

WHAT IT'S LIKE TO LIVE WITH A WITCH

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By ERIC MAPLE

ALEX SANDERS is one of the best-known witches in the British Isles. His book, *King Of The Witches*, is a best-seller and he and I have debated witchcraft on television.

Those who know him are immediately impressed by his fascinating personality. Alex was kind enough to tell me a few of the secrets of the "craft."

"First of all," he said, "we are a priesthood. We help people in trouble to get on their feet again."

I asked Alex the reason for all the wild dancing, and the magic swords and daggers found in witchcraft.

He said: "A fully qualified witch has no need of such things. They are useful only at the beginning — when one is learning the magic arts. They help to trigger off the power. Afterwards you can do without them."

Like all good witches, Alex has a healthy contempt for black magicians and the black mass. "The work of hooligans or schoolboys," he said.

"Satanists are just silly."

Busy

Alex and his wife Maxine are the priest and priestess of a 40-strong London coven called the Alexandrians. These witches not only shun black magic; they never indulge in sex magic, either.

"What is it like to be married to the King Of The Witches?" I asked Maxine, Alex's wife.

"We are always very busy and it is difficult to live a normal life," she said. "We don't go out very much as the house is always full of people—in trouble, wanting help and advice."

"Alex never gets angry or impatient, he always does his best to help them, he feels this is very important."

"Alex is very fussy about his food he always cooks it himself. He is a very good cook and always blesses the food."

"I hate cooking, and when Alex is out and I have to get my own food I think 'Oh hell, here we go again.'"

Kindly

"When we do get time to ourselves we usually watch television. We like documentaries and variety shows with plenty of dancing."

Most of the witches one meets are simple, kindly people—almost too innocent for this world.

At a meeting in another coven, not the Alexandrians, I saw a young woman naked among some other witches in the middle of a room. She was trembling, and there



MAXINE SANDERS
"We watch television"

were goose pimples on her skin.

"Are you cold?" I asked.

"No," she answered. "Just dead scared in case my husband finds out where I am. He thinks I go to the weekly meeting in the church hall."

Talking to witches brings to light all kinds of secret lore about the craft. One witch told me that she always knew when another witch approached her because she felt a curious tingling running through her body.

The witches use a password to identify one another. It goes as follows:

First Witch: "How many words do you give me?"

Second Witch: "The answer is three."

These three mysterious words are a closely guarded secret.

Words

Witches also have a special language called "witch words," which they alone understand. When one witch sends good wishes to another she says: "I give you the Four Fs." These are Flax, Fodder and Frig—meaning home, clothes, food and love. Frigga was a goddess of love.

I asked one witch, the priestess of a coven, how witchcraft could mend a broken marriage.

"First of all," she said, "you obtain two little dolls—jelly babies will do—and christen these with the names of the husband and wife."

"The dolls are placed on the mantelpiece and drawn towards each other, an inch at a time, every night as the clock strikes twelve."

"When the two dolls finally touch, the real couple will be reconciled."

I was once shown a tiny model of a man who had



Alex Sanders: "Satanists are just silly"

attempted to betray the witches' secrets. It had a gag in its mouth. I was told that, after a spell had been chanted over the little doll, the traitor had found himself unable to speak.

Witches insist that they do not indulge in sex purely for pleasure. Sex is a part of their religion, and they believe it helps to build up energy.

When I asked some leading members of the witch cult about sex magic, they agreed that it did take place, but only in a few covens. And they made it clear that not all witches dance naked. Some flit into the circle wearing cloaks.

Witches are always warning amateurs about the dangers of attempting to work magic for themselves. "You can play with witchcraft three times," a witch told me. "But the fourth time is for keeps."

TOMORROW:
The night of the witches