Astro Spark 1
User Guide

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1   Astro Spark

Astro Spark is an astrological program created by Esoteric Technologies Pty Ltd, the original authors of the full-featured Solar Fire program.

It is intended that Astro Spark will be used either as a companion program to Solar Fire (or any other major astrological package), or on its own as a standard astrological program.

Even though a smaller program it has a unique set of features, and is well equipped to be all many people may ever need as far as astrology software is concerned.

You can browse through this Help topic by topic to get a good idea of how the program operates. Additionally while in any Astro Spark window, if you press the **F1** key on the keyboard usually help specific to that window will be displayed (context sensitive help).

2   Summary of Features

Astro Spark can be used to:-

*   Display a continuously updated astrological chart for any location (an astrological "clock")

*   Have two chart files open at the same time. This can be more convenient than only being able to see one file's charts at a time

*   Create and display new Astro Spark chart files

*   Natal charts created in Astro Spark can be used in the latest version of Solar Fire

*   Copy Astro Spark and Solar Fire chart files

*   Edit, copy and delete Astro Spark and Solar Fire natal charts

*   As well as displaying the chart, display any events a Solar Fire chart may have stored with it

*   Create and edit comments for Astro Spark charts, and edit comments in Solar Fire charts

*   Browse through and display and charts stored in Nova, Blue*Star or QuickChart astrology program files.

*   View an aspect grid and 30° planetary sort for any chart

*   View an essential dignities table and house almuten tabulation for any chart

*   Generate a brief or detailed interpretation report for any chart

*   View Sabian Symbols as an Oracle or for the degree of the Sun, Moon or Angles

*   Print high quality charts and aspect grids

*   Notify you whenever a planetary event occurs, either by sound or with a pop-up message box

*   Step any chart dynamically through time using any timestep interval, from seconds to years

*   Select various chart display options, including house system, lunar node type, and aspect orbs

*   Run either from buttons or with standard Windows menus

*   Run in a visible window, or in the background as an icon

3   Introduction

Buttons vs Menus

You can run Astro Spark either from the bank of command buttons on the bottom right hand side of the screen, or from standard Windows menus. In order to switch between buttons and menus, simply double click anywhere on the chart or form. Double-click again to switch back.

The only significant difference between using menus and buttons is that the chart size is slightly smaller when using menus because of the space taken up by the menu bar.

Window Size

You can run Astro Spark in any of three ways:

Normal Window - This is the size of the Window when you first start Astro Spark, or whatever size you wish to make it by dragging the Windows borders with the mouse. It is smaller than the full screen size, which allows you to leave part of the screen free to run other windows applications, or to keep an eye on the print manager, for example.

Maximized Window - The window can be maximized by clicking on the up-arrow on the top right hand corner of the window. This results in a larger chart viewing area.

Minimized Window (Icon) - The window can be minimized (iconized) by clicking on the down-arrow on the top right hand corner of the window. This results in the program becoming an icon on your windows Desktop area. You can return it to its previous window size simply by double-clicking on it. Note that, if you are running the astro-clock then it will continue to run even when the window is minimized. You can tell if the astro-clock is running when the program is iconized because its caption will read "Astro Spark - Running". If the clock is not running (i.e. is paused), then the caption will read "Astro Spark - Your Name". The clock must be running in order for you to be notified of any alarm events.

4   Astrological Clock

The astrological clock is a chart which is updated at regular time intervals whilst you watch. The chart is calculated for the date and time which are shown on your computer's system clock, and for whatever place and timezone that you enter in Preferences. You can also use this option to specify how frequently the chart is updated, whether the clock alarm will notify you when planetary events occur, and various other items affecting the chart display.

The clock starts up automatically whenever the Astro Spark program is first loaded.

The clock may be stopped at any time by clicking on the PAUSE button.

The clock may be restarted at any time by clicking on the RESUME button.

The clock will also be paused automatically whenever you cast a new chart, open an existing chart, rectify a chart, step a chart or view an aspect grid or dignities table.

Note that the clock will continue running even when the Astro Spark window is minimised, unless you pause it first. Thus it can continue running in the background whilst you are using other Windows applications. This is especially useful if you have selected to be notified of planets crossing angles, in which case you will receive the alarm messages even whilst running your other applications.

If your system date or time is inaccurate, then you can reset them by selecting the Date/Time icon on the Windows Control Panel.

5   New Charts

In order to create a new natal chart, click on the **NEW** button on the Main window, or select the **NEW** menu item from the CHART menu, or in the Charts window click on the **NEW** button. A window will pop up where you can enter the new chart's details. It will have default values in the fields, but you can change these to be whatever you need for you new chart.
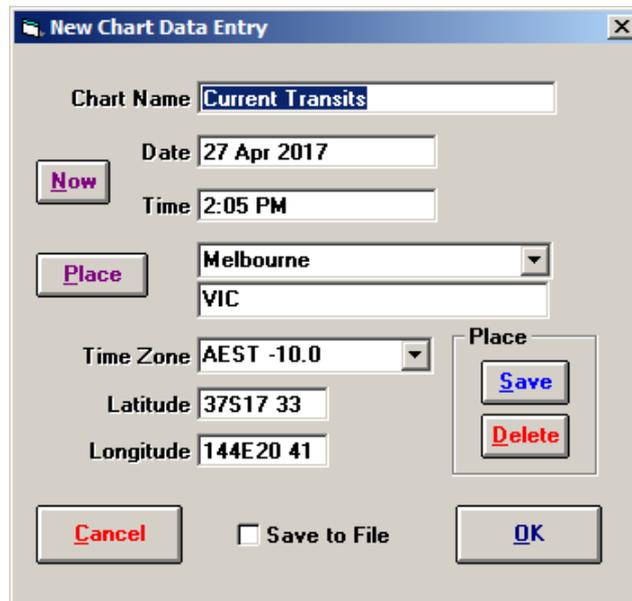
Creating a new chart

Chart Name

Enter a name for the chart. This will usually be the name of the person for whom you are casting the chart (eg. "Sarah Jones"), or a brief description of the event or horary question (eg. "Will I win?"). The name that you enter here will be displayed as the title of the chart.

NOW Button

Clicking this button will automatically update the ChartName with the title "Current Transits", and the Date and Time with the current date and time given by the system clock on your computer.

Date

Enter the date for which you wish the chart to be cast. Most date formats are acceptable e.g. all of the following are valid ways of entering the 31st December 1957:- "31 Dec 1957", "December 31 57", "31/12/57", 31.12.1957"

Time

Enter the time for which you wish the chart to be cast. Most time formats are acceptable e.g. all of the following are valid ways of entering 2:35pm :- "2:35pm", "14:35", "14 35", "2.35 PM". The time that you enter should be the local time (not GMT time.)

Place

Place details may be entered manually, or if you have the ACS Atlas installed on your computer,

then you can use a built-in dialog to access this instead, by clicking on the Place button. (NB – the Place button is visible only if the ACS Atlas is correctly installed on your computer.)

Manual entry: Enter the name of the place for which you wish the chart to be cast. The name that you enter here does not affect the chart calculation, so can be left blank if you prefer. It is simply displayed as a reminder of where the latitude and longitude refer to. Alternatively, you can select the place name from the list of places in the drop-down list. If you select a place from the list of places, then the timezone, latitude and longitude are automatically filled in. However, you may need to alter the timezone if, for example, daylight saving is in effect. If the place that you require is not on the list, then you must enter its name, timezone, latitude and longitude.

ACS Lookup: Click on the **Place** button. This will display an atlas dialog box in which you must select the country and the place name from drop-down lists. When you click on the **OK** button to accept that place, the place name, latitude longitude and correct timezone for the given date are all automatically updated for you.

It is important to understand that if you need to enter a new value or change what is in these text fields for State, City, Latitude and Longitude, then you <u>first need to click in the field</u>. It may seem as if you can't edit these values because they are gray and not sunken. However you certainly can edit these fields. Once you have clicked in a field it will become sunken with a white background (like the State field shown below), and will allow editing.

When you have finished entering in place details click on the **OK** button, or the **Cancel** button if you don't want your edits saved.
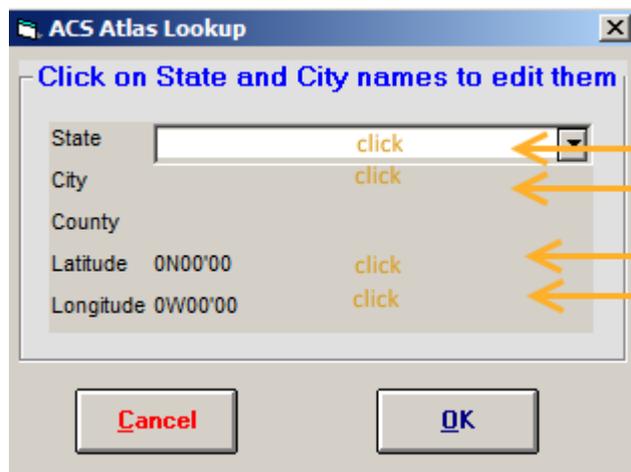
ACS Atlas dialog window

Time Zone

Enter the time zone which was in effect for the given local time. You can enter a timezone abbreviation or a time. Alternatively, you can select a timezone from the list of timezones in the drop-down list.

If you enter an abbreviation, then the time will be filled in automatically.

If you enter "LMT" then the time zone for the current longitude will be calculated and filled in automatically.

If you enter the time yourself, then its format should be in hours, and optionally minutes and seconds e.g. "0:00", "+5:00", "-9:30", "-1:17:22". Note that the time zone indicates by how much local time must be adjusted to arrive at Greenwich Mean Time (GMT). Thus, time zones west of Greenwich are positive numbers, and east of Greenwich are negative numbers e.g. use "+5:00" for USA Eastern Standard Time, "-1:00" for Central European Time, "-9:30" for Australian Central Standard Time.

Latitude

Enter the latitude of the place of birth in degrees and minutes and optionally seconds. Use "N" to indicate northern hemisphere latitudes, and "S" to indicate southern hemisphere latitudes. Typically, the hemisphere letter is used to separate degrees and minutes e.g. "34S55" is 34 degrees and 55 minutes south of the equator.

Longitude

Enter the longitude of the place of birth in degrees and minutes and optionally seconds. Use "W" to indicate western hemisphere longitudes, and "E" to indicate eastern hemisphere longitudes. Typically, the hemisphere letter is used to separate degrees and minutes e.g. "149E08" is 149 degrees and 8 minutes east of Greenwich Meridian.

SAVE Button

You can add the current placename, timezone, latitude and longitude to the database of places by clicking on the SAVE button. If a record already exists with this placename, then you will be asked to confirm whether you wish to add another record with the same name.

DELETE Button

You can remove the current place from the database of places by clicking on the DELETE button. You will be asked for confirmation before it is deleted from the list.

Save to File

If you click on this option before selecting the OK button, then the chart that is being calculated will be saved to a chart file of your choice. You will be prompted to select a chart file to save to, which must be a Solar Fire compatible chart (with file extension *.cht or *.SFcht). You can save to Solar Fire charts of any version from Solar Fire v3 to v9. If you do not wish the chart to be saved, then ensure that this option is not checked.
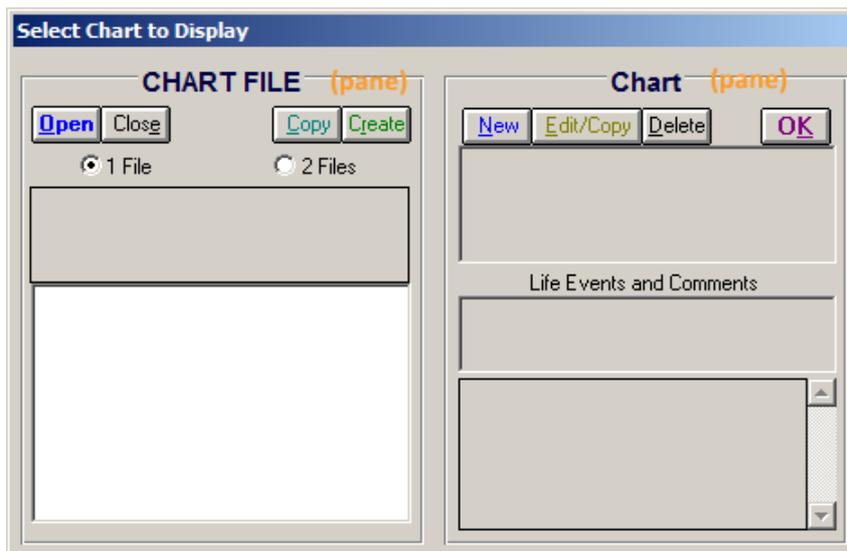
6 Charts Window

The Charts window is the main location for creating and accessing your chart files and creating and working with the charts in them. To open the Charts window click on the **Charts** button on the Main window.
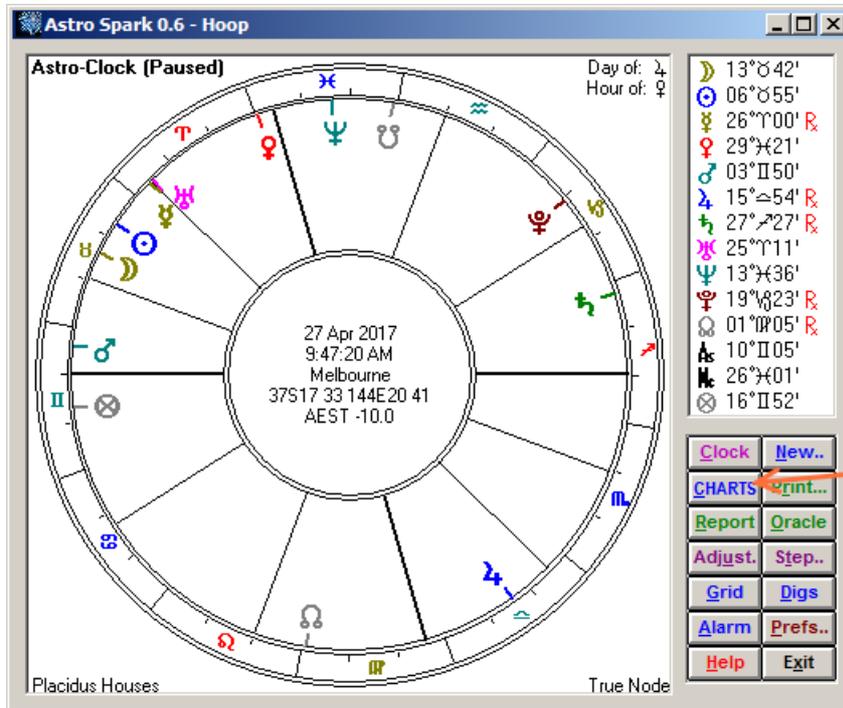
Charts button

This will display the Charts window. When first opened it will look like this:

The Charts window

There is a pane on left-hand side of the window called "Chart File".You can use this for:
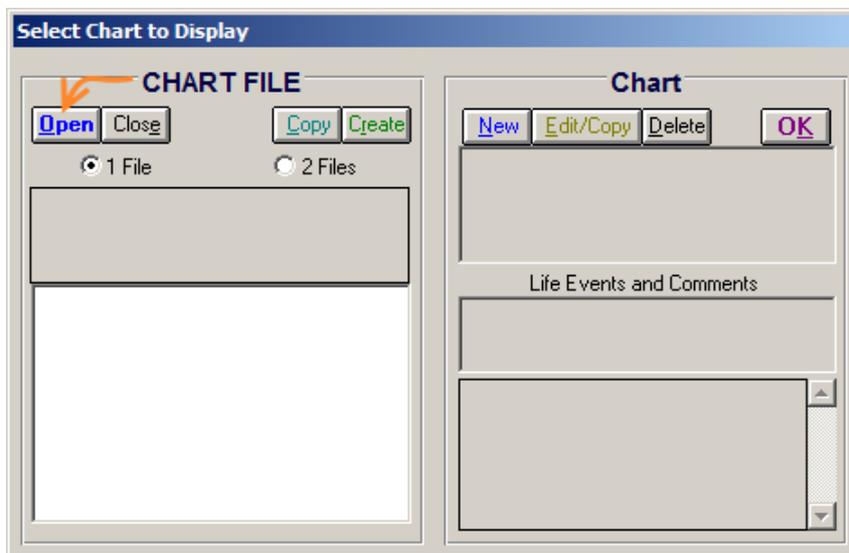
• Opening Chart Files

You can open a single chart file at a time, or you can open two chart files at a time. Astro Spark will only be able to open chart files which have been produced by Astro Spark, Solar Fire, Nova, Blue*Star or QuickChart programs, or other programs which create chart files compatible with any of these.

Working with one file at a time is a common procedure in many programs - open a file and view its contents. However working with two files open at at time can be very convenient in certain situations, for example if you wanted to compare charts from two files, or quickly alternate between viewing charts in one file and then in another file, then back again. If you have two files open at the same time you can switch between files with a single mouse-click.

➢ To work with a *single* chart file at a time click on **1 File** option (the default option when the window is first opened).

1. To open a file click on the **Open** button and select a file to open.
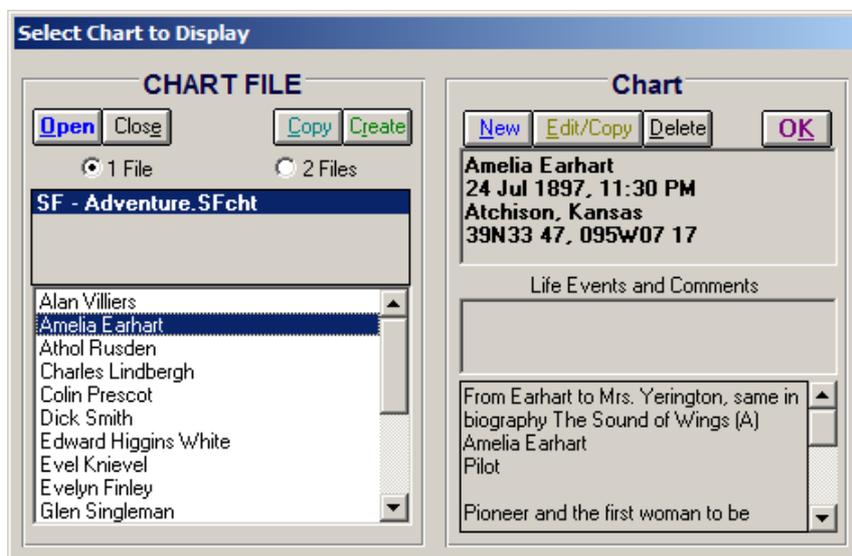

Opening a chart file - Step 1

2. This will present you with a Windows file dialog box for navigating to folders and selecting a file to open. When you have selected the folder in which your chart files reside, then simply click on the name of the chart file which contains the chart which you wish to open. Once you have done that, click on the **Open** button in this dialog screen.
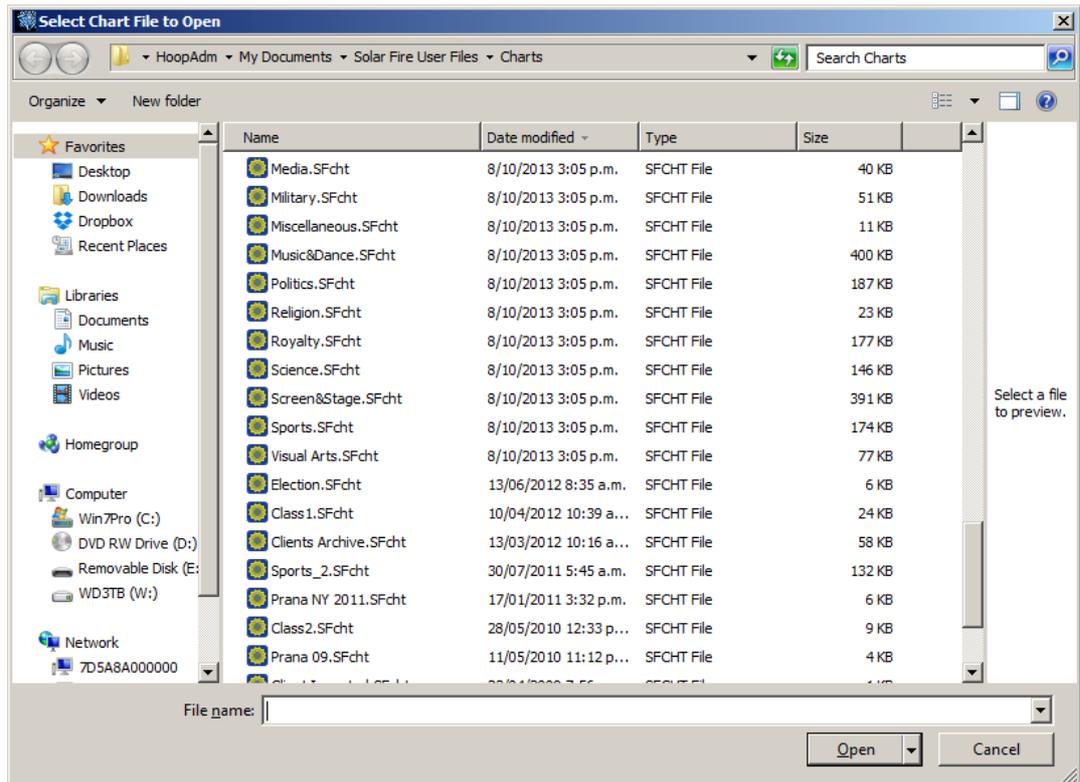
Opening a chart file - Step 2

3. The file you selected will be then listed in the gray box under the "Chart File" pane buttons. By clicking on that **filename** any charts in the file will be listed in the white list under that. This list is sorted into alphabetical order.
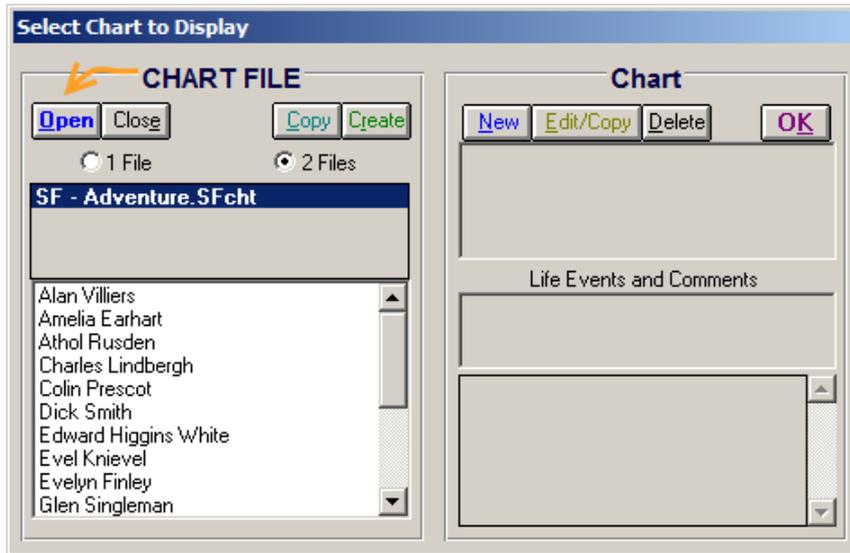

Opening a chart file - Step 3

TIP: In a chart file with many charts you can easily navigate to a specific chart. First click at the top of the Charts list. Then quickly type the first few letters of the chart name. Astro Spark will jump straight to the first chart whose name starts with those letters. This is called an incremental search, but the trick is to type quickly. For instance if I wanted to locate a chart starting with "Rupert" I would quickly type "rupe" which would take me to all charts starting with "Rupe....". But if I slowly typed "r" then "u" then "p" etc, first I would be taken to charts starting with "r" then to charts starting with "u" then to charts starting with "p" .... etc, etc.

▷ To work with *two* chart files at a time click on the **2 File** option.

1. Whether you have no files already opened, or you already have a file opened (as shown in the example below), opening a file or a second file with "2 Files" selected is done in exactly the same way as described above for - just click on the **Open** button.

Opening a chart file with 2 Files selected - Step 1

2. This will present you with a Windows file dialog box for navigating to folders and selecting a file to open. Once you have done that, click on the **Open** button in this dialog screen.
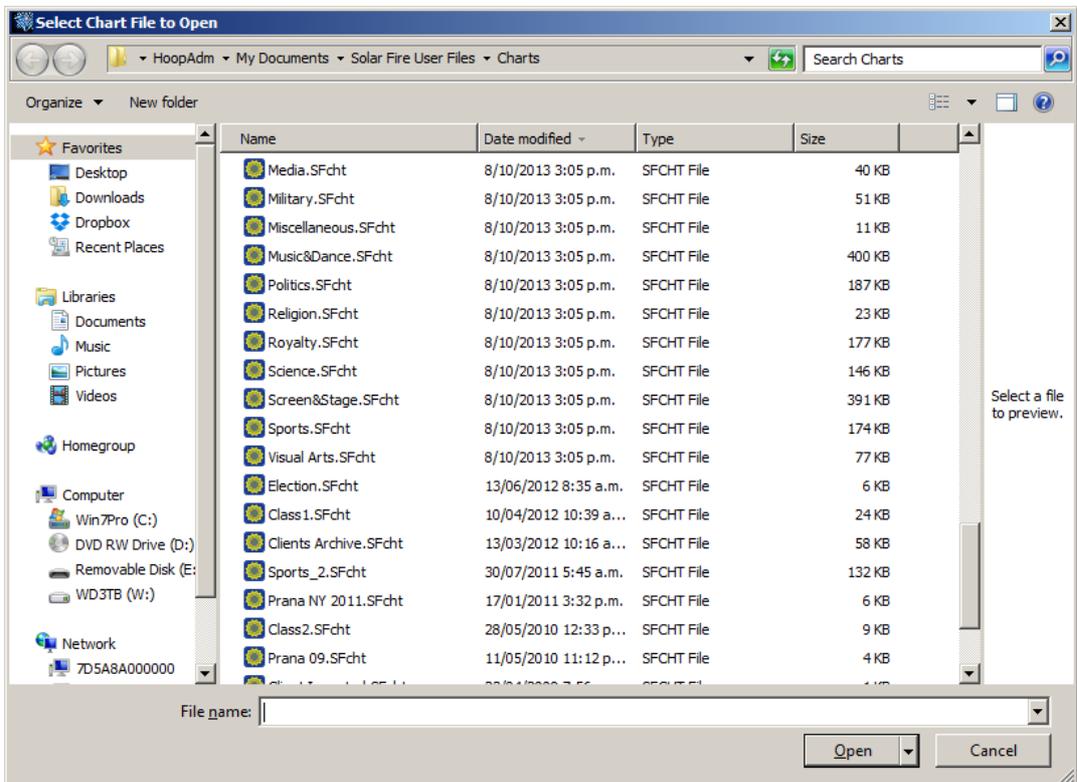
Opening a chart file with 2 Files selected - Step 2

3. The file you selected will be then listed in the gray box under the "Chart File" pane buttons. By clicking on that **filename** any charts in the file will be listed in the white listbox under that.
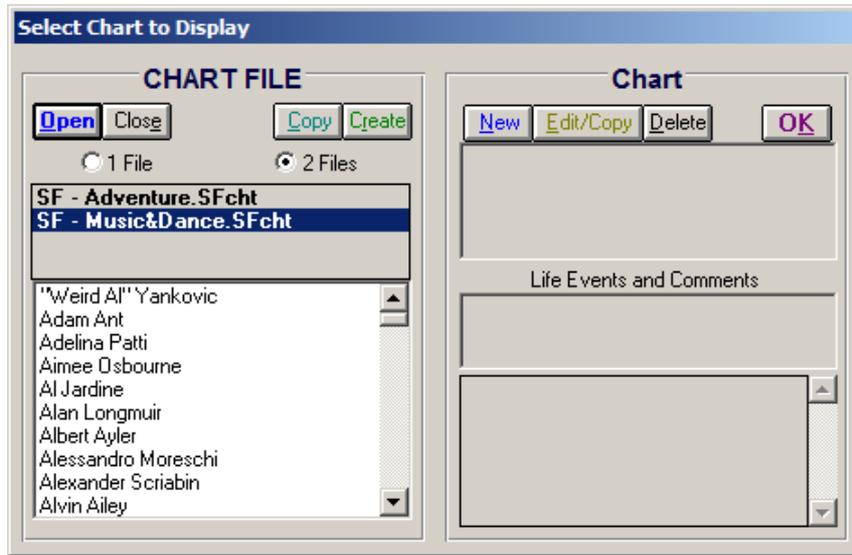

Opening a chart file with 2 Files selected - Step 3

- **Closing Chart Files**

  ➢ To close a chart file make sure it is selected first by clicking on it. Then click on the **Close** button in the "Chart File" pane. If you have made any changes to the file (added new, edited existing, or deleted charts) the chart file will be automatically saved.

  There are other occasions when chart files you have opened are also closed (and saved if necessary) - *in these situations the closing is automatic.*

  1. When the "1 File" option is selected: whenever you open another chart file, the previously opened file is automatically closed.

  2. When the "2 File" option is selected: whenever you have two files opened, and you then open another file, one of the files you previously had opened will be automatically closed. The rules for which of the previously opened files will be closed in this situation are:

    a) If an opened file is selected, and also a chart in it is selected, this file will *not* be closed, the other file will be closed

    b) If no opened file has a chart in it that is selected, then if a file is selected it will not be closed, the other file will be closed

    c) If no opened file has a chart in it that is selected, and neither file is selected, any one of the files will be closed.

  3. When you exit from the program, any opened chart files are automatically closed.

- **Displaying Charts**

  Once you have opened a chart file and then clicked on it so that the charts in it are listed in the listbox below the file, you can then display the chart.

  ➢ To display a chart select it by clicking on it. When you do this the chart details will be

displayed in the Chart pane on the right-hand side of the Charts window, just underneath the buttons. If the chart was created in Solar Fire and it has events attached to it, these will be displayed underneath the chart's details in the list titled "Life Events and Comments".
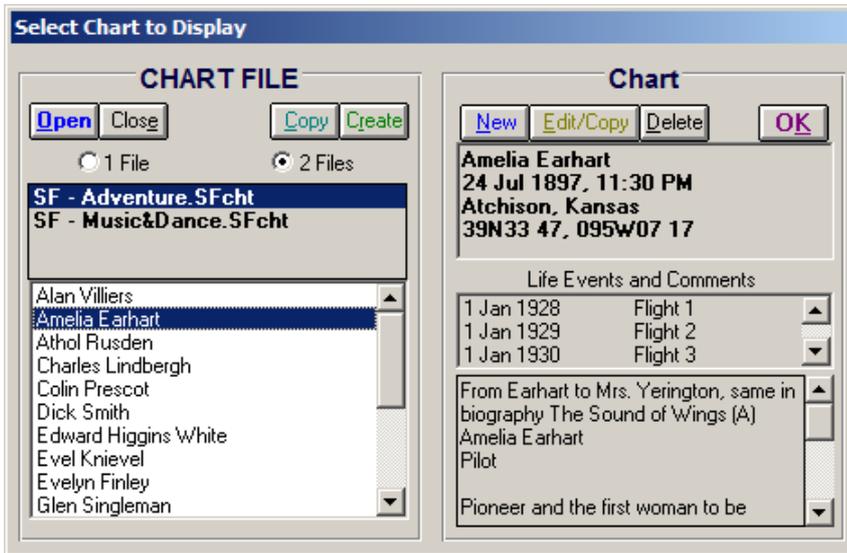
Displaying a chart - details, life events and comments

Additionally, as soon as you click on a chart, it will be calculated and displayed in the Main window. The house system and lunar node type used to display the chart are those which have been selected within Astro Spark. It is possible to change these from the Preferences window.
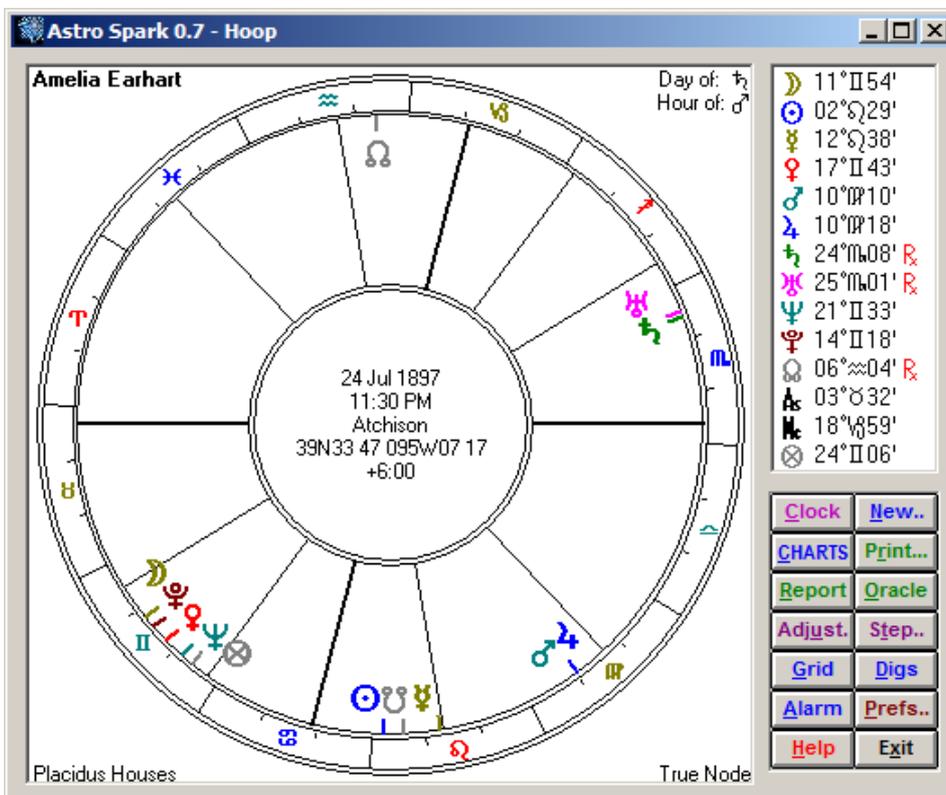
Displaying a chart

- **Chart Comments**

If the chart was created in Astro Spark, or it was created in Solar Fire v5 or later, you can add comments to the chart, or edit pre-existing comments the chart may have already have had. The comments will be displayed in the gray text box at the bottom of the Chart pane underneath the list of life events.
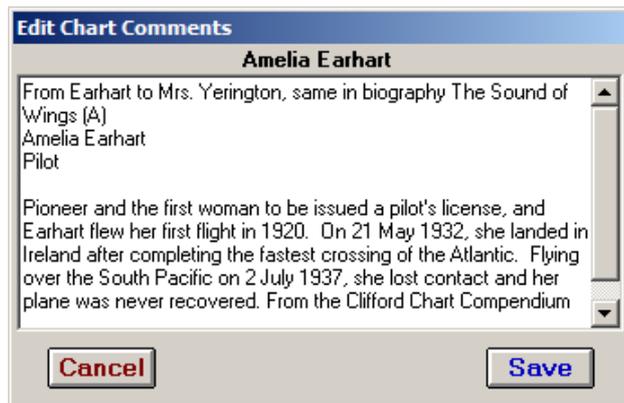
➢ To create and edit chart comments, click in the comments box. A window pops up so you can add or edit the comments.

Edit Chart Comments

Amelia Earhart

From Earhart to Mrs. Yerington, same in biography The Sound of Wings (A)
Amelia Earhart
Pilot

Pioneer and the first woman to be issued a pilot's license, and Earhart flew her first flight in 1920. On 21 May 1932, she landed in Ireland after completing the fastest crossing of the Atlantic. Flying over the South Pacific on 2 July 1937, she lost contact and her plane was never recovered. From the Clifford Chart Compendium

[Cancel]   [Save]

Creating or editing a chart's comments

- ## Creating New Charts

You can create new natal charts in Astro Spark, and these are created in the current Solar Fire natal chart format (SF v6 and later). This means that charts you create in Astro Spark will be immediately and fully useable in the latest version of Solar Fire (v9) and any other astrology software that can read Solar Fire charts.

You can also create temporary new charts, by choosing not to save them when you create them. While all new charts that you create are calculated and displayed in a chart wheel, if you choose not to save the chart then as soon as you select another chart in the charts list, the new chart you created will be lost. If you want that chart you will have to re-create it again.

Detailed information about creating new charts can be found here.

- ## Editing and Copying Charts

You can edit and copy charts created in Astro Spark, and Solar Fire v3 and later charts.

➢ To edit a chart first make sure it is selected in the list of charts at the bottom of the "Chart File" pane, on the left of the Charts window.

1. Click on the **Edit/Copy** button in the "Chart" pane on the right of the Charts window.
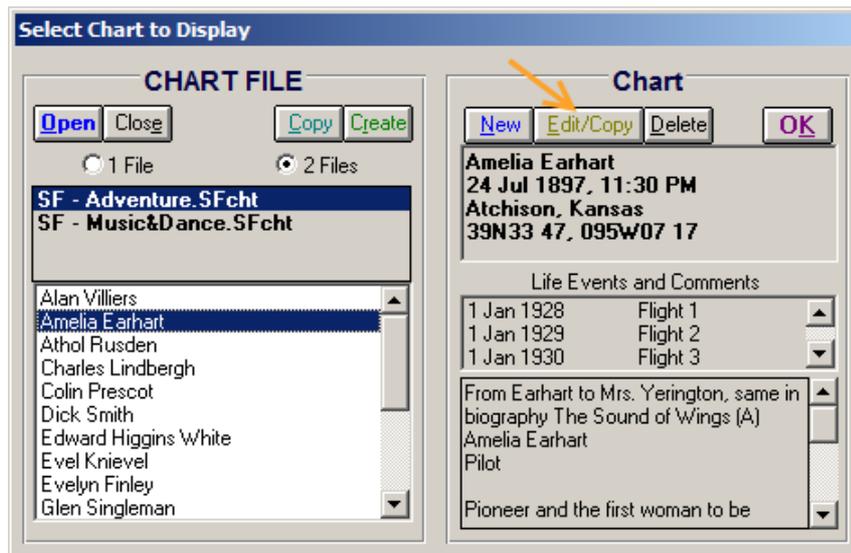
Editing or Copying a chart - Step 1

2. A window very similar to the New Chart Entry window will pop up, with the selected chart's details displayed. Simply change these details as you wish. Enter the place details manually or click on the **Place** button to use the ACS Atlas (see entering place details for information about entering data using the ACS Atlas).
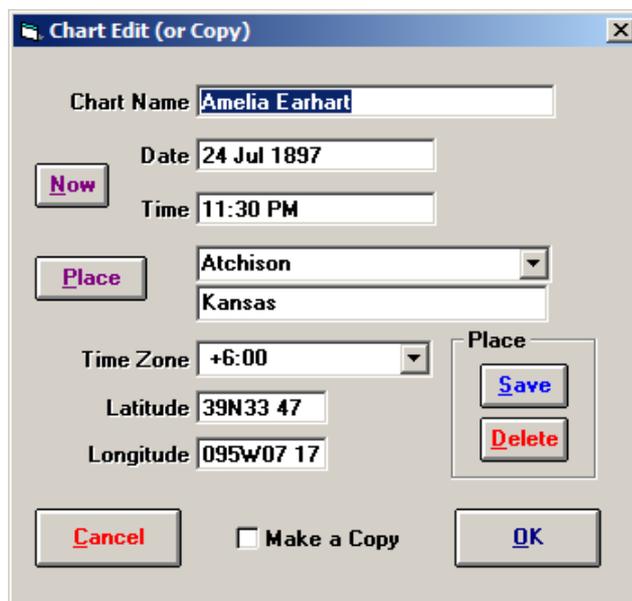
Editing or Copying a chart - Step 2

3. If you simply want to edit this chart then that's all you have to do. BUT if you want to copy this chart then you must click in the **Make a Copy** checkbox.

4. Finally, when you're ready, click on the **OK** button to finish editing or copying this chart.

5. If you were editing the chart you will be returned to the Charts window. If you were copying the chart you will be presented with a Windows dialog for navigating to the folder and chart file where you want to copy the chart to. Once you have selected the chart file to copy this chart to, click on the **Save** button.

NOTE: When you copy a chart the comments are not copied. However this can be manually done.

➢ **To copy a chart's comments to the clipboard or another chart**.

1. Open the first chart that had the comments

2. Click in the Comments box and in the editing window which pops up select all the comments by dragging the mouse from the beginning of the comments to the end of the comments. This will highlight all the comments.

3. Right click with the mouse anywhere in the highlighted comments

4. Select **Copy** off the pop-up menu

5. Close the comments window by clicking on **Cancel**

6. The comments are now on Windows clipboard. If you want to use those comments in another program you can do that now by pasting then into the place in the other program where you want them.

=> To now get those comments into another chart ...

1. Open the file with the other chart in it if it isn't already open, and click on it in the chart files list to select it

2. Click on the chart you want to copy the comments to

3. Click on the Comments text box, and the Comments editing window will open

4. Right-click the mouse at the position where you want the comments to be copied to (if there are no pre-existing comments anywhere will do)

5. On the pop-up menu click **Paste**

6. Click on the **Save** button,

- **Deleting Charts**

➢ To delete charts from Astro Spark or Solar Fire chart files, first select the chart that you wish to delete in the list of charts.

1. Click on the **Delete** button in the "Chart" pane on the right of the Charts window. Or simply press the DELETE key on your keyboard.

2. You will be asked for confirmation before the chart is deleted.

NOTE: From within the Astro Spark program it is not possible to delete charts from Nova, Blue*Star or QuickCharts, or v1 or v2 Solar Fire chart files.

7 Printing Charts

In order to print the currently displayed chart, click on the PRINT button, or select the PRINT menu item from the CHART menu.

It is possible to print two different formats:-

Chart and Aspect Grid: This prints a high quality chart and aspect grid on a single page using the maximum resolution of your printer.

Chart and Dignities Table: This prints a high quality chart and essential dignities tabulation on a single page using the maximum resolution of your printer.

Note that if you wish to change printer settings such as page orientation, resolution etc, then you can do so by using the PRINT MANAGER utility within the Windows CONTROL PANEL window.

8   Generating Reports

In order to generate a report of interpretations for the currently displayed chart, click on the **REPORT** button, or select the **REPORT** menu item from the VIEW menu.

This will display a dialog which allows you to select the type of report to generate, which word-processor to use, and whether or not to use Rich Text Formatting (RTF) in the report.

When you click on the **VIEW** button, a file called SPARKREP.TXT or SPARKREP.RTF is created, and the word-processor is opened displaying this file.

From your word-processor you may browse, edit, print or save your report to a different file name. If you do not save it to a different name, the current report will be overwritten when you generate your next report in Astro Spark.

NB - You must close this file (or exit from the word-processor) before you generate another report from Astro Spark. If you do not, then either Astro Spark will not be able to create the report file (because it is already in use), or you will see the old report instead of the new one.

Report Type

You may choose either of two options:-

- **Brief** (excluding aspects and degrees)

- **Detailed** (including aspects and degrees)

The categories of interpretation text that are used in the report are:-

- Introduction - including the details of the natal chart being used

- General Planet Meaning - a definition of the astrological meaning of the planet

- Planet in its Sign - an interpretation of the planet when it is placed in its current astrological sign

- Planet's Degree - a definition of the astrological meaning of the degree of the planet (only included in detailed reports)

- Planet in its House - an interpretation of the planet when it is placed in its current astrological house

- Aspects to Planet - an interpretation of each aspect that the planet makes to subsequent planets (only included in detailed reports). The planet order used here is Moon, Sun, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, Pluto, followed by the Ascendant, Midheaven, North Node and the Part of Fortune.

Word-Processor

When you first run Astro Spark, the option to use your computer's default word processor is selected. It will usually be taken to be Notepad.exe (which is really a text editor), or on older Windows systems, Write.exe. However if you have MS Office installed and MS Word is included, then MS Word is then selected as a *specified* word processor (as shown below).

Here is the Report window:
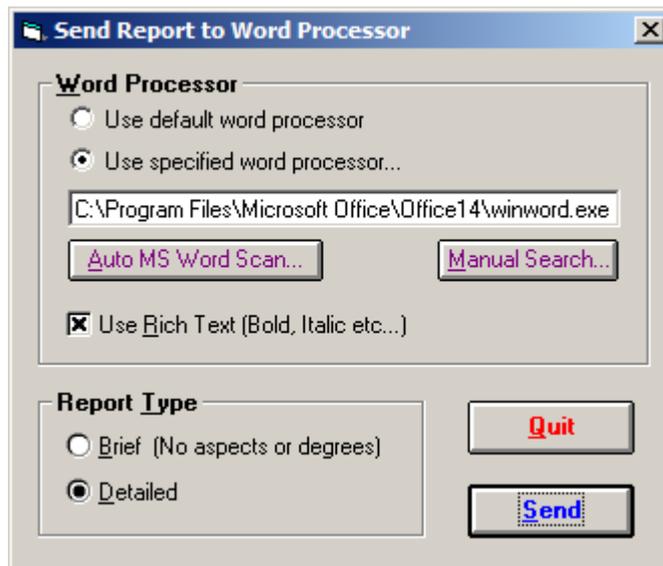
Report window

You also have the option of selecting a different word processor if you wish to, for example WordPerfect, AmiPro or any other similar program, provided that you have it already installed on your computer. However, you must enter the full pathname and correct name of the executable file for your word processor, or navigate to it using "Manual Search". If you don't know where to look for it you may be able to find the correct pathname and filename by looking at the Properties of the icon which starts your word-processor. This icon will usually be in the Start menu under Programs, or on the TaskBar, or on the Desktop. Then type the path and filename into the Report window.

➢ **To search for a different word processor that you want to specify is to be used by default**

Click on **Manual Search**. You will be able to navigate the folders and files on your computer to find your word processor. Once you have found and selected the word processor file, click on the **Open** button

➢ **To get Astro Spark to scan your computer for Microsoft Word, and specify that as the default**

Astro Spark will automatically do this when it is first run on a computer (*a once-only occurrence*), and if MS Word is found will set the Report settings accordingly to use it by default.

However even if MS Office wasn't installed when you first ran Astro Spark, situations do change and later on you may want to do a fresh automatic word processor setup. For instance if you have just installed MS Office on your computer some time after purchasing Astro Spark. In this case it would be handy to let Astro Spark reset your Report settings based on the new situation. To do this click on **Auto MS Word Scan**.

Rich Text Format (RTF)

If the RTF option is selected, then headers in the report are emboldened and centered, and italics are used in some cases. If the RTF option is not selected, then the report is generated in a plain text file, without any special formatting being used. However, in order to take advantage of this option, the word-processor that you are using must be capable of reading RTF files. Most modern word-processors can do so. If you have any doubt, try switching the RTF option on, and then look at the report that is generated. If the report contains a lot of spurious text and nonsense

characters, then your word-processor probably does not support RTF, so you should switch this option off in future.

9   The Sabian Symbol Story

by Lynda Hill

The Sabian Symbols were given birth in San Diego, California in 1925 by Marc Edmund Jones, a noted American astrologer and spiritualist and clairvoyant Elsie Wheeler. Marc Edmund Jones wanted to find a set of degree symbols (a symbol for every degree of the Zodiac), that was less judgmental and more of a reflection of contemporary America life than the degree symbols that were currently available. Elsie Wheeler was an extraordinary clairvoyant, crippled by arthritis for most of her life, with a remarkable ability to "see" symbols. Dane Rudhyar acknowledged this as being true of many clairvoyants of this type, but "she... proved to have the ability to a spectacular degree". The degrees were "manifested" one day in 1925 in San Diego's Balboa Park. Unfortunately, the date was apparently not recorded. Marc Edmund Jones took Miss Wheeler to Balboa Park in his car, where they worked all day. They deliberately found a place in the park very close to a busy intersection where they would be surrounded by the vibrations of modern American life. Jones used a set of 360 cardboard cards. These were blank except for a small notation of the sign and degree. He would shuffle the cards and place a card in front of her, neither of them knowing the degree or the sign on the card and she would describe a scene and Jones would write it on the back of the card. Hence it was completely at random. The set of 360 degree symbols was done in one day, a truly extraordinary feat.

In the 1930s Jones' students of the Sabian Assembly started using the symbols and found amazing results from placing them in natal charts. Dane Rudhyar heard about their extraordinary ability to describe a person's destiny and applied for and received permission to use the Symbols in his book "The Astrology of Personality" (first published in 1936). In this book Rudhyar did a concise, three-line interpretation. In 1953, Jones wrote his book "The Sabian Symbols in Astrology" describing them in terms of sign polarity and giving them both a positive and negative interpretation and illustrated the applications of the Symbols by relating them to horoscopes of 1,000 well-known people. Twenty years later in 1973, after a lot of research and investigation into the complete structure of the 360 degree series, Rudhyar wrote "An Astrological Mandala". This book gave them an incredible new layer of meaning, Rudhyar employing a more holistic and humanistic approach, promoted the idea of using the Sabian Symbols as an oracle. He described them as a "contemporary American I Ching".

The Sabian Oracle Symbolism is a catalyst or key to accessing our own inner wisdom; our connection with the universal consciousness; our spirit or soul; what some call the higher self. This aspect of ourselves does not think in words, but in images, feelings, colours and sounds. It is the abstract part of our psyche that the word dominated social creation that we live in will not accept as valid because it doesn't make sense to purely rational thinking.

It is possible that everything that has happened since creation and throughout evolution is stored within us as an abstract memory. Not like some huge story-telling, factual novel, but as something, as Carl Jung says "beyond the grasp of reason." There are so many things in this world that affect us far more deeply than is explicable. It is symbolism that creates a pathway to our deeper understandings and brings them up into the conscious world. Tom Chetwynd, in his book "Dictionary of Symbols" says, "Symbols have always been treasured as a means of releasing sources of energy from the unconscious". The Sabian Symbols are a wonderful and complete system of symbols that will do just that.

During those times when we need direction, reassurance or answers to questions in our lives, we can employ the use of an Oracle to reconnect with this enormous inner world full of meaning and understanding. What does an Oracle do? An Oracle is not here to give THE answer. An Oracle is not there to do the work for you. It is there to give you the direction to access your own inner

wisdom, the wisdom of the universe, for you to find your true direction and pathway to the answer. The get the most out of the Sabian Oracle, as used in this program, read the wording of the Symbol first, absorb any feelings and images that it conveys, then read the text. The 'you' referred to in the wording of the text may refer to you, a friend, or the situation you're in. Read the text and bend it to fit the particular situation that you're referring to. You'll find layers of meaning. There's always more to a Sabian Symbols that first meets the eye, and you may well see an actual physical representation of the Symbol in the world around you.

I wrote this Oracle in response to many people asking me to do the work of translating the meaning of the Symbols for this more modern age in a language accessible and easy to understand. This is by no means a definitive work - much more can be said about each Symbol. I hope that the use of the Symbols and this Oracle opens up new pathways of meaning and significance for you.

Lynda Hill is the author of "360 Degrees of Wisdom, Charting Your Destiny with the Sabian Oracle". For more information visit http://www.sabiansymbols.com/!HdkGoUrl(`http://www.sabiansymbols.com/')

10   The Sabian Oracle

In order to see the Oracle, click on the ORACLE button from the main screen, or select the ORACLE menu item from the VIEW menu. The Oracle will also appear automatically whenever Astro Spark starts up if the **Show Oracle on Startup** option is checked.

The Sabian Oracle allows you to view the Sabian Symbols and their interpretations. You can view a symbol at random, in response to a question that you may pose, or you can view the symbol which relates to the current position of certain astrological points such as the Sun, Moon, Ascendant or Midheaven, or for any desired degree of the zodiac.

See The Sabian Symbol Story for an explanation of how the symbols were derived, and how best to use them, and Acknowledgments for copyright information.

Sabian Oracle

Choosing the Sabian Oracle option button will cause a Sabian Symbol to be selected at random and displayed in the Oracle's text box. You may scroll through the text using the scroll bar if the text extends beyond the length of the text box. To get another Symbol, either double-click on the Sabian Oracle option button, or simply quit from the oracle screen and choose the ORACLE button again.

Ascendant, Midheaven, Sun and Moon Degree

Choosing one of the Degree options will cause the Sabian Symbol for the current degree of that astrological point to be chosen. To update the symbol for the current time, double-click on the same option button. Note, however, that the Sun's degree changes only roughly once per day, the Moon's degree changes roughly once every two hours, and the Ascendant and Midheaven degrees change roughly once every four minutes.

Other Degree

Choosing this option will allow you to enter any angle into the text box, and the Sabian Symbol for that degree will be displayed. You may use this option to see the symbol for any desired degree. The angle can be entered as a degree or a degree followed by a sign abbreviation, (and optionally also minutes of arc). For example, to see the symbol for 17 degrees of Sagittarius, you could enter "17Sg", "17sg59", "17Sag", "17 sagittarius" or "257". All of these will result in the display of the symbol for the degree from 17°Sg00' to 17°Sg59'. Most signs can be entered by using the first two letters of the sign as an abbreviation. The exceptions are Cancer (Cn), Sagittarius (Sg) and Capricorn (Cp).

Show Oracle on Startup

If this option is checked, then the Oracle screen will be displayed immediately whenever Astro Spark starts up, and a random Sabian Symbol is selected by the program. You may wish to use this symbol as a "thought for the day". If you wish to prevent the Oracle screen from being displayed on program startup, then simply uncheck this option.

Copying Text to the Clipboard

In order to copy the symbol title and interpretation text to the Windows clipboard, for use in other Windows applications, click on the COPY button. Note that you can add your own text to the existing text before copying it to the clipboard. For example you may wish to write in the question that you posed for which this symbol is the answer.

Note on Symbol Numbers

There are 30 symbols in each sign, which are normally numbered from 1 to 30. These correspond to the 30 degrees in each sign, but these are numbered from 0 to 29. For example the first symbol relates to 0° thru 0°59' of that sign, the second to 1° thru 1°59', etc. If you refer to books on the Sabian Symbols, you may need to bear this in mind, as you might erroneously assume that the number of the symbol was the same as the number of degrees, whereas the number of the symbol is actually ONE MORE than the number of degrees, e.g. a planet at 23°17' is actually in the 24th degree.

11   Rectifying Charts

In order to obtain a rectification assisting tool, simply click on the ADJUST button, or select the ADJUST menu item from the EDIT menu.

You can alter either the chart's time or its Midheaven (MC), but not its Ascendant (Asc). If you wish to alter the Ascendant, then you must change either the time or the MC until the desired Ascendant is found.

You may alter the time in increments of 1 minute by clicking on the time spin buttons, or the MC in increments of 10 seconds of arc by clicking on the MC spin buttons.

Alternatively you may enter a new time or MC angle directly into the appropriate text boxes. If you enter a time, then the MC corresponding to that time will be shown, and vice-versa.

Angles can be entered in degrees, minutes and seconds (e.g. "133 24 30") or in zodiacal annotation (e.g. "13 Cn 24 20"). Time can be entered in hours, minutes and seconds and include an am/pm indicator (e.g. "7:30" or "2:23pm").

Note that it is not possible to change the date of the chart from this dialog box. If the time passes forward through midnight, then it reverts to the beginning of the same day.

When you have selected the desired time/angle as described above, then you must click on the ADJUST button in order to recalculate the chart.

12   Stepping Through Time

In order to obtain the time stepping tool, simply click on the STEP button, or select the STEP menu item from the EDIT menu.

You can choose how long each time step will cover by entering a number and selecting a unit from the drop-down list e.g. 15 minutes, 1 day, 10 years.

It is possible to make a single step forwards or backwards, or to "play" (i.e. make continuous steps) forwards or backwards.

The outermost buttons will "play" the chart backwards or forwards, until the central (red) stop button is clicked.

The inner buttons will make a single step backwards or forwards.

Enable Alarm Events:

If you wish to leave the clock alarm events working whilst you step through the chart, then click on the "Enable Alarm Events" check box. If you have not selected the "Notify with Message Box" option from the Preferences window then you must select the Alarm Notification button or menu item in order to see what alarm events have occurred.

Whilst you are stepping the chart with alarm events enabled, special conditions apply to the alarm. These conditions are:-

If the step time period is greater than 30 minutes, then alarm messages relating to transits of the Ascendant and Midheaven will be disabled.

If the step time period is greater than 1 day, then alarm messages relating to transits of the Moon will also be disabled.

If the step time period is greater than 1 week, then alarm messages relating to transits of the Sun, Mercury, Venus and Mars will also be disabled.

If the step time period is greater than 1 month, then all alarm messages will be disabled.

The reason for these messages being disabled is that in each of these cases the total movement of the points in question is likely to exceed 15 degrees, which means that more than one aspect may occur to each point being considered, and this could lead to too large a number of alarm messages being issued. Also the outer planets may retrograde during this period, and this might cause messages to be missed in certain cases, giving an inaccurate picture.

Useful Tips:

Note that if you wish to watch the motion of the planets through the zodiac, then you should select the "0 Aries" houses from the Preferences window, as this will prevent the house cusps from changing with time.

Also note that you can view annual secondary progressions to a chart by selecting a time period of 1 day. The charts generated by this method correspond to the secondary progressions at intervals of 1 year.

You can also use this tool to look for certain events, e.g. to run forward in time until Uranus reaches a point which is the Midheaven in your own chart.

13 Viewing the Aspect Grid

In order to view an aspect grid and 30° modulus planetary sort for the currently displayed chart, click on the GRID button, or select the ASPECT GRID menu item from the VIEW menu.

The grid displays the aspects formed between each pair of planets, and the orb of those aspects. It is possible to alter the maximum orbs of each aspect from the Preferences window. Note that you can switch off any aspect by setting its orb to zero.

Aspects may be **applying** (moving closer into the exact aspect) or **separating** (moving further away from making an exact aspect). These are denoted with an A or an S respectively e.g. 5S12 means the orb is 5 degrees and 12 minutes of arc, and the aspect is separating, whereas 5A12 means that the orb is the same, but that the aspect is applying.

The 30° modulus planetary sort strip appears below the grid. It shows where the planets are in terms of their degree (0 to 30) within their sign. The actual sign of each planet is also shown as a glyph above each planet.

This window may be re-sized by dragging its borders with the mouse, or maximizer by clicking on the maximize button at the top right of the window frame. In order to close the grid window, double-click on its top left-hand corner.

14   Viewing the Essential Dignities Table

In order to view an essential dignities table and house almuten tabulation, click on the DIGS button, or select the ESSENTIAL DIGNITIES menu item from the VIEW menu.

The tabulation displays a list of the traditional chart points, and for each one indicates which planet is the ruler, is in exaltation, is its triplicity ruler, is its term ruler, is its face ruler, is in detriment and is in fall at that position of the zodiac. A '+' sign indicates that the planet is in its own dignity, and an 'm' indicates that it is in mutual reception with another planet in that dingity. The final column indicates the overall dignity score, and an additional 'p' indicates the 'peregrine' condition, which means it has no essential dignity in its current location.

A table of each of the 12 house cusp's almuten rulers is displayed underneath the essential dignities table.

This window may be resized by dragging its borders with the mouse, or maximised by clicking on the maximise button at the top right of the window frame. In order to close the window, double-click on its top left-hand corner.

15 Viewing Alarm Notification

In order to view the alarm notification window, click on the ALARM button, or select the ALARM NOTIFICATION menu item from the VIEW menu.

Clicking on the OK button will hide this window. You can view it again at any time by clicking or selecting the ALARM option again.

If any selected alarm events have occurred since Astro Spark was started up, or since you last stepped the chart through time, then you will see a list of what events occurred, and the dates and times between which those events occurred. These will be sorted into order of date and time at which they occured. See Setting Alarm Events for information on how to select which events will trigger the alarm.

If you have enabled the "Notify with Message Box" option on the Preferences window, then the Alarm Notification window will pop up automatically whenever any alarm events occur.

If you have disabled the "Notify with Message Box" option, but have enabled the "Notify with Trill" option, then you may wish to view the Alarm Notification window after hearing the trill. Each time that you hear a trill sound, the contents of the Alarm Notification window is updated.

If you have disabled both of the "Notify with..." options, then the Alarm Notification window will still be updated when alarm events occur, but you will not receive any kind of notification that they have occurred. In this case, you may wish to view the Alarm Notification window at certain times, in order to see a record of what the most recent events were.

16   Preferences

In order to choose or browse the current default settings, click on the PREFS button, or select the PREFERENCES menu item from the OPTIONS menu.

If you change any default settings, then they will be saved when you click on the SAVE button, and Astro Spark will remember these settings in subsequent sessions. Clicking on the CANCEL button will annul any changes that you have made since last saving the defaults.

Location

This box allows you to enter the details of your current location. These details are used to calculate the astro-clock chart.

Name: Enter the name of your current location. If you have the ACS Atlas installed, then you can click on the Place button to select a place from the atlas.

Latitude: Enter the latitude of your current location in degrees and minutes, using "N" or "S" to show which hemisphere you are in e.g. 34S55 for 34 degrees and 55 minutes south of the equator.

Longitude: Enter the longitude of your current location in degrees and minutes, using "W" or "E" to show which hemisphere you are in e.g. 138E55 for 138 degrees and 55 minutes east of the Greenwich Meridian.

Timezone: Enter the adjustment to the local time required in order to bring it to Greenwich Mean Time e.g. +5:00 for US Eastern Standard Time, +0:00 for Greenwich Mean Time, -1:00 for Central European Time, -10:00 for Australian Eastern Standard Time. You can enter a timezone abbreviation, or a time, or alternatively you can select the timezone from the drop-down list.

Astro-Clock Alarm

This allows you to switch on or off an alarm which notifies you whenever planetary events occur, such as a planet crossing an angle, a planet making a sign ingress etc.

Use the Alarm Events button to choose which events will trigger the alarm.

Notify with Trill: This will cause your computer to issue a trill (warbling tone sound) whenever an alarm event occurs.

Notify with Message Box: This will cause a message box to pop-up whenever an alarm event occurs. The message will indicate which planet formed an aspect to which chart point, or made a sign ingress e.g. "The Sun Conjunct Midheaven."

If both of the above options are switched off, then the alarm will not notify you when events occur. However, Astro Spark continues to keep a record of the alarm events as they occur, and these may be viewed at any time by using the Alarm Notification option.

Selected Alarm Events: This shows you how many kinds of events are currently selected to set off the alarm. This number will change whenever you edit the events with the Alarm Events button.

House System

This allows you to select a house system which will be used for any chart subsequently calculated. To select a new house system, click on the arrow of the drop-down list box and highlight the required house system by clicking on it.

Aspects

This allows you to set an orb for any of the standard aspects which are used by Astro Spark. To alter an orb, click on the arrow of the drop-down list box and highlight the aspect whose orb you wish to alter. Then edit the orb by entering a number of degrees, or degrees and minutes e.g. "7" for 7 degrees or "7 30" for 7 degrees and 30 minutes. If you wish to switch off an aspect, then set its orb to zero degrees.

Lunar Node

This allows you to select whether Astro Spark will use the True Node or the Mean Node for any chart subsequently calculated. The Mean Node is a mathematical approximation to the True Node, but has been used by many astrologers historically.

Clock Interval

This allows you to determine how often the astro-clock is updated whilst it is running. Enter the number of seconds which you wish your computer to wait between updating the clock. If you have a powerful computer, and are not running other applications at the same time as Astro Spark, then you may wish to set the interval at 10 seconds or less. If, however, you have a less powerful computer, or if you wish to run Astro Spark in the background as an astro alarm clock, then you might prefer a longer time interval, so that the chart calculations do not interfere too much with whatever else you are doing on your computer.

Chart Display

This allows you to set option affecting how the chart is displayed on your screen.

Show Degrees, Sign & Minutes: This option causes the planets' degrees, signs and minutes to be printed within the wheel circle. When this option is in effect the secondary window on the screen will show the positions of the house cusps instead of the planets' positions. Note that this option is automatically switched off whilst you are stepping the chart, in order to speed the updating of the chart display.

Use Segmented Tick Marks: This option causes the tick marks which indicate the zodiacal position of each planet to be split into three parts. This clarifies which tick mark belongs to which planet when the planet glyph cannot be printed immediately next to its tick mark due to house cusps or overcrowding.

Note that charts sent to your printer always show degrees and segmented ticks regardless of what options are chosen here. These options apply only to charts displayed on your screen.

Date Order

This allows you to specify whether you want to enter and display dates in either the International or US formats.

DD/MM/YY

This is the standard international format, with the day first. If you enter a date as digits only, then it will be assumed that the first number is the day of the month and the second number is the month e.g. 1/2/93 would be interpreted and displayed as 1 Feb 1993.

MM/DD/YY

This is the US format, with the month first. If you enter a date as digits only, then it will be assumed that the first number is the month and the second number is the day of the month e.g. 1/2/93 would be interpreted and displayed as Jan 2 1993.

17   Setting Alarm Events

In order to set which events will trigger the alarm, click on the PREFS button, or select the PREFERENCES menu item from the OPTIONS menu. Then, from the Preferences screen, select the ALARM EVENTS button.

When this screen appears, any events which have already been selected will appear in the "Selected Alarm Events" list box. If no events have been selected then it will be empty.

To add new alarm events:

Click on the NEW button. This will add an entry to the list of events, which will initially be a copy of the last event that was highlighted. You can then edit the details of this new event as described below.

To edit an existing alarm event:

Highlight the event that you wish to edit by clicking on its entry in the "Selected Alarm Events" list box. The details for this event will appear in the edit boxes below the list.

Click on the "Point 1" drop-down list box to open up a list of all the chart points, and select an item from this list by clicking on it.

Click on the "Aspect" drop-down list box to open up a list of all the aspects, and select an item from this list by clicking on it. Note that if you select the item "Sign Ingress" then the "Point 2" list will become disabled, as there is no need to specify a second point in this case.

Click on the "Point 2" drop-down list box to open up a list of all the chart points, and select an item from this list by clicking on it. Alternatively you may enter a zodiacal position directly into this list box, for example entering "9 Cp 09" for 9 degrees and 9 minutes of Capricorn. You can enter degrees minutes and seconds of arc in this manner, and whatever you enter will be converted to its zodiacal equivalent e.g. "45 05" will result in "15Ta05 00" being shown, as 45 degrees is 15 degrees of Taurus.

If you have entered a zodiacal position in the "Point 2" box, then you will also be able to enter a name for that point in the "Point 2 Name" text box e.g. if you have entered "9 Cp 09" as the position of your natal Sun, then you could enter "My Sun" as the name for this point. When you are notified of alarm events, then this name will appear in the list of transits instead of the its zodiacal position.

To change the ordering of alarm events in the list:

You can alter the relative positions of items on your list of alarm events by simply highlighting the event which you wish to move, and then clicking on the upwards or downwards arrow button to the right of the list.

Note, however, that this will not affect the order of items in the alarm notification list, when they occur - these will always be sorted into time and date order.

To delete existing alarm events:

Highlight the event that you wish to delete by clicking on its entry in the "Selected Alarm Events" list box. Then click on the DELETE button.

To remove all the selected events:

Click on the CLEAR ALL button.

Points to remember:

Note that the transiting angles (Ascendant and Midheaven) rotate around the entire chart every day. If you include either of these points in your alarm events, then alarm events will occur much more frequently than if you limit your selection to planets only.

If you wish to be notified of transits to your natal chart, then you could select, for example, "Points Moon-MC" from the first list, "Any Aspect" from the second list, and then enter the angle of your natal Sun in the third list box. You can repeat this for each of the points in your natal chart, until you have an alarm event for every point in your natal chart. If you save this selection of alarm events, and leave the astro-clock running in the background, you will be notified whenever a transiting point makes an exact aspect to a point in your natal chart.

18 Exiting

In order to exit from the Astro Spark program, simply click on the EXIT button, or select the EXIT menu item from the CHART menu.

You will be prompted with a message box to confirm whether or not you wish to leave the program. This message box will also appear if you close Windows before exiting from the Astro Spark program.

19   Accuracy of Charts

Astro Spark has the same accuracy of planetary calculations as Solar Fire does.

The following accuracies are shown in seconds of arc.

The Sun - 1" arc

The Moon - 10" arc

Mercury - 4" arc

Venus - 4" arc

Mars - 4" arc

Jupiter - 4" arc

Saturn - 4" arc

Uranus - 3" arc

Neptune - 3" arc

Pluto - 1" arc (1885-2099 only)

Note that these accuracies apply for the period 1900 to 2100, and that the accuracy decreases slowly over longer time scales. With the exception of Pluto, positions are still reasonably accurate for BC dates.

20   Solar Fire

Solar Fire is a full-featured astrology computer program. First released in 1992, it has been continuously enhanced and upgraded since then.

Following is a list of features from an early Solar Fire version. The latest version has a greatly expanded feature set.

Chart Types

*   Natal/Event

*   Secondary Progressed - Astro Arc MC

*   Secondary Progressed - Daily Houses

*   Astro Arc Directed

*   Astro, Lunar or any other planet or asteroid return (or partial return)

*   Any planet or asteroid ingress or transit to any user-defined point

*   Harmonic

*   Antiscia & Contrascia

*   Composite - Midpoints (2 charts)

*   Composite - Derived Ascendant (2 charts)

*   Composite Group - Derived Ascendant (up to 15 charts)

*   Relationship - Davison

Zodiac Types

*   Tropical

*   Any of 8 Sidereal zodiacs, plus a user-definable ayanamsa

House Systems

*   Campanus, Koch, Meridian, Morinus, Placidus, Porphyry, Regiomontanus, Topocentric, Hindu Bhava

*   Equal: Ascendant on 1st house cusp; MC on 10th; Zero Aries on 1st; Zero Sun sign on 1st; Any planet, Lunar Node, Vx or Ep on 1st; Whole Sign

Chart Points

*   Planets: Sun, Earth, Moon, Vulcan, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, Pluto - accurate to several seconds of arc in most cases

*   Asteroids: Chiron, Vesta, Pallas, Juno, Ceres, Hygeia, Astraea (1800 to 2050) - accurate to about a minute of arc

*   Others: Ascendant, Midheaven, Vertex, East Point, Part of Fortune

*   Charts may be calculated for any date, including BC dates. (The accuracy of Pluto decreases significantly outside the years 1885-2099).

Aspects

* All aspects from the 1st to the 12th harmonic (26 aspect types), with user-specifiable orbs for applying/separating and luminary/other points.

Time Zones

* A database of over 50 standard time zones may be accessed.

Places

* A user expandable database of over 3000 Australian, US, NZ, Canadian and European locations may be accessed.

* ACS PC Atlas may be accessed (must be purchased separately).

Display Styles

* Single Wheel, Dual Wheels, Biwheel, Triwheel, Quadriwheel

* Aspect Grid, Synastry Grid

* Proportional/non-proportional houses

* Expandable house cusps

* Aspect lines/glyphs on or off

* Selectable black or white screen background.

* Colors of signs, planets and aspects are user selectable

Definitions and Interpretations

These may be viewed by simply pointing to a feature on a displayed chart and clicking on the mouse

* General text relating to each degree, decanate, sign, element, mode, house, quadrant, hemisphere, ray, aspect, lunar phase.

* Interpretations of the balance of signs, elements, modes, houses, quadrants, hemispheres, rays in any natal chart.

* Interpretations of each planet and asteroids in each house and sign in any natal chart.

* Interpretations of each of six aspects (Conjunction, opposition, trine, square, sextile, quincunx) between each combination of two planets.

* Information on house rulerships and dispositorships for each planet in a chart.

It is possible to access and browse through any of the text supplied quickly and easily. Any of the supplied text is editable with an included utility program. A full set of interpretations relating to a natal chart may be exported to a file for editing and printing with a separate word processor, if desired.

Chart Report Types

Reports may be viewed for any of the available chart types, using either abbreviations or glyphs for signs, planets and aspects. Reports can also display colors for different signs, planets etc.

* Basic Chart Details (for any 1 chart):- House cusps, chart point positions, lunar angle and phase, elements & modes analysis

* Rulerships - Modern, Old, Esoteric or Hierarchical (for any 1 chart):- Accidental dignities, mutual receptions, rulerships, detriments, exaltations, falls, chart's final dispositor, rulerships and dispositorships for each chart point

* Aspect List (for any 1 chart, or between any 2 charts):- Aspects used and orbs, aspects between each chart point

* Aspect Analysis (for any 1 chart, or between any 2 charts):- Aspects used and orbs, major aspect patterns, aspect distribution grid, aspect frequency analysis

* Chart Point Sort - Any Modulus:- For either a single chart, or the points of two charts intermingled

* Midpoint Listing - Any Modulus:- Sorted in planetary order, and in modulus order, for either a single chart, or the primary points of a second chart intermingled with the midpoints of a chart

* Midpoint Trees and Axes - Any Modulus and Orb

Dynamic Report Types

Any chart points may be used as radix, transiting or progressing points, including the moon and the chart angles. Any aspect set may be used.

* Transits to radix, transits to transits, transits to progressions, transits to solar arc directions, progressions to radix, progressions to progressions, solar arc directions to radix (to any radix chart).

* Sign ingress, house ingress, stationary points, parallels of declination or latitude, eclipses, entering or leaving orb.

Additional Utilities and Features

* Charts may be imported from Nova , Blue*Star or QuickChart files

* Charts may be exported to Nova type files

* Rulerships and weightings of chart points may be edited

* You can edit existing interpretations or enter your own interpretations text from scratch

* Rectify Assist utility to adjust time or angles of a natal chart

* Continuously updated display of current ascendant, midheaven and planetary positions

21 Acknowledgments

Symbols

The Sabian Symbol and wording of the symbol is from:-

"The Sabian Symbols in Astrology" by Dr. Marc Edmund Jones (c) The Marc Edmund Jones Literary Trust, first published in 1993 by Aurora Press, PO Box 573, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504, USA.

"The Astrology of Personality" by Dane Rudhyar (c) Aurora Press, PO Box 573, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504, USA.

Interpretative Text for Symbols

The interpretations of the symbols are written by Lynda Hill, (c) 1995, Lynda Hill, 20 Harley Road, Avalon NSW 2107, Australia. Tel +61 2 918-9539; Fax +61 2 973-1453.

Lynda Hill is the author of "360 Degrees of Wisdom, Charting Your Destiny with the Sabian Oracle". For more information visit http://www.sabiansymbols.com/!HdkGoUrl(`http://www.sabiansymbols.com/')

22   Further Information

For further information, or to order astrological software, please contact your local dealer of Esoteric Technologies Products (scroll down to see them).

The creators of Astro Spark are Esoteric Technologies Pty Ltd, based in Melbourne, Australia. Other programs for the astrologer created by Esoteric Technologies are: Solar Fire, JigSaw, and Solar Writer which comprises of a range of astrological report writers. Please visit our products page for further information.

Website

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