

About Faeries

The following articles are taken (and adapted a little) from the Radical Faeries entry at Wikipedia as well as other sources eg. our very own ozfaeries!

History

In 1979, Harry Hay, his partner John Burnside, Don Kilhefner and Mitch Walker, veterans of various phases of Gay Liberation, issued the call to a "Spiritual Conference of Radical Faeries." Those who responded to the call showed up at an ashram in Benson, Arizona over Labor Day weekend (September 1). Hay introduced the idea of merging spirituality into gay liberation, recognizing the isolation and disconnectedness that Gay men grow up with as a spiritual wound needing spiritual healing. The goal of the co-creators of the Radical Faerie movement was to make this spiritual healing possible through various means.

Some Radical Faeries ask what kind of society emerges if Queerfolk are together by themselves, set apart in order to investigate the inner voice in a completely Gay culture. Such seeking led to Faerie Gatherings lasting from a day or two to a week or more where new and spontaneous ways of relating could emerge.

In keeping with the hippie, neopagan, ecology, and eco-feminist trends of the time, gatherings were held out-of-doors in natural settings. To this end, distinct Radical Faerie communities have created Sanctuaries in many rural settings.

Philosophy

No Radical Faerie dogma or doctrine exists per se. The identity of Radical Faerie is never conferred upon a person. The individual claims their Radical Faerie nature in an on-going act of self-discovery and self-actualisation. It can be as challenging to define "Radical Faerie" as it is to define "Human Being," as ultimately those aspects of life that hold meaning are experienced, rarely to be mediated effectively through description.

Some Radical Faeries hold that the Queer soul is linked with the natural world, that Queerfolk are called by the Good Goddess to be gatekeepers to the spirit world. As a sign of this spirit connection, many Radical Faeries take a ritual name, known as a Faerie Name. This tradition is inspired by the Native American "Medicine Name" tradition, where a shaman gives spiritually significant individuals a Medicine name. In the Native American traditions, a shaman always bestowed Medicine Names upon initiates; one does not choose it. The Faerie Name tradition is similar, though Radical Faeries usually choose their own Faerie Name(s).

Faerie Gatherings

Faerie gatherings are a space "between the worlds." Generally, Radical Faeries come together to celebrate a number of times each year, formally and informally. Gatherings are frequently held in connection with times that signify the close or beginning of a new season of the year eg. the solstices. A ritual at gathering may include candles, fires, prayers, chanting, dancing, streamers, bedizened drag queens, ritual music, mud pits, sweat lodges, fire dances, drumming, running through the forest naked, Sufi twirling, and spiral dancing. Nudity at ritual is common. And as always, Radical Faeries take inspiration from the spirits of the earth where they live and from the ancestors.

Informality, acceptance, and flamboyance of dress (and undress) are the norm at gatherings, which are held across the world. Traditionally, these have been rural affairs, though some urban gatherings take place as well.

Heart Circles

Heart Circle is a central tool of the Radical Faerie way of life, and arose from the ideal of consensus. Heart Circle is informed by a theoretical opposition to hierarchy, from radical politics, and from Hay's idea of "subject-SUBJECT Consciousness" (capitalised by Hay for added emphasis). It includes aspects of various therapy, human-potential, and consciousness-raising groups. Each day at gatherings, this group process forms for discussion, emotional processing, and emotional healing. Heart Circle is a place to share thoughts and feelings, to heal, to make decisions, and to develop a deeper understanding of what it means to be a Queer person. It can also be a place of confrontation, of unflinching examination of one's deepest beliefs, understandings, and faults. Disagreement – rooted in the "contrarian" tradition of some Plains Indian Tribes of north America- is a Radical Faerie first principle.

Heart circles are also held regularly outside gathering times – in faerie communities across the globe.

At Faerieland we meet for community sharing every fortnight. This can take the form of a traditional heart circle as outlined above or may be another form of sharing led by one of the residents. If you are ever passing on a community sharing night, drop in and join us.

Communities

- [Web Portal for Radical Faeries](#) [doesn't work]
- [EuroFaeries website](#) [doesn't work]

- [AsianFaeries](#)
- [Paganism and Gay Spirituality: A Survey of Radical Faeries in Asheville, North Carolina](#) [doesn't work]
- [FAQ about the QueerNet Faerie Email List: online radical faerie community since 1996](#)
- [New York City Radical Faeries](#)

Sanctuaries

- [Faerie Camp Destiny in Vermont](#)
- [Faerie Camp Destiny's building project in progress in Vermont](#)
- [FolleTerre Faerie Sanctuary in France](#)
- [Zuni Mountain Sanctuary in New Mexico](#)
- [Kawashaway Sanctuary of the Northwoods Radical Faeries](#)

The Oz Faerie Story

The Australian Radical Faeries have been emerging & bedazzling over the last 25 years- read on.

While the radical faerie community in the USA has been gathering and forming intentional communities for over thirty years, Australia has experienced its own history of faerie gatherings, circles, communities and networking since the early 80's.

Gays and lesbians had begun doing the hippie thing spurred on by the same motivations as their North American brother and sister "hippies". There was a queer presence at the earliest rock, lifestyle and alternative festivals that began in 1967. But where it all took off was the Nimbin Aquarius Festival in 1973. It was concerned more with lifestyle than music, and gays and lesbians were there in force playing key roles. In rural areas, as well as Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Canberra, queer hippies were dropping out and turning on in the same ways as their US counterparts. Queer hippie communal

households were springing up in inner suburban areas.

Australian gay men had discovered the radical faeries and their magazine RFD and so a number were at the second and third US Radical Faerie Gatherings in 79 and 80. This led to visits by Sr. Mish and Purli Sudds to the "Wellington Boot" faerie household in Sydney. The "boot" faeries introduced gays and lesbians to the idea of a rural queer community and the thinking of the radical faeries at the annual National Homosexual Conferences held throughout Oz in the 80's.

A gay, urban, communal household "Euree St", with several key faerie members, was organised in Canberra in 1982. "Euree St" played a key role in gay political actions and organising in that city. The A.C.T. AIDS Council was housed there and it was home to the Canberra chapter of the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, ACT UP, University gay groups as well as being a base for interstate activists targeting the Federal Government.

Gay rural communes were beginning to take shape and the bedazzlement work at the conferences brought many new visitors looking for a gay alternative. Mandala near Murwillumbah, Lawrence Station near Grafton and CommonGround near Kempsey were three communities that began to grow in the early 80's in northern NSW.

The first "faerie" gathering was held at Mandala near Nimbin in the Spring of 1982 hosted by Lemuel and David. Other gatherings followed and at the 10th Anniversary Aquarius Festival at Nimbin NSW over 100 queers created a fabulous faerie camp supported by the Mandala crew. We paraded and performed and definitely added to the fun and glamour as well as increasing the visibility of queers in rural areas. Through the late 80's and 90's despite the devastation to our community from the AIDS epidemic, the dream of a queer rural intentional community space was kept alive by many of us. Australian faeries were always there- reading RFD and our

local magazine Gay, Sex & Spirit, visiting each other around Australia and also faerie communities in the USA, attending and playing key organising roles in the alternative gatherings such as Down to Earth Confests and Men's Festivals and more recently the Rainbow Gatherings. As more and more queer folk moved to the country areas, rural gay and lesbian social/support groups sprung up all over rural Australia bringing together local queers and the their city 'cousins'. Rural queer Australia was coming out.

The Northern Rivers/Nimbin region of NSW has had a long history of queer hippie folk living communally and being part of the counter-culture movement as mentioned above.

Over the years, an emerging group of faeries gathered for meetings and began thinking and dreaming about purchasing a property to create an Australian sanctuary. Hugglewampf and Shamus organised the first OzFaerie gathering "of the modern era" at the Rainforest Meditation Centre in 1998. Later joined by Teacosy, Lezbo, Sparkle and Phillipe, the search began for land to build a sanctuary. We had so much support from Eva, Eric, Surge, Spidercutie, Barry, Mish, Bradley, Short Mountain, Elijah, Neil, Trevor and many more.

In April 2002 "Faeryland" was purchased on the edge of the Wollumbin Volcanic Caldera in the NE corner of NSW. And the rest is a faeriestory as we say... and a very magical one too. Presently 8 faeries reside at "Faerieland" as stewards of this beautiful piece of land. As is the way with such sanctuaries we regularly host many faerie visitors throughout the year- old friends and new- from faraway Europe and the USA, or down the road from Grafton and Lismore. Meditation Retreats, Bushdances for Winter Solstice, Bake-offs and faerie fun days to welcome Spring, Rainforest Planting and Weeding Days, Drag Events, a week-long Summer Solstice Gathering and other impromptu performances happen here regularly as well as the all important heart circles, working bees, planning days, swimming picnics and resting in between- a rich faerie

community life.

And in the last few years, flights of faeries have moved to the district and now faeries parties and other events fill the yearly calendar. A rich community life in the Northern Rivers is being created.

Radical Faeries Down under are part of a worldwide faerie tribe. And "Faerieland" and the Northern Rivers District is one of your homes- come by and see us sometime.

You Whoooooooooooooooooooo