treasure of Internal Peace** - Wednesday, July 12th, at 7:00 pm (members only)  
A meditation session at Frater Ouroboros' & Soror Astarte's place.
- **Symbolism of the First Degree** - Saturday, July 15th, at 4:00 pm  
(First and above Degrees only) The lecture will be held at Frater Ouroboros' and Sister Astarte's place.
- **Gnostic Mass** - Sunday, July 23rd, at 7:00 pm (open to the public)  
The members will meet at 6:00 pm to set up the Temple, guests are welcome to arrive at 6:30 pm, and the Mass will start at 7:00 pm. It will be held at 202-1814 Pandora St.
- **Symbolism of the First Degree** - Saturday, July 15th, at 4:00 pm  
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## Little Treasures

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### RAIDERS OF THE LOST BASEMENT

When you buy a house, proverbially there is trash in the basement. Our house was no exception. The former owner had been due to come through and take it all away, but she had had to go out of town and delayed the cleanout until after Deb and I had moved in. On moving day, after the 15 foot truck had gotten unloaded in 45 minutes, I decided to look and see if there was anything of interest in the trash.

Old mattresses. Old wood scrap - well, we can burn that in Larry's fireplace. Old high school textbooks - nobody wants those. A couple of boxes of old letters and junk ... might as well look through that. A newspaper clipping from the 20s about Aleister Crowley? A carbon of something called AMRITA which appears to be an O.T.O. ritual for eternal youth? These boxes are worth looking at more carefully!

For those of you who led a sheltered childhood and did not dabble in the occult, a little background. Aleister Crowley was an infamous hedonist and the best-known magician of the early part of this century. He controlled several organizations at various times, probably the best known of which was the Ordo Templi Orientis, or the Order of Oriental Templars, known generally as the O.T.O. He is the author of many odd books including an autohagiography, and took for himself the appellation of '666', referring to the Beast from the Book of Revelations. He died in 1947. The O.T.O. is still around, and recently won a lawsuit against Peter Straub for misrepresenting them in one of his books.

I figured we might find a few letters from Crowley in the boxes: those would be of interest to almost any student of the occult, and I certainly wouldn't mind having one. They'd also be fairly valuable. So I hauled the boxes upstairs, and over the next few days I dug through them.

What I'd found were two boxes of papers relating to Karl and Sascha Germer. I'd never heard of them, but I soon discovered that Karl was Crowley's literary executor and the head of the O.T.O. after Crowley's death. There were letters from Crowley indeed; about half a dozen of them. More interesting were the dozens of file folders containing flimsy carbons of letters documenting a batch of rifts in the O.T.O., feuds which sound so much like AH, SWEET IDIOCY that it isn't funny. And most odd was what appeared to be three rituals in a strange handwriting, covering 65 sheets of paper.

The writing didn't look like the writing on the letters from Crowley. The envelope they were in (which was mostly disintegrated) had been mailed from England in 1948. But I thought they might be in the style of Crowley's automatic writing (writing guided by a spirit hand, which often looks different from a person's normal writing), and that there might be some reason it had been sent in 1948. So I started asking around to see if anyone knew what Crowley's automatic writing looked like. One person told me that there were a bunch of reproductions of it in the back of most editions of THE BOOK OF THE LAW, also known as LIBER AL VEL LEGIS, or LIBER AL for short. I decided that what I should do was copy the whole thing and look for a copy of LIBER AL to compare it with. Before I could do this I had lunch with a friend of mine, and decided to ask a workmate of hers, Josh Gordon, about it.

I had known Josh was a member of the O.T.O. – he'd mentioned it a couple of times in the store. So I just dropped a copy of the first six pages on his desk, and said "Do you know what that is?"

"Sure, it's a xerox of the manuscript edition of THE BOOK OF THE LAW."

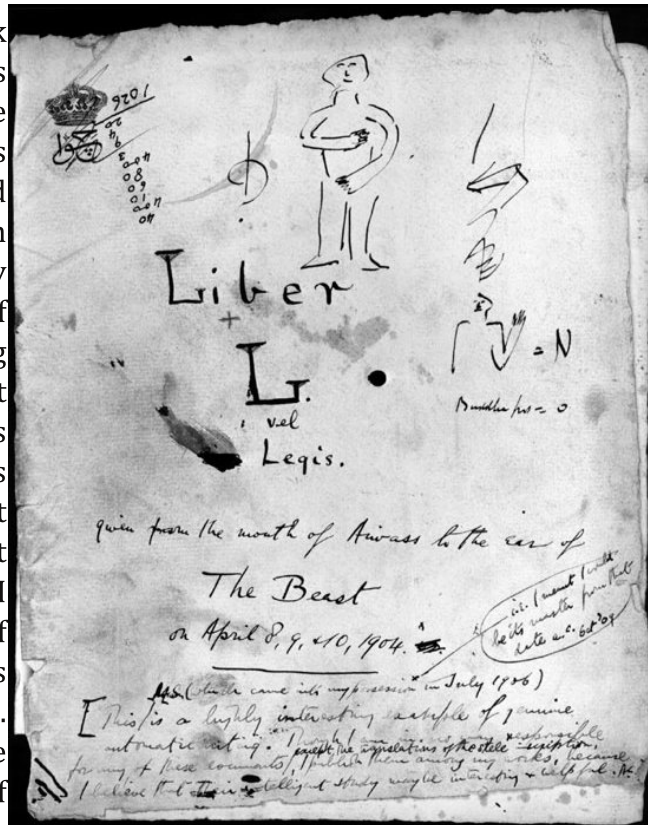
"Gee, I have the original at home."

(pause)

"The ... original?"

"How much do you want for it? Oh Jesus, who can I tell? Do you realize that I'm an O.T.O. member, and I'm bound by law and by oath..." He rapidly became incoherent. I was able to figure out that the O.T.O. had been looking for the original for more than 10 years; that it had not been among Germer's papers when he died; that Josh really felt that he had to tell

the secretary of the Order that it had been found; that it was stolen property; and that he was as freaked-out a human being as I have ever seen. He called the secretary from his office then and there, and without naming me told him that LIBER AL had been found. We arranged that I would meet with the secretary (Bill Heidrick) and Josh sometime after I had talked with Debbie and Larry about what to do with this stuff. Josh also said "There are people out there who would kill for that manuscript." I believed him.



So what do you do when you have a problem and need advice? You call your friends who know something about the subject. Now, we knew that Patrick Nielsen Hayden and Alan Bostick were knowledgeable about Crowley. So we called them that evening. After each had picked himself off his respective floor, they produced a lot of information that was rather helpful. Patrick produced the information that the book had supposedly been dictated to Crowley by the angel Aiwass in Egypt in 1904. Patrick also said that the one person connected with the O.T.O. that everyone respects is Israel Regardie, Crowley's secretary for many years, who apparently manages to avoid fighting with anyone. Alan confirmed this, and said that finding that manuscript in one's basement was a bit like finding one of the Dead Sea Scrolls. THE BOOK OF THE LAW was the cornerstone book of



Crowley's philosophy.

I was in a bit of a quandary at this point. It seemed to me that the letters and manuscript really belonged to the O.T.O., or at least that they had a strong moral claim to them. On the other hand, this was one of the most spectacular rare book finds I had ever made. I didn't want to just give it away to the first people who claimed it was theirs.

In mild trepidation, Deb and I decided to go meet Heidrick. We called Josh and arranged to meet at the store and drive over to Heidrick's house. We told Larry where we were going and that if he didn't hear from us by morning, he should take action. I packed up the first third of the manuscript and some of the financial records, and we headed off at about 9:00 PM.

It turned out that Bill lives in Marin County. We got there, and told the story and pulled out the section of the manuscript. Bill looked at it calmly, pulled out his copy of the printed manuscript edition, and confirmed, by checking stains and so forth, that it was the real thing; he then said, very calmly, "It is the real manuscript. I am shitting a brick." Josh said, "Wouldn't it be fun to tell everybody in the Order about this at once, and observe their reactions?" Bill replied, "No, you can only watch so many bricks get shat before they obscure the audience." We talked about whether and when Bill should tell Grady McMurtry, the current Outer Head (in effect, president) of the O.T.O. Grady is an occasional customer of ours, and has heart trouble. They didn't want him to know until we'd worked out the details of returning it.

Bill seemed reasonable to us, but we didn't want to give up the manuscript without at least some checking with an outside observer. So we asked if they would mind if we called Regardie and asked his advice. Bill said, fine; but he's over 70 and lives in Arizona, so we shouldn't call him this late at night; here's his number. We parted, all somewhat shaken by the speed with which things were going. Josh rode back with us, and we talked about O.T.O. history all the way home.

The next morning I called Regardie. I introduced myself, said Bill had suggested I call, and then said "I seem to have found the original

manuscript of THE BOOK OF THE LAW in my basement."

"Oh, then you're a very lucky fellow!"

"What do you think I should do with it?"

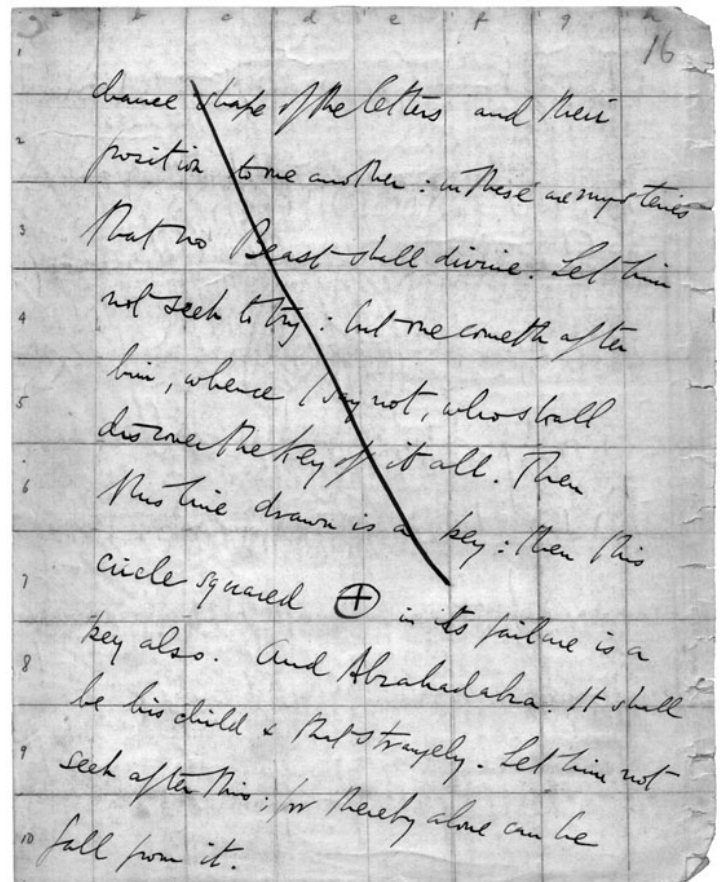
"Well, you could keep it, or you could sell it..."

"I was thinking of giving it back to the O.T.O."

"That would be a very nice thing to do!"

"Well, if I were to do that, who should I give it to?"

"Well, X is a raving lunatic, and heaven only knows what Y or Z would do with it... Bill and Grady are really the only appropriate people. But what I'd like to know is, how did the manuscript get into your basement?"



"I'd like to know that myself. If I ever find out, I'll let you know."

"This is indeed a great day in thelemic history."

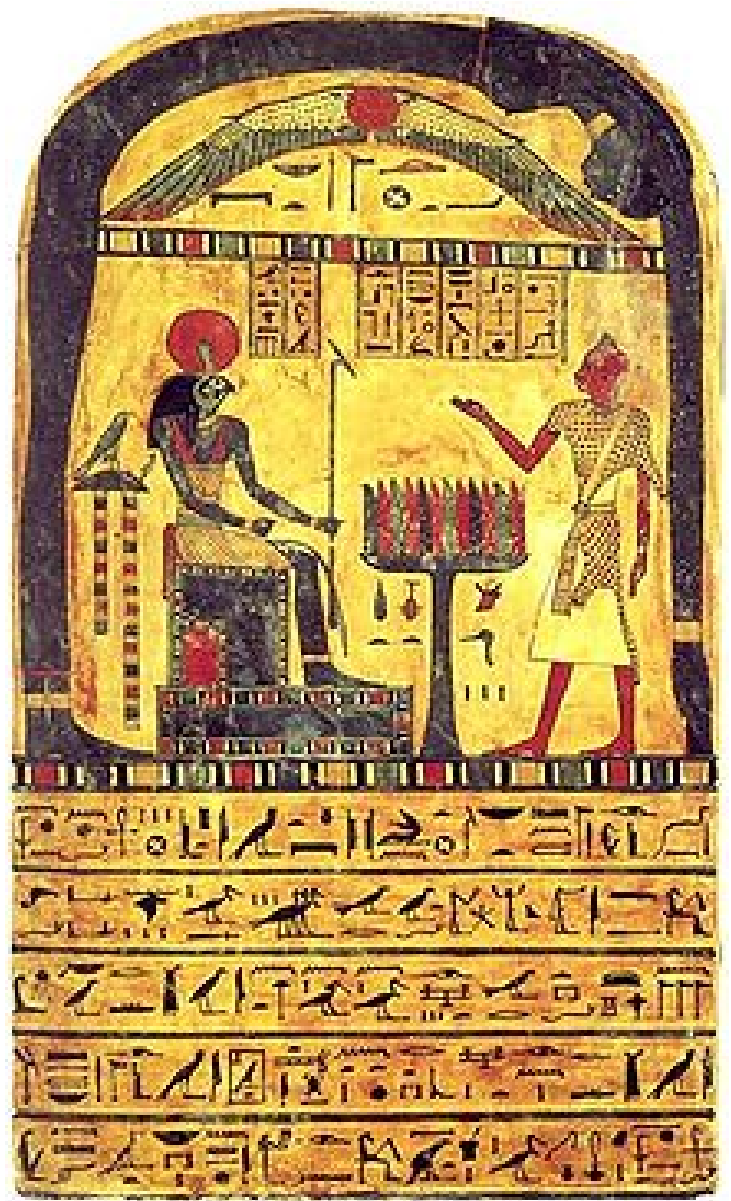
He was a very nice man, and the first person who acted as if he believed the thelemic doctrine, "Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law." Since this is the way all good Crowleyites start their letters, and the most important tenet of Crowley's doctrine, it's nice to know one of them believes it! (Actually, the "thou" refers to the divine self rather than the temporal, so it's not that easy, but I can't resist an occasional dig.) We exchanged a few more pleasantries, and I rang off and called Josh. He came over and got the manuscript, taking it to Bill who called Grady. It now rests in a safe deposit box the location of which is known only to three people, and I'm not one of them.

The rest is somewhat anti-climactic. The one lead we had as to how the papers got into the basement turned out to be false; we may never know. In among the papers we found the letters Crowley sent making Germer his legate in the United States, the original charter of the O.T.O. as given to Crowley in the 1920s, and various letters from Gerald Yorke about the manuscript of LIBER AL. One of the copies of AMRITA was annotated in Crowley's hand. There were also a large number of the original copyright forms for Crowley's books. The copyright papers and some of the letters from Crowley are going to be instrumental in a lawsuit the O.T.O. is fighting over who has the copyrights to Crowley's work. The repercussions of this in the local magickal world are going to be fun to watch.

I got to keep one Crowley letter, and the O.T.O. is going to give me some sort of a finder's fee and possibly some more money if the materials are displayed or published. And I got a story I can dine out on for a while. Estimates of the value of the manuscript range from the naive guess of several people of \$10,000 up to an informed guess of \$250,000+. With almost no Crowley manuscripts in circulation and the key nature of this particular work, your guess is probably as good as any.

But if I ever do find out how it got in the basement, I'll let you know!

by Tom Whitmore  
12 July 1984



The Stèle of Revealing, depicting Nuit, Hadit as the winged globe, Ra-Hoor-Khuit seated on his throne, and the creator of the Stèle, the scribe Ankh-af-na-khonsu.

