

DOWN THE RABBIT HOLE Chronicles of an ex new age traveler....

Chapter one.... Summer 1975 Bridgwater

The Initiation.

It was a long, hot summer, the summer before the legendary, scorching summer of '76, standpipes and the famous plague of ladybirds.

I always looked forward to my elder sister's visits but one particular day, she brought along Black Sabbath's first album. The creepy artwork fascinated me and from the first chord struck on that iconic first track, i was hooked!

That album, quite simply, blew me away. Other stand outs i remember were: Emerson Lake and Palmer's Brain Salad Surgery, Meddle by Pink Floyd, Fireball and Deep Purple in rock and Mick Ronson's Slaughter on Tenth avenue. I soon discovered a plethora of Heavy metal and Prog rock and they became the soundtrack to my teens. It got me through some very tough times and being bullied at school, until i learned to fight back. Living in Bridgwater was no fun , Metal made me strong and Black Sabbath were like my invisible big brothers !! Metal held me up proud but I was only one of very few(two or three) at my school, who enjoyed it. I was listening to Sabbath, Nazareth, Rainbow, AC/DC, Floyd, Zeppelin, Blue Oyster Cult, Tangerine dream, Steve Hillage and Deep Purple; while everyone else was caught up in the Saturday Night Fever, Grease and disco explosion of the seventies. Punk offered temporary relief. I loved it's energy and attitude but it didn't really grab me by the gut.

Chapter twoSummer 1980 Bridgwater

The Party.

I muddled through my last few months at school and my nine o level exams. The very day after my last exam at school, i left home at the tender age of sixteen with mums blessing (albeit with many reservations and what could only be described as tortuous worry) and a blazing row with my step dad. He probably thought I would end up in trouble. Fortunately, thanks to the good people around me; namely Zeni and Jon, Pete and Gerry, Sue and Chris and Maggie and Simon.... I didn't. I was living with my boyfriend Graham, who was a hulk at six foot seven tall, a scouser who was quite a bit older than me. He was nicknamed Scouse into the bargain!! He was always the life and soul of the party, had a cracking sense of humour and loved life. Although he famously wore his six foot afghan coat , he wasn't really a hippy. He liked the love ,peace and drugs bit but he hung around with bikers and might have, at one point, been a part of the Somerset biker chapter known as the Headhunters. He was certainly good

friends with a few of them. The ones I remember were: Shaver, Mick, Rat, a few others from Taunton, Dou and Martin but my favourite was Adolf !!!!

As I had missed Stonehenge 1980 due to sitting my exams, we decided to head off to the Ashton court festival held in late June and it was free in the eighties!!! It was here that I took my first acid trip. This was a major release for me, I had never felt so free, so wonderful in my life

and we all had a brilliant time with Pete, Gerry and Chris (who was Grahams youngest brother) and his girlfriend Sue. It was pure liberation point for me as after a very restrictive upbringing, this festival was bliss.. pure freedom and here I fell in love with the whole way of life and it's philosophy. The party had begun.

I smoked , drank and tripped like there was no tomorrow! I love going to parties and pubs but especially festivals. Something about them unleashed a powerful, primitive, tribal feeling in me, like we had all done this before, thousands of years ago.

Although, Graham and I worked hard in the normal world; we partied hard too.....(in the words of the Andrew Wk song!!!) We ended up staying with Zeni and Jon for a few months, and they really looked out for me. We shared everything and had some fabulous times together. I will never forget Zeni sharing her last slice of jam on toast with me. That's when I realized what an amazing person she was. We spent most of our spare time in the pub, mostly the North Pole and weekends were spent tripping with friends , going to parties and getting hammered !! Sometimes Pete and Gerry would hold mini weekend festivals. They had recently bought a bus and kitted it out with a bed, seating and a cooker. We would have enormous fun and I was loving my new found freedom. Other festivals we went to were Deeply Vale, where I got closer to more people from Bridgwater. Kathy Wells and Marion, Peggy's sister, who was going out with Nick from the Headhunters. I had my usual trip and they were speeding but we still managed to connect with each other. I never really enjoyed speed.

The highlight of the summer was going to see Pink Floyd at Earls court, August 6th, on their original "The Wall" tour.... What can I say? /// They were absolutely mind blowingly brilliant and it was the only gig ever, to have rendered me speechless!!!.

My seventeenth birthday was a blockbuster.... We were already camped at the Psilocybin Fayre festival, held at Devils Bridge, in wales. I remember being woken up by a dog who kept barking at passers by!, After getting up into the fresh air to greet everyone. We met up with Geoff and Nad and their two daughters, Alan and Janet B . Pete and Gerry were there in their bus and I will never forget feeling so alive, all of us around the fire, watching the flames and feeling the cool yet warm breeze. We were listening to "The Forest" by the Cure from their "Seventeen seconds" album.....Good times.I found out that Gerry had actually made me a full on Chocolate cake for my birthday, but to her dismay, discovered that the festival dogs had robbed and eaten it!!! I laughed at the irony but felt a bit bad for Gerry, as she had put in so much effort. I briefly wondered if it was the little black, cross bred spaniel dog camped behind us as I saw his owner leave his tent. He was a small bearded man with flowing gingery blonde hair. It was such a brilliant weekend and the peak of my romance with Lsd.

We also used to love going to the infamous Headhunter parties. These were often held on the Quantock hills, Kilve beach or occasionally Lilstock cove. They were crazy affairs, tents around the place, some in a circle, campfires, motorbikes (of course), very loud music (usually heavy), a lot of alcohol and drugs and nearly always ended up in a brawl !!

Graham acquired a motorbike for a few months. I think it was Chris's bike, as he had gone back to the merchant navy for a bit. I loved going on the back of that bike! :) It wasn't a particularly powerful bike, Japanese but got us from A to B . We would quite often take off late morning and return in the early hours of the following morning having pub crawled our way

around Somerset..... :0....On a motorbike....Were we crazy?.....I will never know how we didn't get ourselves killed because we were never straight!!

Chapter Three..... Winter 1980

Music was my first love....

By the early winter of 1980, I began to take an interest in learning to play the guitar. This was inspired by Jon Mathias and Simon wills. Both were excellent guitarists. Jon, bless him, drew me out some chord shape in fret boxes (similar to tablature). Frankly, he and Zeni both deserved a medal for putting up with the infernal racket I made, trying to get the hang of the basic chords. I must've played a million bum notes in those first few weeks and it sounded dreadful with a very grating eternal fret buzz !!! Eventually, I began to master the basic techniques and learned a few cover songs "Wish you were here " by Pink Floyd was the first one. By the spring of 1981 I was writing my own songs.

I also began a new job. It was one of the first YOP schemes piloted by Thatcher's government but it was an interesting placement. The job was with the new works team at Wessex Water. My role was that of a chainman but I also drew up site plans in the office. I actually drew the site plans for the Riverside restaurant in Coxley near Wells! Their car park was prone to flooding and had to be built at a higher level. I got a measly £23.50 per week but the job was great and my co workers were brilliant, but it was only for six months because the company were pretty much railroaded into taking on an apprentice, without actually having a real job to offer me at the end of it. At least they were honest with me about that from the start and I was ok with that, as I knew I wanted to do something else eventually.

My main focus now, was centered on Stonehenge '81. From the late spring, my whole mindset was the summer solstice at Stonehenge. The time arrived and it did not disappoint. I loved every minute of it there! Zeni and I dropped a trip and we went for a wander. All went well and we followed any good music we could hear, which meant everywhere!. As we were coming up on our trips, we noticed a disheveled character, somewhat like a whacked out Phil Collins.The most distinguishing fact about the guy is that he had a rubber duck, a mallard drake on a leash.....A LEASH !! He kind of latched onto us and was plainly more off his trolley than we were!! He began to get a little too intense and we shook him off. then we met him again and again and then again, we lost him again and reveled in our freedom.We were giggling away like little kids, when we nearly came a serious cropper.

We found ourselves inside a circle of motorbikes, beautiful, shining, proper, all balls out British bikes. "Wow " breathed Zeni in awe, "These bikes are amazing ". She touched the tank of one of them and "clink " went her ring on the metal.....BANG! Suddenly, in a split second, we were surrounded by several very angry hells angels." Leave our fucking bikes alone " one of them growled. He was swarthy skinned , wearing a red bandana with glittering dark eyes. Terrified, we apologized profusely and explained that we were only admiring their bikes. After a few horrific moments, they let us off with a heavy warning. That was only because we were women, of that I'm sure. If we had been men....i wouldn't like to think. Lesson learned; we

enjoyed the rest of the festival to the max ! Sunday night, we went back home ready for work on the Monday.

We both worked hard and played hard too !! but Grahams love of alcohol, gradually became a rift between us. He became more and more ridiculous and outrageous every time he drank. The cracks soon began to show in our relationship and more often , I was being left behind at home waiting for him to return, absolutely plastered! He was never violent towards me, to his credit but he was oafishly stupid and cack handed, usually making a complete spectacle of himself. I became more impatient at him and we both began spending more time with our own friends, Gradually we grew apart.

Chapter four.....Autumn '81

Personal Jesus...

Geoff and Nad had known a couple of girls who used to live in Bridgwater but had moved to Cardiff. Zeni knew them as well , so I had already heard about them. One of them, Shaz , had moved back to Bridgwater and I finally got to meet her. We got on well from the start, I found her easy to talk to and enjoyed her company. She had left Cardiff and so had Helen, but Helen didn't return to Bridgwater , she had met a new guy and gone off travelling with him. I was surprised, one day when Shaz brought along another friend of Geoff and Nad's..... Enter Alan!!! He almost floated rather than walked, was about five foot five and had flowing, wavy, long strawberry blonde hair, long beard, the lot!! He was very ethereal and a real hippy (which Graham was not!). What was even better was the fact that he wasn't a pisshead ! So, my own personal Jesus had arrived, with his little black dog "Gyp" in tow, and as we spent more time together, I realized I was falling for him. He felt the same way and I split from Graham, who took it much worse than I expected :(With half of Bridgwater on my back about me leaving Graham, we decided that leaving was a good option. My close friends were supportive. Zeni and John put us up for a while at her mum's old flat and I got some serious support from Shaz when she overheard one of the big dope dealers bitching about me. She marched up to him and told him to mind his own business and live and let live.... pretty brave of her, as a lot of people wouldn't have stood up to him. Graham was furious and caught up with us, when we were on our way to Zeni's. He confronted Alan, towering over him, shouting almost unintelligibly. Alan, very bravely stood his ground, refusing to get into a fight and even refusing to put down his bags of shopping!!

By November, we moved in with an old friend of Alan's, a guy called Tom who lived in Creech Heathfield near Taunton. Two days later, I had a shock. Graham had somehow found out where I had gone and had asked one of the Headhunters to trash the place , beat Alan up and bring me back to Bridgwater. It turned out he had asked Adolf and he told Graham to grow up and accept the changes and that he wasn't going to do it because he considered me as much of a friend as Graham. I felt extremely honoured actually !! Graham asked a couple of the other members of the biker gang, but they all flatly refused. I felt very relieved for Alan and indeed Tom but..... I had other problems.

I began to feel extremely ill, with some weird flu type illness....I had violent headaches, extreme nausea, stomach cramps and the shakes.....badly. I sweated and shivered for what seemed like weeks. It was like the worst flu of my life, yet no one else caught it!!! Alan with his messianic brown eyes treated me with herbs, which slowly began to work. I felt physically better but suffered a heavy blanket of depression for months. Even smoking pot made me feel worse and I gave it up for a few months. I began to swap Alan's extensive knowledge of herbs, and traded my knowledge of Astrology, having self studied it since 1975 !! Alan lived on a very pure wholefood diet and I adapted by joining him in vegetarianism...Tom continued to eat meat, he loved his bacon butties and a very packed hash pipe every couple of hours. He was a nice guy but could be contrary, he loved an adherent routine and was very structured in his lifestyle, which sometimes clashed with Alan's rambling chaos!! Alan was as chilled out and laid back, as Gyp was mouthy and feisty !!! He was a gun dog crossbreed and barked at everyone and everything!! He had a hilarious range of vocal sounds and was very loyal and loving. I felt quite relieved that he had accepted me as part of the package especially as he was seven, so had been with Alan a long time. After chatting about festivals, we hit on the previous years festival in Wales..... where I had my seventeenth birthday. It turned out, amazingly, that it was Alan camped behind our tent and Gyp was the dog that kept barking at everyone !!!! I mentioned the birthday cake that got eaten... and here's the kicker... Gyp hadn't eaten his dinner later that day. Alan had thought he hadn't felt well but we soon realized, he was probably full of chocolate cake. Guess what?...Gyp adored chocolate!!!! It felt like fate had truly pushed us together and soon the family was ready to expand !!...Tom had a massive dog called Sam and he had bred a litter of puppies from him. Sam was a St Bernard crossed with a Bull Mastiff. Wellington the mum was a black Labrador crossed with a pointer. There were only three left from the litter. Rusty and She were the first two. Rusty was cream coloured and She was black, apart from white toes and a cravat. She had wavy fur like her mother and deep, very dark eyes that looked right into your very soul. Alan had already reserved She. There was also another puppy from the litter. He was half the size of She and Rusty, but he was black and white, cute and very hyperactive !!! He had been nicknamed Tiny Tim by Tom, as when he was born, he actually fitted into a standard sized mug !!! Cute or what :)He was full of character, even though he was tiny. He was the runt of the litter. Tiny chose me, rather than the other way round!! He tugged at the hem of my skirt as I went to the bathroom and I knew he was going to be my pal and companion for many years to come. He was adorable, cheeky, naughty and extremely hyperactive. If a dog ever had A.D.H.D, It was him. He would pull at, play with and pester the other puppies long after they had worn themselves out!!!!

Tom, meanwhile was having relationship problems, but then Angie.... his other half moved in with for a while with her two kids, Tammy 3 and Shane 1 and a bit. Tom was a mixed bag and kind of complicated . He could be charming, entertaining and very kind. Yet he could blow hot and cold and we began to feel "in the way " Angie was cool though, we got on well and she would often take me aside and ask for advice. As she was in her late 20's and I was just 18, I felt honoured. They eventually left and went to live in Much Wenlock in Shropshire and we were left there.... We had a very hard winter in the farmhouse and ended up pretty much living in the living room, as it was the only room we could afford to heat. I was still battling

depression and paranoia and gave up smoking dope, as it seemed to make it a lot worse. In Hindsight, it was all kind of related to my giving up alcohol, as I had drank pretty solidly for two years. My initial illness in the farmhouse was alcohol withdrawal and the severe depression that followed was utterly crippling.

Over time and into the spring of '82, our tenancy drew to a close and we were squatting the place in effect. Alan was a fantastic guy, very kind hearted, completely eccentric and didn't have a practical bone in his body!! He seemed to live purely for the ethereal / spiritual worlds. This was great for me in one way, as I needed a path to follow and being tired of boozing and partying, I wanted to do something worthwhile. I wanted to join Alan in saving the world and so my hippy trail had truly begun.

Chapter Five.....Spring 1982

Down the rabbit hole.

Among Alan's eccentricities was the hatred of living in a house and the longing to live completely at one with nature. His dreams were to live in a dugout hole, on the Quantock hills. He wanted to be self sufficient, close to nature and reject the values of society. I was cool with this and could see where he was coming from, but a hole in the Quantock hills? I had lost my virginity there only two years previously but I sure as hell could not envisage me living there.....

Alan had a plan....to be completely self sufficient, living in a dugout hole in the hills. He planned for the three dogs, She and Tiny mainly, as they were only months old and also a bit for Gyp, to be trained to hunt for their own food, live meat. !!! Tiny was zippy enough, he once caught a leveret but didn't have a clue what to do with it !! We for our part, would live off wild foods and probably what we could pilfer from allotments !!! Alan was vegetarian and lived as much of a wholefood diet as he could. How practical could this be ? We decided on having to buy certain foods that we couldn't find in the wild and even this I was dubious about, as Alan once famously ate a mushroom he thought edible and it turned out to be a Destroying Angel He was lucky he didn't die !! So all this did not settle comfortably with me. I wanted to live in a nice cozy, warm flat with heating, hot water, a comfy bed and four walls, but he hated the thought of this, so we had to come to some sort of compromise.

We decided to buy a van to live in and travel around the festivals in the summer. It wasn't ideal but it was something we both felt we could live with. Alan bought a brown, snub nosed Bedford CA van. We fitted a bed, storage space, water containers, equipment for cooking and everything else that we had, which wasn't a lot. I was limited as what I could bring from Bridgwater and Alan didn't believe in having a lot of possessions. We packed everything up and left the farmhouse.

For a couple of weeks before Stonehenge '82, we went pea picking to try and make a bit of money in order to eat and save for the petrol need for the Stonehenge trip. We pea picked and did a couple of strawberry picks too and made enough to survive. The farmers were reasonable and didn't mind us parking up on their land, which was a huge bonus as it saved petrol.

Crazy but, Alan didn't believe in motoring practicalities. It was more than likely the lack of money as well as his rebellious streak! He had no driving license, no insurance, no M.O.T and no car tax!! Even though my dad was a mechanic and I had heard of tax, insurance and definitely M.O.T.s ; I was too naive and star struck by hippydom to be too worried. So I went along with it, excited and enthusiastic, all ready to save the world.

The general public's reaction to us unkempt travelers was overall very negative. We were often shouted at, bad mouthed..." Scum of the earth " " Disgusting " "Get a job ", "You should be locked up ". Worse was when we would park up somewhere and we would get abuse from people yelling at us that we couldn't park there, not even overnight. Occasionally we would get a surprise reaction. I will never forget one time, we were in a garage, getting some petrol and a woman got out of her car and headed over to us. She was blatantly wealthy, very well dressed and dripping with expensive jewelry. We expected a mouthful of abuse, or worse but she shocked us with her words "Good for you, Fair play to the both of you! I wish I was young enough to be able to take off in a van and be free... Good luck to you " and with that , off she went!! So it wasn't all bad vibes, we did get the odd positive response and it cheered us up immensely.

We did get a few problems with the police, usually driving document related, but I remember one curious young police officer from Creech St Michael, asking us if we "Had any of them magic mushrooms in there ? " when he saw Alan's herb collection, he soon gave up on deciding to search the van . He was a nice bobby and decided to turn a blind eye after all !!
BEANFIELD ANNIVERSARY.....

Chapter six.....Stonehenge 1982.....

It's a New Age...

Stonehenge '82 was a pure victory for me. The van just about made it there and we parked up ready for the fun and festivities. Five minutes there and I spotted Tiny haring out of someone's tent with a string of sausages!!!! Bloody hell, That dog!!!

Stonehenge '81 was a weekend party where me, Graham and our friends smoked dope, drank cider and took acid. This time I was no weekender.It was pure heaven and the life I had craved for so long. We met some wonderful and interesting people from all walks of life. The festival folk themselves were like a tribe, almost a village, as each person had their own particular trade or talent. Among the convoy/ new age travelers were mechanics, builders, woodworkers, stonemasons, gardeners, teachers, doctors of alternative medicine, astrologers, and artists, dancers and musicians a plenty plus of course various drug dealers !!!! I did enjoy getting to know the people living this life for real....all the time. It was a free kind of life, back to basics, no trappings of a house or job and the so called normal society . Normal society so far, had let a lot of us down in one way or another, and I wanted a new way. Fresh air and living close to nature was a kind of paradise for me, although the physical way of life was quite hard work. Collecting wood and water was heavy work and time consuming. Also cooking for between five and twenty people was mental, especially for an inexperienced eighteen year old!!

Around this time, I started my Tolkien obsession. I remembered my mum reading the books to me as a child and had read them again, during my time in the farmhouse. Everyone seemed to be or represent a character, I felt quite elven at times, though I probably had more the mentality of a Hobbit!!! Alan reckoned I was like Goldberry, a female water spirit in the Silmarillion series, wife of Tom Bombadilo!

Interestingly I met Chris and Helen too. Helen was Shaz 's sidekick back in the Bridgwater days and though I had already met Shaz, here was my chance to meet Helen. Helen was living on a lime green/ bottle green coach with her fella Chris. They had just had their first child, a little girl called Crystal. Although I never got as close to Helen as I did Shaz, she was lovely and would occasionally pop round and ask if we had any milk or spare wood. Chris tried to help Alan with our van, which wasn't starting up anymore.

I was shocked one afternoon, as after watching a few bands, I went back to our van to find another couple asleep in it!!!..... For one horrible moment , I thought I had gone to someone else's van but soon realized, by the faces of the couple who woke up, that it was them who had made the mistake. The small dark haired woman was shakily apologizing and looked quite frightened that I would hit her. I told her not to worry and after they left I checked that nothing was missing. Of course nothing was but we didn't have much in the way of possessions anyway, just lots of books and herbs!!!

The summer solstice came and once again , we were in the centre of the sacred stones. Weddings, hand fasting's and even baptisms were performed, among drumming, guitars, penny whistles and a massive celebration of life. As always , when i looked up to the sky, the sky seemed to spin and become so alive. I really did feel the pulse of the whole universe in that place.

I loved living in the van, as it had more space than a tent and somehow felt more real...The music was a big part of Stonehenge for me and I saw some great bands. Hawkwind, Misty 'n' Roots, Inner City Unit, Red Ice, The Wystic Mankers (brilliant!!), The Enid and good old all time favourites, Here and Now :).

I saw some ugly scenes or rather heard them. One in particular stood out for me. I saw a large hippy guy with a cap and robes sat in a bender, having a very heated discussion with some very irate hells angels. I knew to steer clear but this guy was pleading and desperately trying to reason with these guys. I knew

how unreasonable they could be but couldn't imagine the hippy guy being interested in their bikes and did wonder what all the tension was all about.

Perhaps the funnest people I met at Stonehenge were three Scottish guys. They all had broad Glaswegian accents. Free, Jon and Jim (or Red as he was known) Jim and Jon were brothers and damn good on the guitar too. Free was a definite one off!! He was a little wiry guy, great fun, massive sense of humour and with crazy frizzy hair, pretty much shaped like Krusty the Clown in the Simpsons!!! We had some wicked guitar jams together and started a brilliant friendship.

We met all sorts of people, some were plain wacky! One guy, called Adam, he was a lovely guy was talking about wintering in Iceland.... I found this ironic, but it was good when he offered me a job, painting his land rover. He was heading to place called Skogaheimer, to join some spiritual cult. It took me three or four days to do it, but it looked good and he paid me.

He was a pure dreamer but he was honest and ethical and he began to come round and visit us.

Soon the main part of the festival was over and it was us travelers/convoy left. The weekenders had all gone back to their cozy homes and jobs. A lot of us were signed up for litter picking, as we did prefer to leave the site clean and tidy. We were paid twenty pounds per day and it was amazing what we would find. We found, money, tents, hash a plenty and even a few trips and speed wraps!! At least we had a good income for a week and some good finds too. There was soon talk of travelling on to the next site....Our name was changing too.....

Chapter Seven.....Greenham Common Summer 1982

Rainbow Warrior.....

Greenham Common was a name on everyone's lips, and the buzz was that we were taking our Peace Convoy there; as a protest to the storing of cruise missiles and their warheads there. Also as a support to the women that were already camped there, some of them since 1981.

During the hub bub of site meetings and talk of this; I got to know some of the iconic hippy characters, the more well known ones and certainly the respected ones that others looked up to. I met Tony from the Tibetan Ukrainian Mountain troop. These guys travelled the festivals in the summer, and during the winter, actually travelled to Tibet and Nepal and wintered abroad in many places.

There was also the Inequitable Sid Rawle and the ethereal spiritual master Jon Pendragon. Jon Pendragon was one of the most amazing and stand out characters for me at the time. Though he was shorter than me, he seemed to stand incredibly tall and had perfect posture. (Probably years of yoga). He had a full beard and a mane of the most amazing red/brown hair ever. It was blatantly years of henna but with his brightly coloured clothes, it made his brilliant blue eyes stand out. I remember overhearing him talking to someone about ley lines, which was a favourite subject of mine at the time. I've always had the utmost respect for him; as he was a genuine, he meant it with his heart and soul.

Sid Rawle was a larger than life character. He was a bit portly and dressed either in robes or a blue or orange boiler suit!! (inspiration for Slipknot maybe !!) He was very friendly and otherwise known as the king of the hippies. He was once reputed to saying that he thought he was Henry the Eighth in a past life..... well he did like the ladies !! I soon realized that he was, in fact, the guy who was pleading and trying to reason with the hells angels.....His partner at the time Jules, was brilliant, I loved her down to earthness!! They had just had another child..... a baby boy named Ra.

So, the plan was to head to Greenham common and set up our own camp to support the women already there protesting. We created a festival event known as " The cosmic counter cruise carnival" to be started on June 30th 1982.

The day started in a hub bub of expectation and excitement. We tried once again to start our van up but she wasn't having any of it!! Eventually, someone agreed to tow us, all the way from Stonehenge to Greenham Common. Our new name was hurriedly being painted onto

peoples vans, trucks, buses and coaches.... PEACE CONVOY. The less artistic had it stenciled on the sides of their vehicles. We were so last minute that I scrawled it on to both sides of our van, in yellow road marking crayon!!!

It looked one hell of a sight, slowing snaking it's way out of Stonehenge. Hundred of cars, buses, vans and trucks all in a convoy, travelling the road to Greenham. It was a very slow process, as people's vehicles broke down and others stopped to help them. This was what I loved, the proof that we were one family and that we were about peace , love and helping one another. So although it wasn't a long journey in distance... Stonehenge to Greenham Common near Newbury, Berkshire; it was the slow trundle of the vehicles travelling in convoy, what a sight it looked!

Close to destination, it became apparent that there was a blockade and swarms of police everywhere. Outside the base entrance, the convoy ground to a halt, while some sort of negotiations took place. This took ages and I have no idea of the politics of what did eventually gain our entry to the site. Alan got a snap of paranoia and ditched his tiny wrap of speed out of the van window; as he flicked the screwed up wrap, he nonchalantly, yet cheekily, whistled the theme from Z cars !! He became even more worried, when he noticed the discarded wrap had not gone the distance he thought and there were a few tense moments, as the police patrolled up and down the queue of vehicles.

Next thing I knew, I could see Jon Pendragon walking, towards our van, carrying a small bunch of brightly coloured flowers. He spotted me and handing me the posy, he told me to go and hand them to the nearest police officer!! As a very young, naïve and starry eyed eighteen year old hippy, I thought that my "moment had arrived !" The police officer I picked was in his mid fifties and wearing a flat hat as opposed to the helmet. I handed him the flowers with my sweetest smile and said "these are for you, and for peace ". He looked painfully bemused and embarrassed and not wanting to seem horrible or soft to his colleagues; he quickly stuffed them into his pocket, out of sight!! I walked back to the van, swathed in the victory of love and light !! HaHaHa a true child of the sixties.....

The blockade somehow, was overcome and we were towed onto site. I think they managed to find a different way on to the site by going around the back. I remember it was pretty bumpy but eventually victory was ours! This was the so called Green gate, the neighbouring gate to the main gate where the women were....Our camp was the site for the COSMIC COUNTER CRUISE CARNIVAL. There it was Greenham Common in all it's glory, sat in woodlands, mostly silver birch and a lot of bracken that had been burnt down. It left a fine black dust which got absolutely everywhere. At this point, no one cared about the dust There was a carnival atmosphere and an air of victory and celebration. No sooner had I stepped out of our van, when I was accosted by Sid Rawle. He was looking worried and holding his newborn son, "I can't find Jules anywhere, please could you look after Ra while I go and look for her?" and with that, he handed me his newborn son and off he went!

I was quite popular with kids but newborn babies? Forget it!! I think he was hungry because he screamed the place down, quite rightly, sensing and smelling that I was not his mum. I had a bit of trouble stopping him crying, in the end I walked around with him singing to him a couple of my own songs and it actually started to work. By the time he had properly chilled out, Sid and Jules came back, both grateful to me. I gladly handed Ra back, relieved and

deciding I was never to have children. Sid told me I was I natural mother, I disagreed but he said "We'll see!!"

Word must've got out because the following morning, the festival had more than quadrupled in size and we had neighbours!! A ginger head popped out of the tent right next to our van. "Excuse me, do you mind if I fry an egg on your fire?" Of course I agreed and we began a friendship. It turned out he had taken his first acid trip the night before!! I found that he too, played guitar and for a seventeen year old, played pretty well. He even taught me to play Jumpin' Jack Flash by the Rolling Stones!!

There was plenty of wood available and temporary standpipes had been put up by the roadside for water. The festival continued to grow and I was delighted when Pete and Gerry arrived in Boo Boo their bus. They made their living by cooking good, wholesome burgers, meat and vegetarian and teas and coffees. By the weekend, the festival was massive and something happened that made me sure that I was part of a revolution....the new age uprising.

I know very little of the politics of what went on and what was involved. All I know was my favourite hot knife seller, the Venusian, was one of seven people who were part of an active protest. These seven people were involved with pulling down part of the perimeter fence of the military base.

One afternoon, I was sat in Pete and Gerry's bus when their seven year old son Keith ran in saying "There's police everywhere" I looked out of their window and was horrified to see the place swarming with police and they were on a mission. It turned out they were looking for these seven people who became known as the "Greenham Seven". The Greenham seven were responsible for the breaking down of the perimeter fence surrounding the base. I remember seeing one of the pillars spray painted with the words "DOWN WITH THE SYSTEM" Everywhere I looked, the police were storm trooping the whole site. They seemed to be coming from every direction and it got quite scary. I was worried for Alan as I didn't know where he was. Then the police eventually left, satisfied with their arrests and we were left in relative peace. Shaken but relieved.

We soon became a whole community and a rainbow village was born. At one point we had our own mail address and post office. I was delighted to receive a postcard and letters from my mum there. Also, the word was put out to send out postcards, addressed from the Greenham rainbow village, These all had to say "WE WANT PEACE" on the back so that the delivery postman and all the postal workers in whichever town they went to, would see the message that we were bringing . My mum helped with being a happy recipient! :)

The guy acting as the site post office was getting pally with Alan. Our van was still bugged and Alan discovered that he was a mechanic. It looked ridiculous with the engine standing on the ground outside the van. After hours of talking, Alan and Pete the Bus , as he was known, came to a deal. We agreed that he would fix our van in exchange for me working on his wholefood shop/ stall and looking after his three children.

Pete the Bus was a character! He was fair haired, tall gangly and freckled, talked a lot but said little really!! He came from Wales, in a stunning old school style bus from probably the

50's maybe earlier. The bus was beautiful and housed Pete, his wife Fran, who I liked enormously. She was small, dark and also freckled and was at least as fertile as Jules, Sid Rawles's lady !. They had three children, by this point ,Brian who was four, Angie was three and Ashley was one and a bit!! They were hectic kids and I wasn't best amused by my part in the deal,after my experience of spontaneous babysitting of newborn Ra !! Brian was full on but Angie always seemed to be the one to get into trouble, poor maid. As the middle child , I felt sorry for her. Ashley her younger brother was extremely active and hectic and took a lot of time and attention. What a handful!!!

I did enjoy working on the wholefood shop counter. I already knew a bit about wholefoods and what beans were what. I packaged up various flours, beans, rice's, bulgur wheat, buckwheat among many others. I also got to know more about herbs and with Alan's love and knowledge of herbs that I had gleaned and gathered, I decided to learn more about them and their medicinal healing qualities. Already the seeds had been sown for the following year.

One day stood out for me running that stall. I had a stressful morning with Pete and Fran's kids and after lunch, I began work at the shop. It was a hot summer that year and I had already seen people naked at festivals. It never bothered me but I never had enough confidence to go naked myself!!! Lol One lady, I'll never forget her, came up to the counter and asked for some muesli and mung beans. I went to put them into plastic bags.....Mistake !!! :0 This lady was most unhappy that I was using PLASTIC, she had brought her own material bags along. She was completely in the buff !! Well, fair enough, I took her point, We were all trying to save the planet and as a customer, it is entirely her choice. For a split second, I saw how ridiculous it all seemed !!! There I was.....eighteen years old, confronted by an angry naked woman, angry about plastic bags. In that second I thought " so this is my life "then saw the funny side of it all!! I apologized profusely and did as she asked and chalked it all up to experience!

The days passed, the bands were brilliant and it was a happy, laughing, vibrant place. I carried on working for Pete and shared my' quite good at the time' knowledge of Astrology with Alan. I began a love affair with studying herbs and Alan quickly learned quite a bit about Astrology. It was a great period of learning and celebration, although, there soon were rumblings of discontent in our new age paradise. A new age paradise next to hell. Still the engine remained outside of our van and came no nearer to being fixed. I began to worry about what would happen after the festival.

Site meetings soon became a regular occurrence. They were always very interesting, sometimes humorous and attended by lots of people. The Tally valley people were there. Brig and Ric the vic, Yes, an actual vicar, who was an alternative, part of the rainbow tribe. They were such lovely people.

These site meetings were somewhat entertaining at times! They dealt with the usual festival complaints; Hard drugs being sold on site, people cutting down live wood, rip off merchants and drongos. A big one was that some people were not burying their shit properly and making a general mess and nuisance of themselves.

A major beef people had with the organizers was the trouble, weeks ago, at Stonehenge with the hells angels.It did get bad, resulting in a food van being set on fire The debate got heated

and people began to really kick off at Sid. I began to feel very sorry for him because I clearly remember walking past Sid, in a bender, with a group of hells angels and he WAS trying to reason with them...peacefully.....

That was it, He snapped! Sid stood up, purple in the face and he exploded. "I was in that bender with those hells angels for four hours trying to talk and come to a compromise " He was genuinely upset and I didn't blame him one bit. "He ain't lying" I whispered to the woman , sat next to me "I saw him ". In my own experience, the hells angels were ok as long as you STAY AWAY FROM THEIR BELOVED BIKES!

There were very cool people at that festival. Amanda from Sheffield, not much older than me, stunning, dark skinned and amazing hair. I had many a good smoke and a laugh with her. There was also this other guy. I never got his name but for about two weeks, he would come round, every afternoon, to visit us. He was very tall and dark and had a northern accent . He would always say the same thing. "Got any skins and baccy and I'll roll a joint , Yeah? " He would roll the most lethal joints, get us totally mashed and off he would go. I'll never forget him!!

There were eight gates surrounding the military base. The women's camp was at the main gate. We were at the Green gate. There was a blue gate, yellow gate, orange gate, red gate, indigo gate and purple gate. They were all named after the colours of the rainbow!! The women at the main gate would have nothing to do with us because there were men on the site! Only two or three of them bothered with us. I do remember, Jill and Arleen were a gay couple and we had some great times with them. They would pop over and have a drink with us.


Our days were busy with surviving; food prep, wood runs, which were easy . We were surrounded by trees and fallen branches. I learned soon, how to pick the dead wood, as live wood doesn't burn properly anyway plus the last thing I wanted to do, was kill the trees. Tiny loved the wood runs and quickly learned how to help us by carrying wood back in his mouth. Occasionally, he'd find an enormous branch and try to drag it back to our fire. Unfortunately, he'd sometimes take out a few legs in the process!!

Water runs were now a bit more time consuming . At first, we had a standpipe, out by the main road. This was taken away after the bulk of people had left, so we would load everyone's water containers onto one truck and then it would be driven into town, all the water containers filled up , then brought back to site. The weather was pretty good and some of went off to a river nearby to bathe. Other ways to wash were strip washing, which is what I mainly did. The other alternative was something that Sid Rawle invited me to. A sweat lodge. Heated stones

in the middle of a tipi. Water poured carefully on top, steam sauna a la Mother Earth. It did

Rainbow News ☾
AND SOME THOUGHTS FROM SOME OF THE RESIDENTS.

The door
Yes, door
Any door
On any floor.
In any city anywhere.
Go now
Put down the book
Slip quickly out
Ignore the shout
Don't look back
Still here. L.



Here at the Rainbow we live with the noise of the construction of the missile base, the eerie noise that go on into the night - a constant reminder of the tragedy that is befalling on around us - the work of the warmongers.

Frightening as this construction is, we all have a greater fear - a fear of the apathy that lets it go on. It's so easy to forget about the annihilation these missiles will cause - here we can't forget.

There's a terrible power behind that gem, but we've got the power to conquer it - all we need is you and people like you to come here, deal with these crazy people that we can live happily, together without their bombs.

M.

I LOVE GREENHAM COMMON - J.

From Sunny, aged six, when he came to visit us from London
The colours are nice here, and it smells nice

* * * * *

We are getting a little magazine together, a compilation of everyone's thoughts and talents. This sheet is a taste of what's to come.

Some of us went to the local carnival last week. We got a pretty good reception and there was a beautiful picture in the local newspaper of one of our ladies dancing nearly-naked, with a banner saying "make love not war." More about the carnival next week from those who were there.

About donations. Stamps would be a useful thing to send. Or money. We could use anything. Send to "Rainbow Peace Settlement, outside works entrance, USAF Greenham Common, Newbury, Berks." Better still, come here yourself.

We would love to see a tipi here.
We need a mechanic!
We have a regular sweat lodge now.

STOP PRESS... STOP PRESS... STOP PRESS... STOP PRESS... STOP PRESS
Court hearing between Newbury District Council and Persons Unknown at the High Court of Justice, Aldwych, London WC2 on Tuesday, fourteenth day of September, 1982, 12 o'clock mid-day. Tentative.

WARR

sound like a nice idea, but I

was too shy to get naked in front of other people, no matter how liberated they were !! He did offer a few times but I stuck to the river and strip washes!

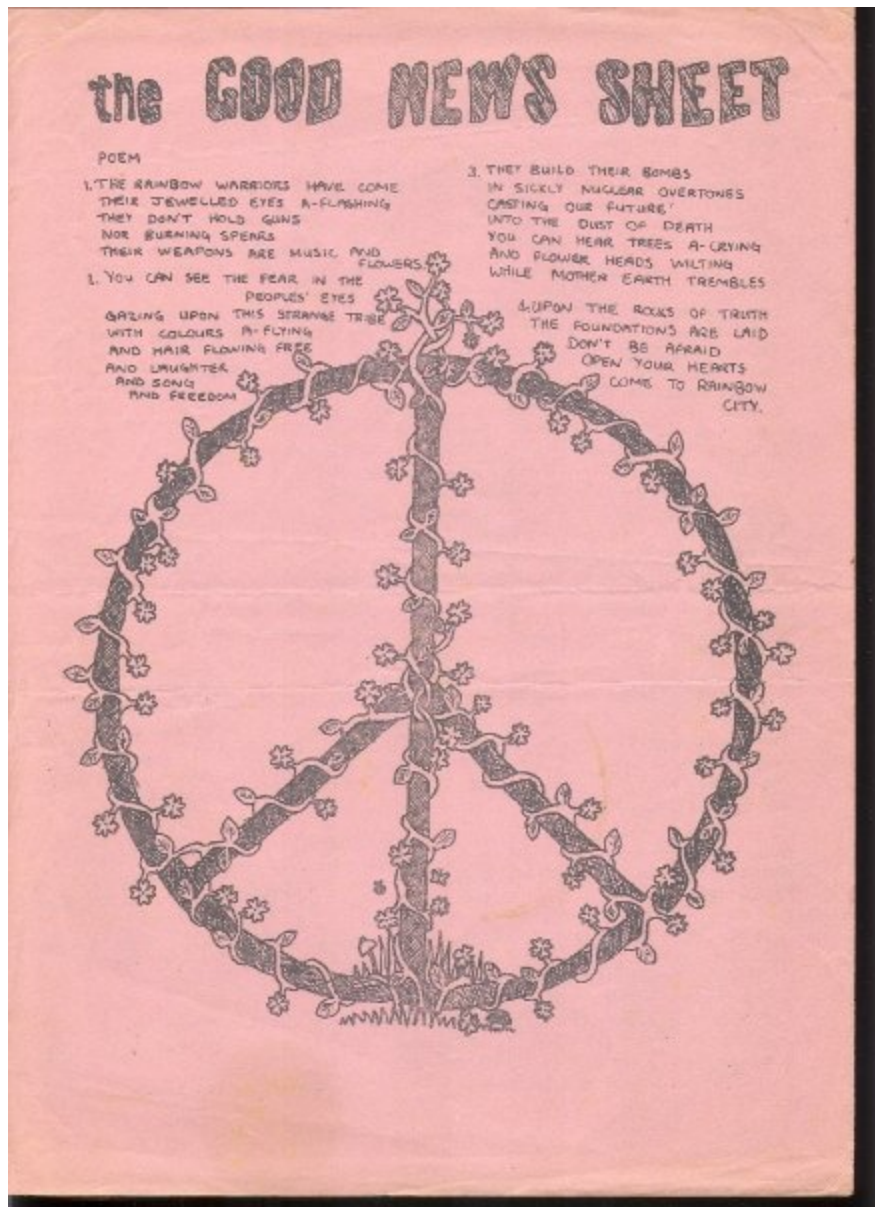
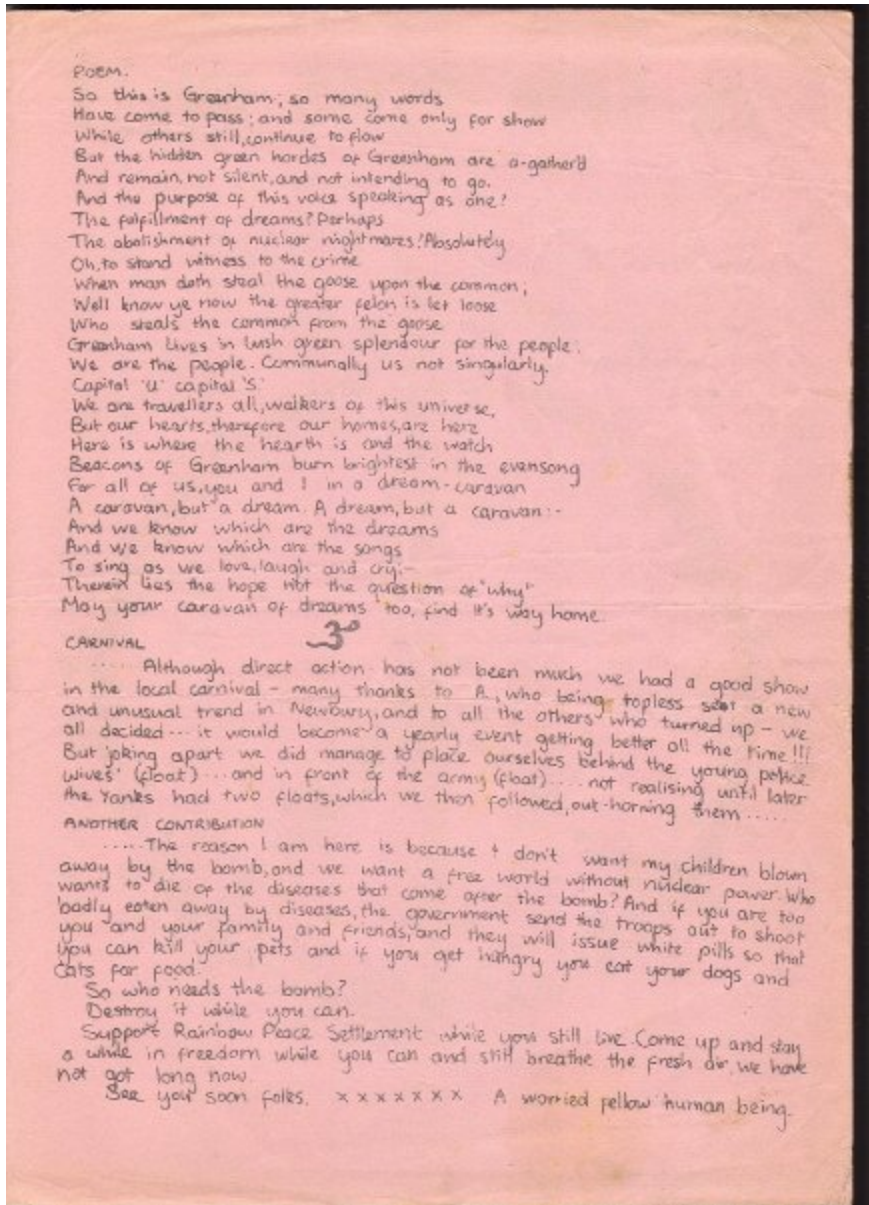


PHOTO BY HAZE EVANS

We even had a weekly newsletter, actually printed out. There were several, usually covering subjects, such as festival living and tips, politics, the politics of common land, travelers rights, and art and poetry. In one of these newsletters, I was lucky enough to get one of my poems printed. :) It was a poem typical of my dappy idealism at the time !!! The first line of that poem, became a song title of a traveler anthem,

sang widely over the following few years. However, it originally, came from a native American



prophecy. PHOTO BY

HAZE EVANS

The rainbow village eventually diminished in size and gradually small groups of travelers left. Pete the Bus left and so also the Greenham site post office :(. Peter Potter also left. He was a real potter and a very clever, quiet intelligent man, very tall and solid, he was cool. After a few weeks there were only about 8 to 10 trucks/ living vehicles left on site. We were still there because our van STILL hadn't been fixed. The new engine was a dud. In effect, we were stranded there. Not only that but there were now two engines outside our van :0 . Although the Cosmic Counter Cruise Carnival was over, our rainbow community was still there and we were proud of it. We got into a daily living routine and trod lightly upon the earth. Right next to the gates of death... we were living life. The days were spent getting wood,

water, food supplies, improving the environment, cooking and cleaning. We cooked our food on a camp fire and washing up was done by heating water in the pans, then pouring in to a bowl to wash the dishes. The evenings were a celebration every time. We played music, drank and smoked until the early hours of the morning. It was a simple yet joyous life.



PHOTO BY HAZE EVANS

We were sited at the green gate and the women's peace camp was the next gate up. The main gate. Pretty much all of the women would have nothing to do with us. This was because there were men at our camp!!! A couple did though. I remember them well. Jill and Arleen. They were lovely, slim, short fair hair, both of them. They would have passed for sisters. They often popped by with some food or other essential supplies and would stay for a drink or smoke!

Food shopping was usually a case of Alan or me walking the two miles into Newbury and buying our food. Many of the shops refused to serve us but we found the most amazing wholefood store, which sold the best honey ever. I wish I could remember their name. SUN FOODS I think it was. We would carry our shopping back, the two miles to site, all three dogs in tow. I spent my 19th birthday at Greenham. I loved it, Alan made me a special meal and we had a good smoke, a couple of ciders and one of the best jam sessions I can remember. In between the survival routine of wood, water, food, hygiene, we read a lot. Alan studied astrology, I studied herbs. I read some good books, including the first in the trilogy of the "Illuminati" books :) Brilliant stuff. We also played Cribbage !! Alan taught me to play. We had

a deck of cards and he had a board, we had plenty of matchsticks !!! We had a lot of fun with this and my fave card, of course, was the Jack of Spades !!!!

We made some cool friends among the people living with us at Greenham. The main ones I remember were: Rainbow Dave. He was a lovely soul, very quiet, said little but when he did speak, everyone listened. Though not tall in stature, he stood solid and proud and sported a fine beard. He had a dog called Max. He was a large, black and tan Alsatian. Tiny, my dog, absolutely HATED him. They were arch enemies!!! Sadly, I never got to have a proper conversation with Dave, because we were always separating a massive dogfight!! Tiny was smaller than Max, and Max would kick his arse every time but Tiny never gave up challenging him !! Alan was very good friends with Dave. Jan and Adrian: Adrian was a few years younger than Jan. He was tall, slim, dark and bearded. He was very softly spoken, kind and generous. Jan was in her forties, An utter powerhouse, outspoken, supercharged and friendly. She was Irish, had dark hair and twinkly blue eyes. I found her fascinating. She had been a traveler for years, super wise and I really looked up to her. I liked her forthrightness, no bullshit attitude and she always had time for me.

Max and Jenny: I think they came from Loughborough. They had the most beautifully painted converted post office truck. I fell in love with that truck, with its rainbow, suns rays and tree of life painted on the back doors. Max was tall, slim, bearded and wholehearted about everything. He was a real giver and was totally into the community spirit of the place. Jenny was little, very fair haired and the kindest person you could meet. Her quietness was a hidden strength in her, she had an inner calm that was unusual. I always remember that she would fast once a week and on that same day, she would bake delicious cakes and biscuits for the

whole site. Not many people would do that. They were proper New Ager's.



Steve and Wendy: They arrived in September. They had parked their van transit van near to ours and became our neighbours. I got on fantastically with them. Steve was a stocky chap with long brown hair and a mad beard and moustache. He carried a wooden staff, hand carved and was very sure of himself. He was a likeable, generous guy and claimed to have met Joe Cocker !! He didn't like the guy !!! Wendy was a dark, petite Jewish lady who I instantly hit it off with. Wendy had a wicked sense of humour and was lively, fun and supportive. She made me laugh so many times and could bring light relief to many a stressful situation. I remember there had been an argument over some wood on site. Someone had claimed the collected wood as theirs and Max had disagreed and claimed it as the "people's wood ". Later on that day, Wendy was sweeping the dust out of their van, held up the brush like a sword and shouted " It's the people's dust !!! " I roared with laughter. Much as liked Max, Wendy never failed to

make me laugh about anything. Sadly they didn't stay much longer than a few weeks.

Bones: Bones was a punk, he was about my age, which was refreshing as everyone else was much older than me. He was hooked on glue sniffing poor guy but Alan and I managed to get him away from the glue, with the odd smoke of grass. He was a nice guy and had interesting taste in music. He didn't stay long but we had a positive effect on his life, which I was chuffed about.

Laslo: Laslo was an amazing guy , he was Hungarian, dark with interesting green eyes. The main thing I remember about him was that he was a brilliant guitarist. We had some awesome jamming sessions together, which often lasted to three in the morning!!

Steve the Snake: Steve was an ex biker for sure, strong and not a man to be messed with but he was a really cool guy. He kept a massive python in his van :) Steve was quiet, strong and a good person to have at Greenham

The Newcastle bunch: These were Mick, Kev, Dave and Haze. They ran a wicked café at Greenham .Mick and Kev were hilarious, almost like brothers with their banter!! Dave was quieter, a little surly, dark long hair and he was fairly practical. Haze, I absolutely loved. She was curvy, had sparkling blue eyes and an accent that I could listen to forever!! Haze was the kindest, most generous lady I could wish to meet. She brought real life to the camp and everyone enjoyed her company. It was impossible not to!! Kev was a sunny, lively soul and would spend hours throwing sticks for Tiny and the other dogs.

Carl from Liverpool. He was young, probably early twenties so a bit older than me!! He had dark hair, longer than shoulder length and a leather jacket!! I liked him but he did manage to upset some people!! He had a good heart and was at least honest enough to admit when he was wrong.sometimes!

We found the press coverage of the whole Stonehenge to Greenham convoy and the Greenham seven incident quite hard to cope with: "GUN CONVOY " screamed the headlines. We were horrified at this, as most of us were peaceful people. As usual, it turned out to be a few idiots, spoiling our name for everyone to see and the British public believed it. Even the Newbury doctor's practices refused to see any of us. Luckily my herbal knowledge began to come in handy.Some of the shops would not serve us but on the other hand some people were brilliant and brought us food, water, wood and words of support.



In the evenings, after everyone had eaten, we would all group together for a drink and a smoke. This would result in a huge jamming session with several guitars, drums, pipes, flutes and penny whistles. Most nights these jams would go on until around three am!! I loved it as I could play reasonably well with my own set list and a large set of covers! "Stairway to Heaven" Led Zeppelin, "Southern Man" Neil Young, also, "Ohio" And "Cowgirl in the sand" "Wish you were here" Pink Floyd and a whole host of Bob Dylan songs. In particular the protest songs :) I bet sometimes, the M.O.D. heard our music!!



The worst thing about living there was the black dust. This was caused by the burning down of a lot of bracken, and the dust simply got everywhere :(No matter how hard I tried, it was virtually impossible to keep ourselves or anything else clean. I began to suffer from rashes and diarrhoea. Worse still, the three dogs and a couple of others, caught Distemper. Poor Gyp, She and Tiny had snotty noses, high temperatures and runny eyes. Alan found a herbal cure in some book about it, as we could not afford vet bills, plus he was highly suspicious of vets anyway. We bathed their eyes with cold black tea and eyebright and washed their mouths with lemon juice in water. This helped with the symptoms and Alan concocted a herbal mixture containing, comfrey, sage, mullein, star anise and thyme among others. I could kind of understand the Distemper outbreak, as a lot of the festival dogs had never been inoculated against the disease. The other problems were rashes, runny shits, constant headaches. We began to wonder if these illnesses were being sent over the fence.... no really. Everyone got ill for a period and it was suspicious. One day an eviction notice was served, but as no one would give their real names. Everyone answered to the name of..... John Smith !!! In the end the eviction notice had to be made out to the name of John Smith !!

Chapter eight..... Greenham Common Autumn 1982

We've got the biggest balls of them all.....

I remember one Thursday, it was shopping day, and Alan needed a lift to go and get our supplies. The only person who had enough fuel in their truck was Steve the Snake. He was a generous guy, so he gave Alan a lift. Unbeknown to Steve or his two biker friends, who were visiting that day, Alan had dropped a tab of acid. This was probably not the wisest decision to make! The inside of Steve's van was awesome. There were loads of pictures of skulls, snakes, death and scantily clad females on the brink of murder! Basically, it was a typical vans interior of an ex biker! The van sped away from Greenham, as Alan started to come up on his trip! It was dark in the back but light enough to see the gory and menacing images around him and Alan began to wonder... His thoughts echoed, "Am I really being taken to Newbury?" "Do I know these people?" Then the music kicked in: LOUD. It was the AC/DC'S Big Balls song! "Where am I going?", thought Alan, as the music screamed "I got big balls." Alan began to get a little worried. "

You got big balls", "He got big balls" Alan's thoughts began to scramble, as the L.S.D. took a stronger hold. "She got big balls" "They're taking me somewhere else... Am I going to get out of this alive?" "But WE GOT THE BIGGEST BALLS OF THEM ALL"colours were mingling, the fear was electrifying, his hair literally, almost on end "oh Shit" He thought, the van stopped. Light flooded into the back, as Steve opened up the back door. Blinking wildly, Alan saw that he was indeed in Newbury, as promised. The relief was immense but then he did confess to me later on that he felt a bit silly having those thoughts!!! I said it might have been a bit silly dropping acid and going into Newbury anyway!!! We had a good laugh about it and it became one of Alan's trademark stories to come!

One night, someone offered us some Datura to try. I felt a bit iffy about this, as I had heard dodgy stories about the stuff but we did give some a try. I didn't notice a lot happening, except things seemed slower and a bit more colourful. Then Tiny and Max had a huge fight. I hated dogfights with a passion and sat back. They erupted again, right near our fire and then both dogs were actually stood in the flames. I freaked, and leapt behind me, towards our van from where I was sat, something caught on my jumper and pulled over books and herbs, on top of me, in the van. When the dogs were split up and I recovered, I was aghast to see I had actually leapt about nine feet into our van. I couldn't do that again if I tried!. I had read tales of how Datura could make people superhuman and be able to do impossible feats. Well, that was one of them!! I was amazed and luckily, this time neither dog was badly hurt.

One other stand out evening went off like a bang..... Someone had somehow, managed to get hold of a flare and they set it off!! I didn't see this happen, as I was sat in the van reading about the medicinal uses of herbs. I do remember intense floodlights from the base, a LOT of activity, sirens going off and guards running around with barking dogs!! They even flew a couple of chinooks overhead. It certainly set off a huge panic within the base and some ironic humour in the camp.

Autumn deepened and the colours changed to a glorious red, orange, yellow and brown and we had some nice evenings. The leaves seemed golden and I felt like I was transported to Lothlorien in the Autumn..... except Mordor was just next door, the other side of the fence. When the main part of the festival was over, two months prior, and the rainbow villagers were clearing up the site: I found a triangular shaped piece of wood with an eye, drawn in the centre. The words " Time is running out " were written underneath and it became so true in so many ways. We were there for a reason. To protest against the cruise missiles, war and everything else the greedy corporations stood for. A new age was coming soon, within two decades. I strongly believed that a new healing age would come and so time was running out... for the evil in the world but also time was running out for us as well. Rumours of court appearances and site evictions were getting stronger and I felt a growing sense of unease. The flies seemed to be increasing in their foul numbers rapidly and even though we kept our camp clean and buried our shit properly, they pervaded us every where. Alan was normally such a "live and let live" type of person. He loved animals more than people and made no bones about it. One day they were particularly bad in our van. Alan and I went over to see Jan and Adrian, who had some cider and we had a couple of drinks. I stopped at less than one, the taste reminded too much of what I overdid only a couple of years ago!! Alan enjoyed it, which was a rare thing because he wasn't normally a fan of booze and very, very rarely drank at all. A while passed and Alan went back to the van to pick up a book he wanted to lend to Adrian. Jan and I chatted away and I realized that Alan had actually been quite a long time to just be picking up a book. I went back to the van and was both absolutely flabbergasted but highly amused at the sight that greeted me. There was Alan, furiously hitting and swiping at the flies, with the Hare Krishna magazine called "Back to Godhead ! "Um, what are you doing?", I murmured. "I'm sending these flies BACK TO GODHEAD "!!!!He said, through gritted teeth. I found this incredibly amusing, as did every one else but poor Alan, he felt guilty for his "cider fuelled violence" because he was literally, one of those guys who would never hurt a fly !!!

During those autumnal weeks, we received visitors quite often. Someone would turn up with some grass or hash, and the call would begin "BOMBALEEEEEYYYY!! " This was a cue to get to who ever made that call. There would be a ceremonial chillum to pass around everyone in the camp who wished to participate. Someone would usually start drumming and the chillum was smoked and passed around "Boom shanka ".... It felt like a ritual, of a tribal togetherness. The best one was Bender Paul. He had one hell of a pair of lungs on him. When he yelled " Bombaley ", they must have heard it in Newbury!!! Good times. :)

Chapter Nine.

The Bell end from Bridgwater!!

It was a crisp but dry evening , when we were just getting the fire ready to cook our evening meal. Alan arranged the kindling and set light to the newspaper, tucked in beneath it. We were alerted to a rumbling sound, getting ever louder. Everyone got out of their trucks to see where the commotion was coming from. Rolling on to our camp was a long, beautifully painted and luxurious coach. Everyone waited to see who it was. It was someone flamboyant

and very showy and with an uncharacteristic amount of money.... plainly. The guy got out and my blood ran cold. :(I knew this guy and he was bad news. Yes, he did have plenty of money but he was into coke, in a big way and was a known nark in Bridgwater. He was a talented painter but a boastful wretch, grandiose, over confident and a madman. He spotted me and cried "It's little Rae !!" His frizzy hair seemed wilder than ever and his mad bug eyes gleamed with glee, as he headed over.

"Hey up, who this?" someone said as he swaggered over and pointed to his coach. " Meet Serenity ". Gob smacked, we headed towards the beast of a vehicle. I stepped in and it was like a palace. Wooden fitted, all varnished, luxurious, velvet curtains, plush wall hangings and fur rugs on the floor. I was pretty speechless and told him I had to go and help Alan with the dinner that we were making. I really couldn't bring myself to like the guy and couldn't wait to get out of there. Like a predator, he followed me outside. "What sort of pathetic fire is this? " he exclaimed loudly. "Come on , lets have a PROPER fire" What he did next was insane, shocking and downright dangerous.

He brought out a five gallon container filled with petrol and proceeded to pour it on to our fire...FUCKING IDIOT. Immediately, a barrage of flames bellowed out of the fire pit, meant for cooking on. Within seconds, those flames were nearly six to seven feet high and increasing rapidly. I moved quickly away, calling the dogs. Carl came over to help put it out. Followed quickly by Adrian and Mick and Kev. Alan erupted..... I began to feel really terrified, as the flames were licking the side of our van. Close to tears, I thought our home was truly going to be destroyed. Everyone got the fire under control and put out, as they did with the idiot who caused it. Steve came over and had a word with him. He returned to us and had the cheek to moan that we were missing out... big time! He went and drove off, in a right royal piss!!

Bollocks to him!! Our fire, was totally useless to cook on, as it stank of petrol. Luckily, Jan and Adrian had cooked extra food that night, and the following day, Alan dug out a new cooking pit. It was great how we all looked out for one another and took no crap from anyone , even if they seemed like a traveler!!

Some of the travelers, used what was termed as an Earth Oven. It was made into the earth itself, burrowing out the side of a raised mound or hump. Oven put in, a hole for the pipe and room to put the fire and wood to keep it going. Jenny had used one of these, in the past and was experienced in building, lighting and using an earth oven.. I was quite happy with our little fire pit and oven grille over the top!

Meanwhile, the dogs were poorly, they coughed, sneezed and were generally unwell. I desperately wanted to take them to the vets, but we had no money and there was no such thing as a P.D.S.A scheme back then, certainly not for us travelers anyway. I got very depressed about it, and stayed in the van a lot, reading and writing poetry. Alan wouldn't take them to the vets out of principal, he thought he could cure them using herbs. For Gyp and She, it did work. They began to turn the corner. They coughed much less, and their snots dried up. Poor Tiny was still pretty rough with it. One day, he started fitting. This is the secondary stage of Distemper and I began to panic.

Alan and I began an extensive and desperate search for the herb Skullcap. This was the best one we found, specifically for the second stage of Distemper. It was quite a hot day for the time of year, and we walked for miles and miles along the Kennet canal, hunting and

searching for the blue flowered, uncommon herb. We managed to harvest some very helpful herbs, almost every thing you could think of, except the one we needed the most. I got more and more upset as time went on, worrying about my still, shivering dog who was normally so lively and active. I stopped for a cigarette, and spotted a small, purple patch, in the distance. My heart was thumping as I drew closer, it could be... is it? I got all excited and called Alan over, "Is this it? " I asked. No it wasn't. DAMN. I was gutted beyond belief.

The plant I had found was in fact, Policemen's Helmets. True, they had similar shaped, purple blue flowers, but the flowers were much larger. I sat down on the canal bank and wept, thinking my dog was going to die. :(After a while, we walked on. It was getting later and I was giving up hope. Miraculously, Alan found a tiny patch of Skullcap. It was enough for two or three infusions. We thankfully and tearfully, harvested the plant and went back to site. The next day, Alan disappeared into Newbury and came back with good news. His mate at Sunfoods wholefood warehouse, had ordered some dried Skullcap and Alan had bought a 2 ounce bag :) Result ! Along with Goldenseal for Tiny's poor, gungy eyes, the Skullcap began to work and the fitting stopped. He certainly got no worse.

A couple of weeks later, though he was out of danger, I was worried that Tiny, never quite got back to his old self, and was too listless to even fight Max. I was at my wits end and I phoned my mum in desperation. Mum and Keith, bless them, told me they were coming up in a couple of days, to take me and Tiny back to theirs for a holiday. I will never forget how Alan cooked me sprats the night before I left. He really was a most excellent cook :) Keith drove the long distance from Bideford, North Devon, all the way to Greenham, in Berkshire. On the morning, before their arrival, it was raining steadily and we couldn't get our fire going, to make them a cup of coffee. Our van was a total mess, so Steve offered to drive his van over, next to ours; so that we could make them a brew and they could rest a while before the long drive back to Devon. They arrived and were happily sat in the back of Steve's van, snakes, skulls and naked women all around! Mum, sat on a fur rug, on top of a large black surrounded glass case, said "What is this big glass case, I'm sat on? " " Oh, that's Steve's python's cage" I replied..... She was gone!! I had never seen my mum move so quickly, ever!! I did feel a bit bad, as I had forgotten that she hated snakes and was terrified of them Oooops :o

So off I went, that was it with Greenham for a few weeks for me. I didn't yet know that it would be it for a few months, not a few weeks.

Chapter ten.....Westward Ho! North Devon October 1982

The Healing Sea.....

Staying at mum's was a luxury. We got back to their beautiful and immaculate home and the first thing mum did, before making me a cup of tea even; was run me a bath. Understandably, I must have stank. No amount of strip washing could get me clean at Greenham, the dirt was ground in, after the black dust incident. Laundering clothes was a monthly luxury, at a launderette, so my clothes smelled bad, wood smoke being one of the nicer odours!! That bath was much enjoyed and washing my hair was heaven, the water was an actual murky, grey- brown colour.

Mum and Keith were concerned about Tiny, so Keith booked a vets appointment and we took Tiny along to it. The vets were in Appledore and after a couple of injections, one being antibiotics and the other, against a rebout of Distemper. The vet said that Tiny was extremely lucky to have survived stage two of Distemper, as it nearly always resulted in fatality. Keith drove back towards Bideford and offered us all to go to Westward Ho! beach. I remember living there when I was eight and felt quite excited. When we got there and let Tiny off the lead, he was off!!..... He ran and bounced around like a nutter and headed straight into the sea!! I stared at mum..... "He hasn't been that energetic in weeks " I said. There was no way the vets treatment could have worked that instantly. It was definitely at this point, that Tiny discovered his love of the sea.

I had not long read the book, "Jonathon Livingstone Seagull " by Richard Bach. This is a short book, only about a half an hours read but it is brilliantly inspirational and has a powerful, spiritual message.As I walked along Westward Ho! beach, I saw a seagull, alone from the others, high circling about before taking a dive into another loop.. It was a moment of inspiration for me. I loved Westward Ho! It always seemed to open up spiritual doors for me. I took my acoustic steel string guitar to Devon and began a glut of songwriting.

It was strange being back in society again , so much had happened while I had been at Stonehenge and Greenham. I remember watching Top of the Pops with my mum and swearing that the singer was a female.....It was Boy George!!!! It demonstrated, just how far away from the mainstream I was and I liked it that way! Tiny adored westward Ho! He loved that beach and daily, his health visibly improved. His coat was bright and shiny, his eyes good and bright and he managed to put some weight back on. Certainly, he was happier, than he had been in a long time. I loved it at mums. I enjoyed being with my little sister Rebecca. We played games together and I taught her how to draw and paint rainbows!!

My days were filled with being with mum, helping her look after Rebecca and at the weekends, going out somewhere, usually to the beach, Tiny's favourite :) The privilege and luxury of eating loads of gorgeous food, hot baths... Every day :) Tv, radio, videos and fun with Rebecca and Tiny. He filled out and was looking healthier, than I had ever seen him. His white fur was Super white and he positively bounced with energy and life. Staying with mum did wonders for me. I put on some weight and benefited emotionally and spiritually. Westward Ho! inspired me beyond belief and I wrote a good few songs on my visit. It was a place where I always seemed to get answers. Like Jonathon Livingstone Seagull, I soared in my spiritual growth and everything was wonderful, yet I know this couldn't last, I felt something coming.....

A few weeks into my stay at mums, the inevitable happened. After months of legal wrangling, a court case and judges decision; the traveler's site at Greenham was evicted. :(John Smith, or not, everyone was ordered off. Greenham Common... Let's think about the word common in relation to land. Greenham common was common land.This is an ancient law which states that common land belongs to everyone, including gypsies and travelers. This had been a successful argument in the past, used over wrangles with land and travelers but the laws have been tightened and tweaked to suit the powers that be. Somehow, and I don't know

how, because our van would not start; Alan ended up parked near the



M4 motorway. PHOTO BY HAZE EVANS.

Two most dreadful, awful things, happened that were a devastating blow. Gyp got killed on the M4. :(Before the days, when everyone had a mobile phone, we used phone boxes. I remember, mum's phone ringing and answering the call. It was Alan, sobbing his heart and soul out with the harrowing news. Gyp was Alan's world and like a kid to him. I couldn't believe how something so horrible had happened. I loved that dog. He was not only beautiful, with large deep brown eyes, and silky black fur, but he was the biggest character ever, proper feisty, fun, loyal, mouthy and had the most amazing vocal range for a dog ... ever. Now he was gone and I would never see him again. After a lengthy and upsetting phone call, Alan had to get back to She. I broke my heart for him. This must have crucified him. When Alan rang again, he said there was a chance somebody could tow the van to London, to a squat. This was a squat with a difference, as it was a disused bus depot. Poor Alan was desperate for me to go back but knew it was more sensible, once the van was somewhere reasonably settled. The disused bus garage indeed sounded like the best option. I stayed on at mum's, though dreadfully upset for Alan about Gyp. Every time I heard Chicago's "Hard to say I'm sorry" song on the radio, it made me cry. I still well up now if I hear it. About a week later, Alan phoned again, terribly upset. I instantly knew that something dreadful had happened, something different. ...This time, it was She. She had been hit on the same bit of motorway, by a speeding car... :(I listened on in complete horror, unable to take fully on

board, the enormity of the situation. Our rainbow dream had come crashing down in ruins. She was taken to a vet, as she survived the accident, and made comfy, but the vet said she would be very lucky if she ever walked properly or ran again. I urged Alan to get to London as soon as possible and I would join him as soon as I could. I felt horrendous. There was Tiny, completely well again and Gyp was dead and She was badly crippled, it was almost like my going away brought disaster upon Alan.

We celebrated Rebecca's 10th birthday with a party for her. Loads of her friends arrived and they all adored Tiny. He was used to the good life and mum and Keith had spoiled him over the weeks. The next day, I was going to Hackney, London. Alan had been towed up to the squat in East London. That was a story in itself!!!!!!!

I believe it was Max, who towed Alan up to Hackney. There were other people, getting a lift too. One notable person named by Alan, was that of Zero. !!! I never met him but he was this lovely, albeit eccentric transvestite guy, wearing a flowery dress, heels and jewelry!! Picture the scene: Piccadilly circus, central London. A post office truck painted with the tree of life and a massive rainbow towing a small brown van. The tow rope snapped.... disaster, but no! Out jumped Zero, with his beard, hairy legs and flowing dress and began to direct all the traffic!! Can you imagine all those commuters and business men? what a sight it must have been!!!! He got all the traffic moving again, and turned out to be a bit of a hero really. Just goes to prove just how cool transvestites are. The tow rope was fixed, and Alan got to the bus garage.

Chapter Eleven..... Hackney, London . November '82

London Calling....

It was a very emotional reunion with Alan and She. Hackney bus garage was in Hackney, a very run down part of East London. The disused depot was indeed, also run down. It was filled with Peace Convoy buses, coaches, trucks and vans, all wintering from the summer festivals, as it was now November. It was dirty and smelly there but even in the darkest of places, miracles could happen, and here one did. She was utterly delighted to see Tiny again. Her tail wagged furiously, and after ten minutes She began to walk, unsteadily at first, over to Tiny to greet him. I had kept him restrained, as he was so excitable, I didn't want him to hurt her. However, he seemed to know she was fragile and didn't leap all over her like he normally would. It was a moving scene, as we never thought she would ever walk again and she was getting better by the moment. :)

Within a few days, She was running about with all the other dogs, completely recovered. No body knew what had caused this miracle. My belief was it was something to do with the healing powers of Westward Ho! It was so good to see though, and Alan became a much happier man. Hackney bus garage, was grim but it had a community spirit about it. There was even a communal table football game. I remember beating a couple of the guys at it !!!....They weren't amused but I quit while I was ahead, as I was sure it was beginners luck. I didn't know most of the people here except Rainbow Dave, Jan and Adrian, Bender Paul, Pikey Pete, Convoy Steve and to my delight, I discovered that Free, Jim and John

were living nearby.... Bonus :)



We soon settled into life there. We made rich pickings at Hackney market, as at the end of the day, they were virtually giving the food away. We had no campfire at Hackney but had the use of our fellow travelers stoves. We rotated our friends in turn, and broke some nights with a takeaway!! We also discovered that there were public baths in Hackney and I made use of

them!!



One morning, very early; we were awoken with an almighty start. It was terrifying. Our back doors were ripped open and unbearably strong, white torchlight, shone in our faces. In panic, we woke up, petrified and shaking. "This is a raid. Get out of your vehicle, we are searching it now " they barked at us. I wasn't even dressed, and Alan completely lost the plot at them... understandably. He screamed hysterically at them, that this was our home, our bed and how dare they order us up when I hadn't a stitch of clothing on !! We got dressed, up and out of the van and it soon became clear that everyone else was suffering the same fate. This looked like a pre-dawn drugs raid. Shaken up and confused, I waited for the police to finish their search. It soon became plain that we didn't have any drugs or anything else illegal. They left the van a complete mess and left us alone. It turned out that a few people had been busted. Even weirder, were the rolls of carpets and guns that had been found. I was mortified, along with a lot of the travelers there. The people were arrested, taken away and we sat and dreaded the gloomy headlines, that tarred us all alongside those idiots :(

We recovered from the shock of the pre dawn raid and life went on. I would visit Free, round the corner and we would play guitar and have a good smoke. One evening, in the garage , quite late, there was a rumbling and a commotion.. "Not the police again " I groaned but it wasn't. It was a new traveler arrived and my jaw dropped at who it was... "Oh shit " muttered Alan "not him " We needn't have worried. A clamor of angry voices, swelling to massive proportions, burst out at him. More people came out of their trucks, some carrying sticks and

bats, as they sensed an intrusion. I went back in our van and Alan went to investigate. He came back quite soon and laughed. "They've got rid of him. Steve, Bender Paul, Pikey Pete and a few others, sent him packing. He was most unpopular with them already it seemed, without them even knowing he nearly set fire to our van!!!

Life went on. I remember this guy wandering around the garage with his guitar, playing and singing "Rainbow Warrior, Rainbow Warrior, we come to save our land...." I felt quite amused to think it was part of my poem, that had been printed at Greenham, back in the summer but I also knew that it was the name of a Greenpeace ship and indeed, a Hopi Indian prophecy. A few days later, She came on heat.... We expected it, as it was about the right timing. It was horrendous. Scores of dogs clamored outside our van, barking , howling , snapping and fighting. It was murder, just letting our dogs out for a pee, as She would be surrounded by rampant dogs and Tiny would be trying to fight each and every one of them! They howled all night long and had constant fights. We had no sleep and after a couple more days, I snapped. I told Alan I was moving out of the bus garage with Tiny and into Free's squat, around the corner. He wasn't happy but could see the sense in it.

Chapter twelve.....December 1982...

Urban warrior...

Finally, four walls around me. Hot water and electricity!! I had used tilly lamps and candles for months, this seemed like luxury :) 1 Croston street, Hackney was my new but temporary home. This was a newly opened squat, a terraced house. It was a major relief to get away from the marauding dogs and noise and smell of the garage. Living here already, were Free, (Jim and John had gone back to Scotland for a while) who I already knew and got on tremendously well with. Then there was Jeff Griffin. He didn't seem like a squatter at all or even remotely alternative! He was a student, in his early thirties and obsessed with the French revolution. This was what he was studying. He was a nice guy though and often enjoyed an excuse to break from his studies, to get drunk !!! He would often talk about Jean Paul Marat and spookily, years later, I saw a picture of Marat. It shocked me to the core to see how alike to look at, both Jeff and Marat were ... Shocker :0. Someone else who lived there but very often was away, was Bob.:) Bob was an Irish guy, who firmly believed in Marxism. He regularly went out shoplifting, though he would call it liberating supplies from the big, greedy corporation capitalists. He believed it should belong to everyone, and thus he earned the nickname "Liberation Bob " He was quite a good guitarist too, we found. I liked the guy enormously, and he often brought us supplies, that we needed.

During December, we travelled back to Greenham again but this was for a huge demo. We were there for a day. It was manic, people and protesters everywhere, drumming, guitars, penny whistles and a lot of singing. "You can't kill the spirit, she is strong, and she lives on " Of course, I sang an all time favourite, Joan Baez song "We shall overcome" There was a very large police presence there , predictably, but it went well. Back in London, it was beginning to get close to Christmas and Alan began to formulate plans of seeing his parents, during the festive season. Alan's mum and dad lived in Huntingdon in Bedfordshire. She had

finished her estrus season, thankfully! The only dog that had fully got to her, while she was on heat, was Bryn, Jan and Adrian's Scotch Collie dog. It was highly likely that She was pregnant! Everyone in the bus garage started a festive spirit, decorations went up in trucks and coaches. Bob, bless him, had managed to liberate several boxes of inflatable Santas!!! Nearly everyone in the garage had one!!!

Alan knew there was no way that the van would get us to Bedfordshire. He had this mad idea of buying this bright blue and yellow striped Datsun estate, with no back window!!! There wasn't a mechanical bone in Alan's body and I knew in my gut, that there was no way we were getting to Huntingdon in that car !! I was right! That car broke down several times on the way. Twice before we passed Oxford!! It was December, cold and we had no back window and the car conked out at every opportunity! Alan managed to get it going, somehow by trial and error, but it never lasted long... It was a wreck and probably a death trap too.. Alan, trying to be amusing and upbeat, began to take the biscuit, when he began singing the Christmas hit "Stop the Cavalry " by Jona Lewie, with full trumpet and trombone imitations..!!!.. "Wish I could get home... for Christmas " he sang. The dogs were getting restless and anxious and I rankled with annoyance and worry.

Somehow, amazingly, we arrived at Alan's parent's lovely home. I loved his mum and dad. Alan's mum was a blonde haired, very bubbly, good natured woman and the most FANTASTIC cook. I certainly could see where Alan's culinary talents came from. Alan's dad was a lovely, quiet and gentle sort of guy, with the same solemn, deep brown eyes as Alan. He loved gardening and was the most mellow guy I had met up to then. Christmas was wonderful and Alan's mum made the most delicious food, I will never forget her braised cheese and mushrooms :) We stayed for nearly a week, which was made all the more hectic because the dog living two doors down, had come on heat !! Tiny was going mental and even managed to clear a seven foot fence, twice, to try and get to her. I really enjoyed my time in Huntingdon and was quite gutted to be going back to Hackney again :(

Croston street was almost over. The electricity board had cottoned on to fact that people were getting free electricity, the council were on to us, and packing had begun. Free had his eye on a place around the corner, not far at all. :) This part of Hackney was so run down, there were an unbelievable amount of empty, disused houses around and many people were squatters. 8 Dericote street was a house of very similar size and layout and I loved our time there. By this point, Alan decided to move in . The weather was getting much colder and She was pregnant. He would still spend most of his time in the bus garage, and come home later. I spent most of my time with Free. We shared the same taste in music and jammed on our guitars for hours, amidst joints and chillums. Probably, Free's favourite band was Hawkwind. He painted the lyrics to "Master of the Universe" on the wall of his room. We reminisced about Stonehenge '82 and I told him all about Greenham. He told me how he had met the most amazing guitarist ever, at Stonehenge. He had never heard anything like him before and that his name was "Mange ".....

It was about this time, that he introduced me to a good friend of his, who lived in nearby Brougham Road. He had told me about this lady before and at great length. She was a psychic medium and a very old and special soul, sent to help mankind. She was a visionary, a white witch and a healer. Her name was Trish. Imagine the Glaswegian accent. " You'd love

wee Trish, you must meet her " So off we went to 82 Brougham road. I was nervous, what if she didn't like me , or saw something terrible in me? There she was and what a lovely young lady. Petite, five foot if that, beautiful, elfin like with blonde, long hair and crystal blue eyes, " Hello lovey, come in, sit down " I didn't know then, just how largely she would feature in my future. We hit it off and talked for hours. She fed me and put me in the bath. She even brushed out some seriously bad tangles, bordering on dreadlocks, in my hair. She was indeed, a nurturing soul. She had two daughters. Six year old Cathy and twenty month old Jenny. It was like Trish was the missing piece of the jigsaw in my life.

Chapter thirteen..... Hackney to Dalston and everywhere!! Early spring '83

A Million Places to be...

New year came, and what an incredibly packed year it became. I wanted a mission, to really do something good. She was visibly pregnant by now. Soon it was time for us to leave Dericote street and I became worried as to where we could stay, until Stonehenge. I remember spending some time down in Wales, near Swansea and Mumbles, along the Gower coast. We went to stay with Jan and Adrian at their other winter home. It was a permanent chalet built on the cliffs. Stunning views and pure, life giving air, away from the smoke and choke of London. It turned out that there was a whole community of alternatives living up in these cliffs, in a whole site of holiday chalets up on the hills behind. It was unbelievable. Even the pub, in the nearest village was really cool. Jan and Adrian knew pretty much everyone there and they were all a friendly bunch. Their chalet was warm, cozy and roomy for what they were used to!! I simply loved the place and fell in love with the whole area. The dogs loved it too, it was great to see them scampering around, enjoying themselves. Tiny and Bryn weren't too bad with each other, there were a few growls and grumbles but they were ok on the whole. I was gutted to leave there and go back to the big smoke.

When we got back, we heard that Free, Jim and John had moved. They, Bob and Jeff had opened up a new squat in Dalston. We moved in not long after. 127 Dalston lane was a really cool house. It was detached and in not quite such a bad area. It was a large house , three storeys. The Basement level was our room and the kitchen. Next floor, sitting room and one bedroom. Third floor, two more bedrooms. Compared to the last two places, it was gi-normous!!! Free , John and Jim had the top floor. Bob and Jeff had the middle floor and occasionally Kathy, Jeff's Gauloise cigarette smoking, French girlfriend would stay over. Bob's latest acquirement, was a load of camouflage army jackets. I bagged one of them. I loved it, it was the green kind of khaki and quite long for a jacket. It almost reached down to the back of my knees!! It was the start of some happy times at the new squat.

To be honest, it was a relief having the large basement room, as She was huge by now, and the birth of her pups was imminent. February 21st, early morning, I was asleep, until I felt fur surrounding my face and a heavy plompph on my head! "What the f**k" I exclaimed. "Wait up" whispered Alan gently, "You might have to move, She is giving birth" "What? ON MY HEAD? "The crazy dog's first puppy was already half way out, when I managed to quickly

move out of the way!! So, She's first puppy was nearly born on my head! I couldn't believe it. Eventually all 12 (I think, I might be wrong) pups were born. They were adorably cute. More males than females. Most of them looked like Bryn. They were a brindle colour. Bryn was a pedigree Scotch, (Lassie) collie. She was a mix of Labrador, Pointer, Bull Mastiff and St Bernard. The rest of the pups looked like She, Black with bits of white on the chest and feet. She was a brilliant mum and took well to nursing and cleaning the wriggling, squeaking pups. Days turned into weeks and the puppies grew bigger. I continued with studying and collecting herbs, as a plan was formulating in my head for Stonehenge '83. The evenings were spent jamming with Free, Jim and John. We had some humdingingly brilliant times on our guitars, often playing until the early hours. Free enjoyed listening to music and had rigged up a stereo. Bring on the noise! Haze turned up, as usual it was fantastic seeing her. Poor girl had this allergic skin reaction that had turned into severe Dermatitis. She was actually on the mend and better than she had been the previous week. Still covered in a rash but otherwise her usual glowing self. We offered her a bath, as we had plenty of hot water and I sorted out some herbs to put in it. Free decided to put on Can's "Tago Mago" album. Brilliant choice, as I loved that album. Free's room was above the bathroom, so the music was very loud when Haze was taking her bath!! She said she felt like some spotty and blotchy monster rising out of the deep, on hearing the music and looking at her rash! Certainly later on, she made us all laugh about the "Monster" incident but that was Haze all over. She could get a positive from every situation and just spread joy about, wherever she went.

At this point, another friend came into my life. Either Jeff or Bob had brought her home. Enter Zona. She was five foot, if that. She had short, thick, wild hair and very bright, blue eyes. To me she seemed very nervous and not quite the "right shill". However, I soon found out, as she was very honest and upfront about her life and her past. Zona was a schizophrenic. She was a Christian, a lesbian (or at least Bi) and used to be a prostitute. No one was very sure of her at all at first. I found her fun and we had a lot of laughs. She chain smoked like me and we both loved our cups of tea. I admired her guts and tenacity and was glad to have her around. She had come from a "halfway house " for the mentally ill. We went all over, hitch hiking together. Often going out in London and coming home drunk. As well as jamming with Free and co until the early hours of the morning. It was no wonder Alan was getting pissed off at me.

The next couple of months were absolutely packed. In all truth I can't remember the exact order that all the events took place. I was drinking heavily and dabbling with speed occasionally. At some point in 1983 I spent some time at Crookham common. I can't remember even, whether it was before Stonehenge or after. All I remember was spending a few days there, with Jan, Adrian and a few others. Jan was pregnant, about 4/5 months gone. We stayed in a transit van they had got. Crookham Common was at the orange gate, surrounding the air base. It was much like the green gate with a lot less trees. One of the nights I spent there was crazy!! There were nine of us sleeping in that Transit van. I can't remember who everyone was but we all somehow managed to fit, sleep and live in that van!! I put this down to Jan's enormous organizational skills and staunch common sense. When it came to living outdoors, Jan was an expert and really knew her stuff. I admired her tremendously.

One of the nine people, that night, was a 11 or 12 year old lad called Warren. Warren was brilliant. He could make a bender, a fire, collect clean water, could handle tools and could even drive a bit!! He was a really cool kid, respectful and turned out to be super helpful. His mum was a lady from London called Dyllis. She was in her late thirties or early forties, stunningly beautiful, slim, very dark and a really kind and calm person. I remember her being a big Santana fan! Zona, developed a massive crush on Dyllis. I could understand why. They became friends which pleased Alan, as Zona wasn't his favourite person!! Dyllis was indeed, a lovely soul but she didn't realize Zona was gay. It all came crashing down when she did realize and she gently told her, she wasn't the same way. Poor Zona, I did feel sorry for her, especially when Spandau Ballet's "True" came on the radio. She burst into tears, as that song reminded her of Dyllis

During this hectic time, my plan was growing. I was reading a lot about colour healing and thought that I could somehow tie it in with my herbs and astrology. As I picked the herbs at certain times, when planets were in the corresponding, compatible signs, I used the ruling planetary colours to dry and store them in. I had row and rows of drying herbs. Some for drying and infusing. Some were for using in Ointments. My big plan was to be a herbal healer at Stonehenge '83, using a bit of Astrology and colour healing along the way.

Soon an eviction order came through the door. I was horrified. What about the puppies and what about my still drying herbs. I didn't want them to get ruined by moving them before they were properly dried. The pups were scampering about the place by now. So cute and playful. Tiny would join in with them at times when She got tired

Chapter Fourteen..... Dalston and beyond

You can't kill the spirit....

We had to start thinking ahead. The eviction date was getting ever closer and we had no where to go. Some of She's puppies were spoken for and they were in the process of being weaned. That in itself, was a chaotic and laborious process. Several times a day, we fed those eager, hungry, ever growing puppies.

She had stopped clearing up after them (understandably) so it was down to us to do that !! Eurrkk !! Thinking ahead for the summer, Alan ended up selling the Bedford CA van and the dreaded "Jona Lewie" Datsun estate for scrap and managed to make enough money, just about , to buy another vehicle. Somehow, we met this couple called Dave and Leonie, I think, through Dyllis and they kindly offered us to stay with them, until Stonehenge. They wanted the firstborn pup. So Alan agreed and they called him Jasper. I don't know where Free ended up but we moved to Dave and Leonie's flat in Hackney. It was about three floors up which was fun with the pups and dogs!! They were very kind but very strange people. They were practicing witches, which fascinated, rather than phased me.

In the last days at Dalston, Alan bought our new van. I hoped it was still drivable, for when we moved. I knew how unlucky Alan was when it came to anything mechanical!! However, when Alan had managed to drive this new van back to a car park, behind their block of flats, I went to look at it and couldn't believe my eyes. It was much bigger than I expected. Enter "Uinen

Este " our new home. A Bedford J type ambulance, beautiful, just beautiful :)



Half of it was painted white and the rest was a hotchpotch of brown, red , orange. It was certainly interesting looking and I fell in love with it straight away. One of the best features was her interesting number plate.... 9888 UE. So we had to call her something after her initials!!! We had much work to do. I had all my herbal work to carry out, plus I needed to make a list of the rarer herbs, needed for my venture. I needed an advertising board plus the planets were nearly in the right places for me, to start on making my herbal ointments. I was happy there. Alan, however was not. If he thought it was miserable at Dalston lane, he was really going to know it here. He hated it there.

They were weird, seriously weird. Dave was tall, gangly, hippyish and looked a bit gormless. He was very much a whacky eccentric. He was a veritable encyclopedia of doomsday and conspiracy theories. He lived by the classic hippy culture book called "The Six O' Clock Bus " I remember him telling me that from the bible, revelations, Margaret Thatcher was the whore of Babylon and the ten horns of the beast were the 10 countries currently in the European union!!! He had it all worked out. Leonie was a tall , well built woman with super luxuriant, long, deep, ginger hair. A red haired amazon! She had a very low and soft voice. She was a practicing wiccan who scared me a little and scared Zona a lot!!

I loved all that new age healing stuff back then and had been interested in the occult since I was twelve, back in that iconic summer, at the start of this book! I had been in to the centre of London and noticed a shop, selling all kind of things for practicing pagans and new age healers. Zona and I went in and I headed straight for the Tarot packs. Like a flash of lightning, they hit me. The new Age Tarot deck! They had some awesome packs there but that one beat the lot! The king of swords was a military man sat on a throne, surrounded by cruise missiles and warheads. The King of cups was the leader of a peace demo, stood outside a fence with rainbows and peace signs. A peace demonstration on a tarot card. This was unbelievable. We were going to a demo at Greenham, scheduled for early April and I KNEW that I had to take those cards. It took me a couple of weeks to save up but I went back to that shop and proudly bought them. :) I also managed to find out about a herbalist shop, at the Elephant and Castle. It was a specialized shop and stocked the rare herbs that I needed for Stonehenge. That was kept on my to do list.

Greenham Common April '83. Alan and I managed to hitch hike to Newbury, to stay with some friends we had got to know during our time at Greenham. They were students but great fun and real party animals!! We had a nightmare getting there. For some reason Alan was tremendously unlucky with getting lifts. Anytime, I hitched even with Tiny in tow, I usually got lifts pretty quickly (Tiny was a cute looking dog though !!) The next day we made it to the demo and what a demo it was. It was packed with protesters from all over the country and abroad. There was me, with my army camo jacket, my guitar and my new age tarot deck. I was in my element. I wandered around the fence perimeter playing my guitar and singing loads of songs. My favourite to play at demos was "Masters of war " By Bob Dylan, I had also added "Natures Way " by Spirit.

The place was heaving with protesters, banging their drums and playing their whistles. I took out my pack and selected the two cards. The king of Swords and the King of Cups. The first policeman I bumped into, had the misfortune of me, showing him these cards " Look at what these two cards represent..... Here is a Master of War and here is a Bringer of Peace. This is happening today, happening now " I said. I couldn't work out whether the copper's reaction was one of quiet contempt or mild bemusement! Another policeman came over, put his hand on my shoulder and said " Come on now Rae, You don't want a night in Newbury police cells do you? " I grinned at him nervously and moved away quickly " Cripes " I thought, " How the hell did he know who I was ?" I guessed the time at the camp had me made known to the Thames Valley police. The crowd was getting bigger, as we encircled the base perimeter and it began to get hectic. Everyone was linking arms around the fence and I rushed to join in. Then things began to get serious. Some people had begun to pull on the fence and I still had my guitar strapped on to me. At first I got into the spirit of it. " The Venusian would be proud " I thought, as I remembered the Greenham Seven incident, the previous summer. Akin to a Mexican wave, the line of people pulling rhythmically on that fence sent a tidal wave of force, quite a few metres around, getting ever stronger. It became so powerful that it was completely out of my control and I couldn't let go and get out of the chain. The momentum, by now, was too strong. I felt my guitar strap getting tighter, as it had gotten hooked on to the person next to me's, bag. :(Stronger and more powerful the wave of strength got, until the point that I almost got strangled, by my own

guitar strap. It was a very scary few minutes, that felt like an eternity. Thankfully, I got out unscathed but it shook me up. Worse still were the 17 hands high police horses, being backed right into us. I was horrified at their intimidation tactics.

It was around this sort of time that Haze (who i met at Greenham) began to photograph demonstrations and also police brutality. She was a professional photographer anyway and enjoyed putting it to good use. Brave of her though, as like me, she was known to the Thames Valley police. As it got dark, everyone around, began lighting candles and night lights and putting them around the fence. It looked really pretty and kind of symbolic of the light of hope. Hope for Peace. What happened next, really appalled me. Policemen were walking round and kicking over the candles and lights. I just couldn't believe it. It felt so symbolic of everything that was evil in normal society. I knew I was always rebellious, always, but this incident fuelled my growing hatred of the establishment. Of course the press had a field day with all this. They printed a load of bollocks about police horses being whipped with barbed wire, by the protesters! I was there, this never happened. It was all tory media lies.

Back in London, I briefly recovered before we were off again! Most of the puppies were homed out and mostly to people we knew. Dave and Leonie had Jasper. Free had one of the males and Zona had a black female. Blossom was cute, very much like She but with slightly more white. The next weekend , there was a one day festival, held in Victoria Park. We decided to go along to it for some fun. Tiny was pleased to go out with his niece. Zona had bought a cute puppy lead and brought along Blossom. It was a good day, though quite chilly for May. I guess the highlight I remembered most, was watching Bad Manners, who did a brilliant set. We were at the front, bopping around, then Buster Bloodvessel did a classic !! He threw a bucket of cold water over me and Zona :o... We shrieked wildly, much to his obvious delight! It was bloody freezing and I copped the most of it. I was soaked through!!! It was a long walk home, as we had spent the bus fare and by the time I got back to Dave and Leonie's , I was shivering. A few days later I went down with the most wretched cold ever, thanks Buster !!

Not long after that, it was time for another festival, this time held at Brockwell Park. This was a much bigger affair with a bigger line up. I heard that the Tibetan Ukrainian Troupe would be there, cool :) Again, Zona and me took the dogs, on the bus, to the festival. It was huge compared to Victoria park. It was a beautiful, sunny day. We headed over to the Tibetan Ukrainian Mountain Troupe marquee. We watched a band playing, who were excellent, when a massive dog fight broke out. "Tiny", I bellowed. I knew it was him. I ended up pulling him off some other dog, who had dared to sniff Blossom. The whole day after that, was spent splitting up one dog fight after another and i got pretty pissed off at Tiny who would not let any other dog near the pretty puppy. We watched Style council from the back of the crowd. I thought they were pretty shit really. Nor was I too impressed with Madness, I always liked something a bit heavier!! I had more fun at the Bad Manners show. By the end of the afternoon, we were tired and I was in a foul mood from refereeing dogs. I was sure glad to get home.

We also acquired two kittens, not from the same litter but we got them at the same time. Puma was Alan's. He was a perfect mackerel tabby. Striped and almost wild cat looking, hence the name "Puma" "Cleo " was a cute black and white kitten with huge green eyes. They adapted well to the flat and the dogs got on well with them.

At one point, during '83, we went to visit some people, in Burghfield. I can't remember exactly when it was, as there was so much going on. There had been a peace camp, near the ordnance factory and some people, had squatted an old mill nearby. We stayed for a couple of days. I loved the place. It was idyllic and mellow. The people staying there were cool and the dogs loved it there too. There was plenty of room for them to run about in. The house was right beside the river, which was beautiful. I just loved the whole atmosphere of the place. All too soon, it was time to return to London.

It was time to start my ointment making. The planets were ready and perfectly aligned. This involved a trip to Baldwins, the specialist Herbalist shop, at the Elephant and Castle. This time I went with Haze, who I still saw, from time to time. We had a brilliant day and even managed to jump the tube!! I spent over thirty pounds, on various herbs, some quite rare. I also bought the ointment ingredients. I used Almond oil, the herbs and a spot of beeswax to thicken. I made three types. Comfrey ointment for treating any kind of wound. Thyme ointment as an antiseptic and Marigold (Calendula) ointment for healthy skin and some types of burns. I made a massive amount of the stuff and got it all in to jars with lids. The consistency and texture was perfect and the Thyme and Marigold ones smelled really nice. I was quite proud of myself, as I had never attempted anything like that before. :) The herbs were all dried, crumbled and put into jars and bottles. I pretty much, had a mobile Apothecary !! The herbal path felt so right for me, especially after Jon Pendragon had praised Alan and me for curing the dogs Distemper, using herbs, at a site meeting. Alan enjoyed studying Astrology more and more and began interpreting people's charts. He was getting really good at it too.

Chapter Fifteen.....Hackney May '83

Mugged off (nearly) Tiny to the rescue.....

Hackney was a notoriously rough area. It was pretty bad where Dave and Leonie lived. Our ambulance was broken into one night. Luckily we had nothing of any value in there, at the time. One night, at about three in the morning; Zona and I decided to pop out and get some sand from the nearest park, for the kittens litter trays. Hackney downs was the closest, so off we went, with Tiny in tow..... Fortunately, as we discovered. We bent down to scoop up the soft sand into bags, when we heard a noise. To our utter horror, we were surrounded by between eight and twelve youths, some holding baseball bats and looking really menacing. I truly thought our number was up but before they could move any closer, Tiny rushed at them, with his biggest and best growl and chased them all away. Good old Tiny, we made a massive fuss of him. He was a hero and had quite possibly saved us from hospitalization, if not our lives. Shaken but relieved, we headed home with the sand.

So there I was, ready with all my herbs and ointments, all ready to heal the tribes at Stonehenge. I was looking forward to seeing the faces from '82 again. I was hoping to meet some more of the tipi people at Stonehenge but more immediately, I needed a name and some good advertising. I chose the name "The

Flying Herbal Doctor " I found an old cupboard door which I thought would be ideal to paint my sign on. This I did with enamel paints! The sign looked good with plants and flowers painted alongside the writing and a sun in the corner with an obligatory rainbow!! The ambulance "Uinen Este " was slowly being kitted out. We had a small cooking range/stove in there and a pipe and hole in the roof. The bed was laid out and some sitting space. All we had to do was pack it and move in to our new home :) Something was missing..... Then it came to me. I had an idea to paint one of the middle panels inside ,with one of the Silmarills from the Tolkien book the "Silmarillion ". I decided on the fire one, as I loved the colours. Purple, white, orange and a bit of red.

I confess, I did have a little help with finding the time to paint the panel inside the ambulance. This was in the shape of a black capsule, a Black Bomber that someone had given me. I was reluctant at first as I really wasn't a fan of speed. I had tried sulphate, blues and dexys in the past and hated all three. I hated not being able to sleep and I hated the miserable, soul racking comedowns well known with amphetamine use. Yet, I gave it a try, hoping to put the extra hours of being awake, to good use. Forty eight hours later, I finished the painting and finally went to bed, having channeled all that Durophet "Bomber" energy into something creative!! The finished result was quite spectacular. I came to thinking, good choice of speed Lemmy (Motorhead's Bomber album) Even better, there was no horrible come down or craving for more. I slept really well and felt absolutely fine the next day. I was super pleased with that painting though. Everything was almost ready for our new adventure. It looked like we were taking a few passengers with us too. Dave and Leonie, Zona, at least a couple of others, two dogs, two puppies and the two kittens!!!!

A few days later, a very packed ambulance left London, full of rainbow warriors :) I was so excited about my new venture. Free and company were going to be there, in their dark blue truck. I couldn't wait to set up the fire and set up my stall. We even brought five small grass plants with us, grown from seed to harvest our own supply, as money was tight. As I still officially lived in London, the plan was to return, every fortnight, to pick up my money and return to Stonehenge. I did hope to make a bit of money as the flying herbal doctor and to make a lot of people better .

Stonehenge '83 was glorious and hot. A massive celebration and a middle finger up to society and the establishment. We parked up, settled in and I set up my fire, kettles and pans for brewing and my sign was proudly propped up, at the back of the ambulance. It was awesome, great to bump into people we hadn't seen for a while and we met up with Free and co. I enjoyed the festival music scene. It covered anything from Gong, Steve Hillage, Hawkwind, Here and Now, Red Ice, Pink Fairies and the ever brilliant and slightly tongue in cheek, Wystic Mankers !!! I also remember being haunted by some very inspiring electronic sounding music. After a week I went off, traced where it was coming from. I found the bus that was playing it and it turned out to be Tim Blake's New Jerusalem!!! :) This became the theme to my entire summer!!!! It really did feel like a new Jerusalem, an entire Rainbow Tribe, people from all background and walks of life. Counter culture became a passion and I was proud to become a part of it.

The Flying Herbal Doctor became a resounding success. My herbal teas went down a treat. I charged 10p per cup. I did all the usual ones, that were popular. Chamomile, Peppermint, Borage, Meadowsweet,

Lemon verbena etc. Mint was a particular favourite with kids and Licorice too. Then there were the brews, infusions and decoctions I made for people who were ill. If the said ill person had no money, I didn't charge them. I considered it was better to lose a bit of money and help them get better. I didn't make a huge deal of money but got a lot of pleasure from seeing people getting better. I treated pretty much everything from common colds, hay fever, stomach cramps, upsets, diarrhea, constipation, Headaches, chest infections, bruises, burns, hangovers, to cuts, open wounds and migraines.

We parked our ambulance next to a café van. The guys in the van were running a café selling teas, coffees and egg sandwiches, bacon, sausages etc. They asked if they could put an awning between our trucks to create a café space and some shade, which made perfect sense. It wasn't going to impact on my Herbal Doctor venture anyway and they were such nice, down to earth lads, we got on great with them. I wish I could remember their names!! I know one of them was a massive New Order fan, as I will never forget hearing the extended version of Blue Monday on repeat!!!!

One afternoon, I nipped off for a break in between brewing teas. I heard amazing music, so followed that and ended up in a marquee, Probably the Tibetans. The Wystic Mankers were playing and I loved their music :) I had no idea of the hilarity of what was about to happen... This dark haired, tanned guy came up to me. He was shirtless and had glowingly white trousers on!! He was blatantly tripping his nuts off! He handed me a large, glowing spliff, which I was glad of. His vivid blue eyes shone dark, with the classic dilated pupils of L.s.d. "I have just seen CHRIST, the actual Christ!" "You what?" I said, thinking his acid must've been super strength! He spun round, in ecstasy, arms raised". I've seen him here, at this very festival "He enthused. A huge grin over his broad, beaming face. "Christ's number is opposite of the anti Christ... 888 is Christ's number and he is here, in his ambulance. It's on his number plate!! "The penny began to drop!! "Did he have gingery blonde hair?" I asked innocuously, "And was he surrounded with dogs?" with that he was off!! He had generously, left me most of the spliff, which was mighty strong, so that was a bonus. I chuckled to myself though. I knew it was Alan he had seen in our ambulance but it tickled me pink to think he thought Alan was Jesus Christ!! Alan was quite amused when I told him. "Well " I said "You did send all those flies back to Godhead!!!!"

Then, right at the peak of the Stonehenge free festival summer solstice, came the spanner in the works. She came on heat again :(What timing!" How the hell did she time it for the height of Stonehenge?" I moaned. "Natural selection! ultimate choice, in the gene pool " replied Alan chirpily. Bloody hell, how much choice did the dog want? Within a couple of days, it was sheer chaos! Dogs were everywhere trying to get to She. We tried to keep her in the ambulance but it was hot and the poor girl was getting restless. Poor Tiny suffered enormously, during her heat. It was natural for him to be protective and want her for himself. He fought viciously and stood his ground with most of the crazed, lustful dogs.

The one dog, he could never beat in a fight was Max. He was just too big and strong. It was a full moon and she was pretty much at her peak. Max and Tiny exploded like a fire bomb,

outside the ambulance. It must've been their fiftieth fight at least, but it was their most brutal and poor Tiny lost that fight and Max got his bitch! Poor Tiny, his eye was almost hanging out of its socket and there was blood everywhere. We got him cleaned up and dressed his wound. For a while after, I treated those wounds with woundwort, cleaned with thyme and eyebright infusions. When it further healed, I used comfrey ointment and eventually, it completely healed, with a small scar as a souvenir!! Max wasn't the only dog who got to She. At least two more had been sighted!! Ah well. we knew that She's second litter of puppies would be due in late August!!!

It was a glorious summer and we met so many amazing and interesting people. We met Free and co and Trish too and others from before. Jan and Adrian managed to park fairly close to us, which was cool. Jan and I held similar hygiene practices, as in washing dishes straight after dinner. This was so the flies weren't attracted to the food traces left on the plates and cutlery. We were both strict on hand washing too. I worked hard. I got up early every day, to get the fire going, then the kettle of hot water on, ready for the early customers. I really enjoyed serving up my herbal mixes but best of all was getting people better from their illnesses.

I treated many people during that festival and soon, all sorts of people were coming to look for me, as they had heard about me, the "Flying Herbal Doctor". My fame had spread as far as the Tipi people. Someone came looking for me, as Tipi Jean had fallen ill, with a nasty bout of flu. To complicate things further, she was visibly pregnant. I had to be very careful which herbs I gave her. Sage, though useful for fevers, was definitely out. It is not good with pregnancy. I made her a decoction of several herbs, Comfrey, Mint, Meadowsweet, Lemon Verbena and ***** Zona made her a nourishing stew for her and the kids, so Jean could rest up, instead of cooking. I bottled her up the rest of the herbal mix, to drink later on.

We went back to the ambulance, Zona, her tent and someone came running up to me. It was the African lady from yesterday, who I had treated for a migraine. She had a big grin over her face and certainly looked a lot better. "You are amazing" she said "I feel so much better and normally it takes me several days to get over a migraine. What was in that stuff? cos it really worked" It turned out that she wanted to buy the actual herbs from me (Lavender, Hops, a pinch of Feverfew and a tiny amount of Valerian) until she could sort out buying some more. As I had plenty, I was pleased to oblige and off she went, pleased as punch!

Later on, Zona and me went for a wander. I usually liked to follow any good music I heard but it was quiet and no loud or amplified music was playing, but I could hear a penny whistle playing and followed that. The penny whistle playing, led to the circle of tipis. Of course, this was where we saw Tipi Jean earlier. We turned a corner and there she was. Up, and dressed in her standard maroon dress, playing the penny whistle that we heard! She gave me a massive hug and said she was so much better. I was delighted that my herbal mix had worked and it was all spoken about and brought up at the next site meeting. Has to be said, I was chuffed :)

Every now and again, I would take a break from my flying herbal duties and would wander around chatting and having a smoke with friends. This time, I took my guitar with me. I ended up walking to the very edge of the festival, by the road and the tourist car park. I turned back, looked at the festival in awe and was inspired to play my guitar. Still facing the festival with my

back turned to the car park, I played and sang my heart out. I played a compilation of my own songs, followed by a cover of Pink Floyd's wish you were here. When I stopped, there was an almighty burst of vigorous applause ! I spun round in surprise, to see a whole coach party of tourists, stood in a line watching me !Feeling a mixture of pleased and embarrassed I said "Thanks " Feeling kind of proud that they liked what I played, I left, realizing that Alan must be wondering where I was.

Chapter Sixteen..... Stonehenge '83

Houdini Hound!!

The main festival was over and once again, it was back to the new age travelling community. We liked to care for the earth and so began the festival litter pick. She's heat was over and the signs were, that she was indeed, pregnant again. I loved doing the litter pick. As well as being paid to do it, it was amazing what you would find. I even found some cool clothes and a pair of boots, that someone had dumped. Our five grass plants were huge by now, as they relished the sunshine at the festival. It would soon be time to prick out some of the leaves, to make way for more. We sampled our harvest and lovely it was. It was a calm and serene atmosphere on site. However, It was soon time for me to hitchhike back to London and pick up some post and money I was owed. Zona had to get back too. I decided it was best to leave Tiny on site. Alan was away somewhere and Jan had agreed to let him out, once I was well gone. Alan was due back later that day, so I thought it would be fine.

Off we walked, along the road to Amesbury, chatting away. Tiny was locked in the ambulance and we were off on a bit of an adventure. We weren't actually sure where we were going to be staying that night. The Dalston lane squat had finished and we had heard that it was going to become a children's home. I was cool with that but we were kind of hoping, that the work hadn't been started yet and we could break back in and stay the night there. Plan B was to see if we could stay with Dyllis. Plan C was the dreaded Horton road!!!

Cheerfully, we sang as we walked, holding out our thumbs if a car was coming. I kept thinking I could hear a noise, other than traffic. No one picked us up and we nearly walked the whole distance to Amesbury, when I could hear that noise again. Like some sort of rustling noise. It was in the hedge. I turned around and could see a familiar face, poking out of the hedge. It was Tiny!!! " How the fuck have you managed that?" I gasped, in amazement. Zona was flabbergasted!! Somehow , he managed to get out of a locked ambulance and snuck off, without being spotted!!! "Well we've come this far, I suppose you had better come with us now " I grumbled at him. His tail was wagging and he was almost smiling. Tiny loved an adventure but the trouble was, I was worried where we were going to end up. I didn't want to possibly have to sleep outside, with a dog. It wasn't fair on him. "Bollocks, I haven't got a leash " I expleted." I will have to use my scarf" It was a bright green scarf and he looked a treat !!! Ironically, we got a lift straight away. People seemed to love Tiny. Unfortunately, the lift was only going as far as Andover. We got out and waited for the next lift.

The next lift didn't happen. We waited and waited and smoked several fags. Normally , when Tiny was with us, we got lifts really quick. We noted how people took pity on the dog, more

than us !!! Lol. Still no lift. This was uncanny. A couple of hours passed with us still waiting and getting more pissed off, with every minute. Then Zona had a brainwave. " I'm going to pretend that I'm pregnant " she enthused. I laughed and said " How? " She shoved a cushion and a couple of jumpers up her long sleeved top, fussed about with it all and it did kind of look like she was expecting!!! We had such a laugh about it and I couldn't see how it could work but it did!! Within a few minutes, a car stopped and a middle aged guy let us in the car. Luckily, he was actually going all the way to London and the car was airy and comfortable. " How long have you got left? " he asked Zona. I tried so hard not to laugh but she carried it off well. " About six weeks " she answered. We got to London and thanked the guy. How he didn't realise that the "bump" was clothes and a cushion, we'll never know!!

We made our way to 127 Dalston lane , hoping we could get in there. However, it was still boarded up and they had done a good , solid job of it. There was no way we were getting in there. Plan B was a half hour walk to Dyllis's place. We got there and the place was in darkness. She had quite obviously gone away. Bogus. Last ditch plan was to go to Horton road, where Zona came from before she moved in with us. Zona had massive reservations, as she had fallen out big time, with one of the residents. This was Veronica. An eighteen stone lesbian with a severe personality disorder. She fancied her chances with Zona, who didn't want to go there. Veronica was a woman who did not like no for an answer. At least it was late, so hopefully Veronica was in bed.

Quickly and quietly, we got in the place, had a quick cuppa and got comfy in the living room. Our plan was to leave early in the morning, preferably before Veronica got up. A few hours after we bedded down, we were woken up with a start. The door opened and I opened one eye and to my horror, saw her stood there shaking with anger, her face red with rage. As I was thinking "Oh shit", Tiny let out a low but steady growl, He was not having us threatened. Veronica quickly closed the door and we didn't hear from her again. It was a massive relief the next day, everything got done that we needed and we both were ever grateful to Tiny, the hero, for seeing her off. Once again, he had come to our rescue. It was just as well, I wouldn't like to have thought what would have happened, if he hadn't escaped the ambulance. Bless him, my Houdini Hound!!! <3

Chapter Seventeen..... Wiltshire July 1983

Splitting away.....

Back on site at Stonehenge, it was the end days before everyone went off. Some went back to Wales. Others went to other festivals, some even went abroad. I considered my Flying Herbal Doctor mission a blinding success. Stonehenge '83 was as awesome as the previous year. Although I made little money, I had gained a very good reputation, as a herbal healer. Gradually the site thinned out as everyone left. Zona went back to London and we left, to head back to Somerset. With everything packed up in the ambulance and the dogs in, off we went. I was nervous that we were once again, striking out on our own. There was always a certain safety in numbers, when there was a group of travelers. Now we were

on our own, I felt vulnerable and exposed. The plan was to head back to Somerset.



PHOTO BY HAZE EVANS.

A few miles down the road, stupidly, we ran out of petrol. Damn! So Alan went off to walk to the nearest petrol station, with jerry can in hand. I settled the dogs down then.... I fell asleep. Next thing I knew, the dogs were barking and the ambulance was surrounded by police " Oh no " I muttered, "Where's Alan? " He soon came back and the police began to question us both. The ambulance was completely illegal, with a poppadum label which actually looked the same colour, as that years current tax disc!! They issued Alan with a Five day wander ticket, where he had to produce those documents within that time span !! One of the police decided to take a closer look in the back of the ambulance and casually lifted up an upside down, large, long bucket. My heart sank as I knew what was under those buckets. SHIT We were busted. They found all five cannabis plants, which had got quite large by this point. Utterly bogus!

We were arrested, and taken into Salisbury police cells. We were then moved to Warminster police cells, which was actually closer to where we were arrested. I guess Warminster police cells were full at the time!! The dogs were put in to the police kennels. Fairly, the police fed and looked after the dogs but we were fretting, as we knew the poor dogs would be so miserable. For Three days, we were stuck in those police cells, kept apart and I felt totally desolate. When I finally saw Alan, It was all too much. Sobbing I clung to him, as he hugged

me. "Aww isn't it sweet " said one policeman, sarcastically. Alan went absolutely ballistic at him and had to be frog marched away. Eventually, they made a decision to take it to court in Trowbridge, on a Saturday. I think they really wanted rid of us, to make a judge work on a Saturday! We did look a sight. The two of us handcuffed to policemen, in our hippy clothes and unkempt hair, walking among all the Saturday shoppers!! Funnier still were the glaringly obvious dope plants, being carried in buckets, by two more policemen.

The trial began and finished, quite quickly. I think the judge just wanted to bugger off home, rather than deal with a pair of sweaty hippies. Basically Alan was fined and the judge let me off, because of my "age". He probably had a 19 year old daughter himself and felt sorry for me. Back to the police station, we had to sign for our possessions and collect the dogs. It took a while , waiting in separate rooms. Eventually, we were released and more or less told to leave Wiltshire.

Later on, After we managed to park up, in Somerset. Alan produced a small package from his bag. With a cheeky grin, he opened it. What an opportunist! Alan had to sign out his belongings and the policeman forgot something and left the room. Alan had been briefly left alone with the evidence, the plants and carefully, serrupticiously, neatly and subtly, picked out the flowering buds on the plants! Just enough so that they wouldn't notice, Quick as a flash. So we had a celebratory smoke with Geoff and Nad, once we got back to Bridgwater!!

A day or so later, Alan and I began to feel ill. We had crippling stomach cramps and the most hideous nausea and vomiting I had ever known. Luckily, there were public loos that were very rarely used, near Geoff and Nad's, because then the diarrhea started. I had never felt so ill in years. this was no ordinary bug or food poisoning. I had never known anything like it. We kept away from people as much as possible and it got really rough. Somehow, we found out that several travelers had contracted Dysentery after Stonehenge and it clicked: We had caught Dysentery from one of the two police cells we were kept in. I went down with it first, and the cell in Salisbury was dirty and smelled funny. Obviously the traveler locked in there before me was carrying Dysentery :(

We spent a good two to three weeks puking, shitting, sweating and feeling like utter death. I began shitting blood. We weren't registered with any doctors, so once again, out came the herbs! We used peppermint, mallow, Melilot to drink as tea, Peppermint is always good for the stomach and digestive system. Mallow and Melilot are very soothing and gentle on the stomach, as well as having antiseptic qualities. After three weeks of minimal food, (couldn't keep it down) we used Slippery Elm and Arrowroot to get our stomachs, gently working again. Eventually and slowly, we recovered and gradually were able to eat properly again. Then it hit me. Though my weight had dropped to 61/2 - 7 stone, I had survived a nasty attack of Dysentery that had floored others, men included. Kudos to Alan and me. It has probably contributed to my cast iron stomach ever since!!

Chapter Eighteen.....Green Gathering '83 Late July.....

The Queen of Cups....

We ended up in Creech Heathfield, where we stayed with Tom and where Tiny and She were born. Completely recovered from the dreaded Dysentery, we felt victorious and wondered who to go and see first, as we hadn't seen anyone for a while. Alan wanted to see his pal Ron, who I met, while we were staying in Tom's old farmhouse. Ron was a humorous man. He was Scottish, with a stammer. I liked him enormously and he was always fun to have a smoke with. Then Alan went off to London. I was left with the dogs at Ron's, which was ok. At least we weren't getting landowner hassle but by the time Alan came back, I was getting restless and fed up, so I decided to head Tiny and me off to the Green Gathering, held near Glastonbury. I knew lots of people would be there and felt excited. I wondered if Jan would have had her baby yet. The morning of my trip came and I pulled one random tarot card from my beloved New Age tarot pack. It was the Queen of cups. A fair, loving, kind and benevolent woman, a mother type. I wasn't fair haired, maybe it meant that I had a nurturing role to play at this festival. I had to wait and see, as I had to get there first!!

The journey was cool because the first part of it was by boat! Ron had his own rowboat and took me part of the way, along the river. I can't remember exactly where I left the boat but what a splendid way to travel. I was already on a high! I hitchhiked the rest of the way and got there quite quickly and smoothly, as I recall. It was brilliant when I did get there. Everyone was there, all the usual suspects. Rainbow Dave, Haze, Pete and Gerry, Zona and Jan and Adrian. Jan had only just, a few hours earlier, given birth to a boy. He was cute, with lots of dark hair. Jack they called him. Adrian made me tea and I sat with Jan and newborn Jack. I couldn't get over how she had given birth with no pain relief, no midwives and no medical intervention. She had even cut the cord herself, or Adrian might have. Brave lady. Jack was her youngest. She was in her 40's and I knew she already had several grown up kids, some in Ireland.

There was no shortage of people to visit and it was great to see everyone. I spotted Zona and she was in a most happy mood. She had got work at the festival and earned a stay in a tent and food for the night. We both had to get to London the next day and she offered me a stay with her. Perfect, ideal. That was my bed sorted for the night! We had a wander and we heard drumming, so followed the sound into a tipi circle. Loads of people were dancing along to the music and drumming, that was nearly hypnotic. We had a great time and I loved that tribal feeling, of being close to the earth. After about half an hour, Zona had to get back to running the café; I noticed Tiny had disappeared. "Damn " I thought, "Where the hell has he gone?" I kept his food and bowl with me and went over to see Pete and Gerry, as I spotted their bright yellow bus.

I was surprised to see that Pete was on his own. I was disappointed Gerry wasn't there, she was always great fun and a very kind soul. She had helped me out a lot in the past and I thought the world of her. Things felt a bit weird when Pete informed me that Gerry had left him. " What?" I said in disbelief. " "Yup, she's up'd and left me for a black man " he said, looking visibly upset. I shifted uncomfortably in my seat, in their cozy bus. I stopped long enough for a quick smoke and made my excuses. It was too quiet without Gerry and Keith. "Come back later on " He asked, " I'll make a meal, we can have a nice smoke and spend some time together " Alarms bells were going off in my head and I mumbled something like, " Might see you later, if I have found my dog " I was still worried, no sign of Tiny and he was easy to spot.

I had recently hennaed his tail, the white half, so he was easy to spot. I was beginning to worry that he would be hungry. It was past his feeding time and he was always hungry, so why wasn't he back?

Soon, I bumped into Haze. It was always brilliant to see her. She bubbled over with joy and enthusiasm and I loved her company. We sat down and had a smoke. Haze packed a mean chillum and after several, we were giggling and waffling like school kids!! I told her about Pete and his request to see me there after this supposed bust up with Gerry. "I reckon he's after something else Rae," She quipped. I did have a very brief history with Pete, before he met Gerry. We lasted about two months, I was way too dappy, clumsy, awkward and rebellious for him! Eventually, after many a laugh with Haze, I went off to find Zona. Still no Tiny. I was getting quite concerned now, as it was getting late.

When I did find Zona, she was dreadfully upset. For some reason, her boss had flipped out at her, told her to fuck off and thrown her out of his tent, the tent we were meant to be staying in! I tried desperately hard to calm her down, she was sobbing loudly but something seemed wrong to me. Something else. She was virtually hysterical, acting very strangely and her eye pupils were hugely dilated. With horror, I realized she had been spiked. What a bastard, whoever did that. It was plainly a hallucinogenic, mushrooms or acid and I had to act quickly. I gently explained to her that she had a drink that was spiked, she was tripping and that she would eventually come down and feel normal again. I promised her that this was only temporary and that I would stay with her. So that was Pete's cozy little dinner and smoke out of the window! I didn't really mind, he creped me out and I was far better, helping Zona. In her state it would have been cruel to leave her.

It turned out to be a very long night, as she lurched between terror and ecstasy, hysteria and laughter and she found that she felt worse for staying still and much better for moving and walking around. So I walked around with her, through the night, as she babbled, cried and waffled away! She had never tripped before, so I spent a lot of time making her laugh and showing her cool things. It was utterly exhausting. I was still worried about Tiny and decided to go and check if any of my friends had spotted him. Zona came with me, as I still didn't want to leave her on her own. The first truck I recognized was Rainbow Dave's "Hi Dave" I said, "you seen Tiny?" He came out of the back and grinned, "Yeah, I did. He was looking a bit sorry for himself, so I fed him" Phew, thank fuck! "Thanks Dave, I was worrying about him being hungry" He scratched his head and said "I don't know where he's gone now though, he should still be on site"

So off we went, I thought maybe Jan and Adrian might have seen him by now. By this point, Zona was beginning to enjoy herself but I was still furious with whoever spiked her, in the first place. We bumped into Haze, about five minutes later. "Hey, You can stop worrying about Tiny, I saw him about an hour ago and I fed him too, so he won't be hungry. I tried to keep him with me but the bugger gave me the slip!" she enthused, with her broad smile. Zona and I laughed out loud "Typical Tiny" she giggled, "He's blagged two free meals already" I avoided Pete's bright yellow bus, as I didn't want to get cozy with him. Plus he wouldn't have a clue where Tiny was, as he wasn't particularly keen on dogs, especially Tiny, who was a veritable canine whirlwind!! We got to Jan and Adrian's at last and I gently knocked on their truck door, in case Jan was trying to settle Jack. "Hi come in" she said, waving us both in. "

Seen Tiny?" I asked. " Yep, he's been here, I introduced him to Jack and gave him some dinner too ! " My eyes rolled, as I realized what he had done. " Thanks Jan " I said gratefully " It appears that Haze and Rainbow Dave have fed him as well!" We all had a good laugh about it though. That dog was clever and had just pulled off a triple free dinner scam!! It was a great source of amusement indeed.

Eventually, Zona had come down off her unwanted trip enough, to want to finally rest. Still, we hadn't seen Tiny and I hoped we would find him by the morning because we had to go to London. We had

gotten a lift from a coach arranged, as they were heading up to Uxbridge. This was ideal and would save us hours of hitchhiking. The problem now was, where were we going to sleep? The weather was very warm still, 83' was a good summer. So we thought that our only option was to sleep under the massive pyramid tent. This we did with confidence, as it was bright, cheery and warm. Someone had lit a small portable brazier and was boiling water with it. I drifted into unconsciousness, feeling warm and cosy, laying by the fire was lush, and my chilly bare feet were the closest.

Suddenly, I was awoken by screaming , intense and extreme pain. Flailing and screaming in agony and shock, I knew what had happened. The boiling water had unbalanced from the brazier and had poured all over my bare feet. The pain was excruciating but in the very next second, I was screaming and screeching even more. Ice cold water was being thrown over my scalding feet. The pure shock of it nearly sent me mad, as I trembled and cried, in a tremendous amount of pain. It was Zona, who was pouring the water. I screamed and thrashed about and eventually my feet were getting less painful. I was shocked but extremely grateful for her lightning speed reactions and knowledge of first aid. I couldn't thank her enough. She would have none of it! " You helped me earlier, now it's my turn " she chirruped. I did doubt that I would be able to get to London, the following day. I imagined my feet would be completely blistered by the morning. I decided I would have to wait until then, to make a decision.

Morning came, The people who were giving us a lift to Uxbridge were nowhere near ready to go yet. This I was relieved about, as I was desperate to find Tiny. After a couple of minutes, I remembered my feet and the horrific scalding they got. What? Why they didn't hurt at all! I looked closely at them and there wasn't one single mark on them, no blisters, nothing! " Zona you're a bringer of miracles" I bubbled over, elated that they didn't hurt at all, not one bit. We had tea and breakfast, then I began to trawl around for Tiny. " There he is " I shrieked. He had his nose in someone's bin, cheeky sod, after three meals and all.

He spotted us and bounded over, very glad to see us. " Bloody hell boy, you're the size of a horse!!" I chirped. He did look very full still, but wagged his hennaed tail furiously. We headed off to the coach we were getting our lift with, when I bumped straight into Pete. "Oops, " I muttered. Zona lit up a fag, while he took me aside. "Where were you? " he asked , very agitatedly. " I had everything ready for you, a meal, candles, good music, some wine and a pipeful of the best Columbian grass around " I shuffled nervously, "Um , my mate got into some bother, I had to help her out " I mumbled apologetically. " You really missed out Rae " He said, shaking his head with disappointment. I didn't want to go into details about how she was spiked and having a really bad trip .Plus, even if it had all been fine, I still didn't want to

cozy up with him. " I gotta go or I'll miss my lift, I'm sorry Pete, We'll catch up in Bridgwater soon eh? " I made my getaway, still confused and a little cross, that he could be like that, so soon after Gerry had "left him ".

The coach we were travelling on was amazing inside. It was filled with several convoy members, all heading up to London. I remember one guy, he had his small son (about four) with him. The little boy was called Pan and his dad played really excellent bongo drums, through the whole journey. The incessant beat of those drums relaxed and sent me into a kind of mini trance. I meditated over the past couple of days. The images flashing through my mind. From me pulling the tarot card The Queen of cups, all through the journey by Ron's boat, the hitchhiking and the arrival. The dancing around with the tipi people, seeing my friends, Zona's bad trip and as my mind came to the present, I wondered what the significance of pulling out the queen of cups was. Was I the Queen of cups, was it Zona for saving my feet from terrible burns? Was it Haze for saving my sanity, after Pete's strange invitation? Or was it Jan for actually giving birth there, on that festival site?. Jan and Haze both taught me things, while at Greenham and I realized that maybe I had in turn, taught Zona things.

Suddenly, the tarot card's meaning was crystal clear. It meant the nurturing, that is inherent in all females. It meant how we had all looked out for each other, over the last 24 hours and that nurturing came in all sorts of shapes and sizes. I felt good for coming to that conclusion and began to join in on the conversation Zona was having with Irvin, a tall lean, very dark guy wearing a Hawaiian shirt. I will never forget that shirt, or Irvin. He almost seemed camp and quite eccentric. He was pretty straight edge, which was unusual at festivals, but he was charming and had charisma. Zona and him certainly hit it off. The coach arrived in Uxbridge and we thanked the people who owned the coach, for their hospitality. After all, it was their home as well.

Chapter Nineteen.....London

Tobacco road.....

Irvin lived in Uxbridge. We stopped off there and all had Baths and something to eat. Irvin had to run some errands in London, pretty much in the centre; so when it was time for us to go, he offered to walk with us part of the way. This was cool, as it was into the evening hours and it was one hell of a long walk. We had no money for train, bus or taxi, so walking was our only option. Irvin was funny in both ways. He had a real hatred of cigarettes and tobacco and began to try to talk Zona and me into giving up smoking. " Not a chance " I said firmly. Zona was quite persuadable and gullible and I think deep down, she wanted to impress Irvin; so she agreed to try and stop smoking. In those days there was no help, no e cigs, no nicotine patches, so she went cold turkey.

I tried to smoke less because I felt it was unfair on Zona. On we walked through London, by Regents park and on up through. It was almost from one side of London to the other and I knew it was going to be a long night. Tiny loved it. He was a very active dog, who needed an enormous amount of exercise. After his overeating stint at the Green Gathering, he had a lot

of calories to walk off and oodles of A.D.H.D energy!! "It's alright for him " I groaned. After very little sleep the previous night, I was pretty much done in already. We walked miles, through London ,dodging drunks and weird people and finally got to Islington. Balls Pond road.Irvin had gone ahead and Zona nipped into a garage quickly. She came back looking pleased with herself. She produced a pack of ten. " I'm having a swift, sneaky fag, while he's ahead." She lit up frantically, desperate for the nicotine. After a few wondrous drags, she sighed heavily with relief. Too late! The bright lights of the garage had blinded her vision and neither one of us spotted Irvin, marching back to us. He was not a happy man.In fact, he completely lost it with us.

Waving and gesticulating with his arms, he began a massive tirade. " HOW DARE YOU, YOU BROKE YOUR WORD " he yelled in Zona's face. She hurriedly stubbed out her half smoked fag, " I'm sorry, I couldn't help it. I promise it's my last one, I promise!" she blurted tearfully.

"It's too late, you've blown it with me

" he snapped. " That's it, you have chosen your path, There " he pointed ahead along Balls Pond road " you just go down your tobacco road, I'm leaving " Zona's mouth dropped open with shock and bewilderment, as he strode off in the opposite direction. That was the last we ever saw of him. I thought he had over reacted enormously- stupid, stropopy git, and to leave two women alone in the middle of London, in the early hours of the morning over a fucking cigarette; what an almighty prick! To cheer Zona up, I began to sing "Tobacco road " by Eric Burdon and War!! I changed the lyrics, to take the piss out of Irvin and soon we were laughing and chatting happily and celebrating by smoking fags !!!! We eventually got back to Hackney. I visited a few people and went back to Bridgwater. Zona stayed on in London.

I decided to visit Pete, as I felt I had been a bit rude to him. I knocked the door. To my surprise, it was Gerry who answered. "Hiya " I said brightly, really glad to see her. It wasn't long before tea was made and a fat joint rolled! " So how have you been ? " I asked tactfully. " Better now " she said. " Keith and I have been really ill " Ah.... " Keith started getting ill, at the Green Gathering and I had to bring him home" , she continued. " I got ill, a few days after " The penny dropped. So Gerry hadn't left Pete for another guy at all. She had left because her eight year old son was really ill.Luckily, Pete was out and Gerry and Keith were both feeling a lot better. After a while, I left to go and meet Alan, feeling really glad that I hadn't gone to Pete's cozy evening and stayed with a mate going through a hard time instead. After all, this is what the new age was all about. Loving one another and helping those in trouble. i also went to visit my bestie Zeni. She had not long given birth to her beautiful son Kai.

Chapter Twenty.....Davidstow moor Cornwall August '83

The Crazy Wilderness.....

For a while, we headed off, in Uinen Este to Davidstow moor in Bodmin, Cornwall. I can't remember if there was a festival before we got there or not. It was very interesting though. We needed to be somewhere for a few weeks. She was getting very large with puppies and her due date was creeping up. When we arrived, Lo and behold, Pete the (I can fix your van) bus and Fran were there with their three kids and twins on the way, due in three or four weeks!

Better still, Trish, David, Kathy and Jenny were there too. :) I loved my time with Trish, she was a great friend (still is), fantastic company and always very interesting with her very own unique brand of friendly chaos! It didn't help that Kathy had recently been knocked down by a car. She had her leg broken and it was in a caste, poor girl.

Over that time. Pete developed a massive crush on Trish. Fran was going back to Wales intermittently but I knew that nothing ever happened between Pete and Trish. She was not interested one bit and she did absolutely nothing to encourage him. It was all one way traffic and it began to freak her out. I think he might have been going through a midlife crisis, because he got silly and started dabbling in witchcraft but using it for the wrong reasons and we all know what happens when people use the craft for selfish reasons.....Fran was not amused at this understandably, she was about to give birth to twins. She thought Trish had woven a spell over him but I assured her she hadn't. Trish never used her powers for her own ends.

I began to worry where She was going to have her pups. She was swollen and visibly uncomfortable now and Alan was sure it was a larger litter. At least in Dalston lane, we had a large room for her. Now all she had was a cramped ambulance and chaos all around. "As long as she doesn't try giving birth on my head!" I quipped breezily. "Consider it an honour" Alan remarked, in witty riposte. I always felt that She was a strange, sad soul. She always had this solemn, dead pan facial expression and hungered for attention. A gentle, kind spirit and a brilliant mother. She had sense.... real sense. She did in fact, find a brilliantly, clever and discreet place to give birth to her puppies. It was away from the ambulance, Pete's bus and Trish's bus. She managed to give birth to her brood, under some shrub, or small tree roots. When we found her, it was a roomy yet warm and cozy hole we found her in.

Her puppies were so cute and numerous. I think she had about 14 pups. I can't remember the exact number but it was a bigger litter and after a few days, we saw why. It looked very much like there were multiple dads! Some of them looked like Rocky, a Doberman cross breed; as they had the classic black and tan markings and head shape. Most of them were definitely Max's! They had his dark brown, black coat, Alsatian head and ears. The males were proper chubby and fluffy, like bears!! The big surprise was that three or four of them looked a lot like Tiny. They had his body shape, head shape and were black and white like him. Two of them had his Pointer streak down their faces, so adorable.

A few days later, Fran came back and Pete went off to Wales for a few days. The atmosphere was much better. Fran was enormous and very uncomfortable. She had a transit van and Her, Trish, myself and most of the kids went out for a drive. For some reason, they were looking for stone circles and stone crosses. I knew these marked ley lines. Trish felt like there was some dodgy energy around the area and she wanted to pinpoint it, I guess. Fran drove and Trish sat in the front, I sat in the back with the kids.

After a few miles, Trish felt that they were getting closer to the source of the energy. She said she felt something malevolent, like something bad was about to happen. By the side of the road, we could see a large stone cross. "That's it... it's coming from there" she pointed, as Fran braked sharply. They quickly got out, Trish, Fran, Brian, Angie and Jenny. I waited in the back and kept an eye on Ashley. My mind mulled over Trish's words, that something bad was going to happen..... It did. Ashley, quick as lightning, made his way over to the passenger

seat, the window was partially open and as the active toddler grasped on to the window, that van door swung open. There he was, dangling several feet in the air above the ground below. Sensing the danger he was in, he started to cry. Quick as a flash, I hurtled forward to the front, in the split second of instinct. I managed to rescue him and lift him away from the open van door before he fell and hurt himself. Half a minute later, they came back and Fran was immensely grateful to me. I never knew what conclusion Trish had come to, except that there was evil coming.

Fran left to go to Wales and Pete was back. He continued his obsession with Trish and began dabbling in the craft again. He managed to badger my old tarot deck out of me for "borrowing purposes". There was no way he was borrowing my New Age Deck... at all. He ended up using the deck, in some kind of magic ritual to win Trish's heart. When Trish found out about it, she urged me with tears in her eyes to burn that pack, which I did. She knew her stuff with things like that and he was noodling with some very strange energy. Within a matter of hours, he got rushed to hospital with acute pain, something to do with hepatitis or his liver. What ever it was, it was serious enough to stop him in his tracks, while Fran came for the kids, he was in hospital.

It was a strange fact that anyone who threatened or did Trish wrong, nearly always came to a bad end and it was never Trish's doing. Somehow, the laws of karma were on her side and punishment was meted out to people who wronged her, without her ever having to do anything at all.... Lesson learned? Don't fuck with Trish! She may be little but she's mighty! I also remember, one night. Alan was away, and for some reason, Trish's bus was somewhere else/ broken down/ something but basically, they had no truck or van to sleep in not even a tent. So Trish, me, Jenny, David and Kathy with her leg in a full cast !! and Tiny all slept somehow, in that ambulance! Luckily She was still in her hidey hole, with her huge litter of pups. It was chaos though, as Kathy took up a lot of space with her leg in a cast :0 It wasn't her fault though, that she couldn't bend her leg.

Bodmin moor was a desolate place and a scary place to be lost in. I had gone up to London and seen Haze again. She told me a horror story of how she too, had gone down with the dreaded Dysentery. She got it around the time of the Green Gathering and ended up so ill, she had to taken to hospital and put on a drip. I was mortified to hear this and realized what a horrendously, nasty strain of the bug this was. Haze was a fit, healthy woman who was hospitalized by it. I was already underweight when I caught it and somehow managed to get over it, without any medical intervention. How? Above all of this, I was hugely relieved that she was ok now and completely recovered. I think she was living in New Cross, by this point and I will never forget sitting there with her, when a brick came smashing through the window. I was mortified but it apparently was quite a common occurrence, in that part of New Cross. Zona had moved and I managed to catch up with her, at her new place. It was well away from the horrors of Horton road!! and she was happy.

All too soon, it was time for me to return back to Cornwall and the ambulance, as Alan had plans to move on. Davidstow was all but finished and everyone had gone, even Trish. The coach was a late afternoon one and I knew it would be already dark by the time my coach journey ended in Launceston. I then had to get back to Davidstow and the moor. I was very glad to have Tiny with me, as it took a while to get a lift. It was teeming with rain and getting

quite windy too. We walked miles and miles and I became unsure of whether I was even going in the right direction. It was blowing up a proper storm by this point and I got more and more stressed because nothing looked familiar. Slowly the horrible truth dawned on me. I was hopelessly lost.

The wind and rain got worse and I could hardly see a few feet in front of me, let alone where I was meant to be going. Panic crept in and I lost it. I began to cry and sob hysterically. Poor Tiny looked at me sadly wagging his tail gently. I wandered aimlessly, for I don't know how long. Then somehow, I spotted something large and pale in the distance. Getting closer, it was a large shape, vehicle shaped, ambulance shaped! There she was, like a ghost in the mist.... My home Uinen Este. How overjoyed I was. I lit the tilly lamp, made some food, and fed Tiny. We checked on She, fed her, sorted fresh water and left her to it. I then went to bed, curled up with a good book and Tiny. Alan was due back the next day.

Chapter Twenty One.....September '83

Accidents will happen.....

The puppies were now big enough to travel. They had been making their way over to the ambulance for a while and were a very playful and lively bunch!! With everyone gone from Davidstow, we headed towards Liskeard. I don't know how we ended up there or how Alan could possibly know or have been connected with. I suspect a friend put him on to this. We went to a place called Doublebois. There lived John Knight a.k.a. Superdad. He had two houses in the same street. He had a wife and a mistress and about 30 odd kids between them. The kids were age ranged between newborn up to in their twenties. Oddly enough, the wife and mistress were ok with each other and somehow it worked. They were almost like a community in themselves, there was so many of them! Previously they had lived several miles apart, the two households. Earlier in the year, they had been granted closer accomodation. Bless them, they agreed to let us park up for a couple of weeks while the puppies were properly weaned. They were an awesome family and so many of them! The only names I remember were... Rory, who was two, Hazel was three, and Rilla was fourteen. There were plenty who were in between those ages and older and younger.

I couldn't help but admire them, as somehow amidst so many hectic kids, there was order and routine, they were brilliant. :) The puppies got bigger, livelier and stronger. Tiny played lots with them and one particular afternoon, tired out, he sprawled out in their living room. Here was an amazing demonstration of his tolerance of kids. Tiny's underside was white, under his belly and his legs. In the middle are his bollocks, which are jet black and as noticeable as a beacon on a dark night, particularly to a curious two year old! Rory toddled over and with his pudgy hand, grabbed and twisted Tiny's balls. "Oh Christ" I thought in dismay. Poor Tiny leapt up with an almighty yelp and ran off whimpering, into their back garden. Carol was horrified and told Rory never to grab at dogs anywhere, let alone there. " Very sore place, bad Hurty" she explained. We were hugely relieved that he hadn't gone for the kid, or at least snapped at him. " A lot of dogs would have had him. It's the worst place to be grabbed and any reaction would have been instinct" She went on. The truth was, although Tiny was a sod for fighting

other dogs and thieving food, he was extremely good with kids and tolerated pretty much anything. This was a very lucky fact for me over the decade to come.....

After a while, we knew it was time to move on. The puppies were eating solid food and needed homing. Alan had to go back up to Somerset for a court hearing and I felt hugely reluctant to leave Cornwall. I had a bad feeling about traveling again and decided to consult the I Ching. That didn't make me feel much better when it said " Do not travel North East, there is danger, though it is temporary danger" I did not like the sound of it but I knew we had no choice in the matter. So we bid that massive and awesome family goodbye and went on our way.

Not long before Liskeard, Alan noticed the ambulance was already low on fuel. For some odd idea he thought if he coasted the vehicle, it would save fuel. We were coasting downhill. Alan went to take a bite of his sandwich with one hand and before we knew it, the ambulance began lurching from side to side, as Alan completely lost control of the vehicle. It was terrifying. We were jackknifing, spinning and spiraling, all across the road. Screaming in terror, I clung on to what I could, with books, jars of herbs and puppies raining on me, hitting my head and my back. The dogs yelped and the puppies screeched, there was utter pandemonium, pure horror. Eventually somehow, the ambulance managed to crash sideways into a wall. Bruised, battered and shaken, we managed to ascertain the dogs and pups were fine.

Understandably, someone phoned the police. Alan was desperately trying to move the ambulance to a safe place, out of the way. A police woman came over and ended up having a furious argument with Alan. She did not want Alan to move the vehicle " This is a dangerous vehicle, you cannot move it" she yelled. "It's my home, I have to get it off the road and safe" screamed Alan. Understandably, he was very shaken and upset. The dogs were barking and the puppies, squealing. Eventually more police arrived and they held up the traffic, while Alan moved the ambulance. Then the police offered us a cup of tea and a chat about what had happened with the accident, back at the station. We knew we had no choice really. So, Alan started the ambulance and we followed the police escort, back to Liskeard police station. Sensing trouble ahead, I quickly swallowed the eighth of hash we had. We arrived at the police station and their cozy "let's have a cup of tea" attitude quickly changed. Instead of the cup of tea they promised, they decided to search our home for drugs! Luckily I had swallowed the only ones I thought we had. They brought out several police sniffer dogs towards the ambulance and Tiny went absolutely berserk. He was protecting his puppies and there was no way ANY dog was going anywhere near them, let alone a police dog! He was so ferocious, like a thing possessed! I had never seen anything like it and I had witnessed him in hundreds of dog fights. The police dogs actually cowered in fear and refused to go near the ambulance. We tried getting Tiny out, which I eventually managed, but the interior of our home was such a horrendous mess, with herbs spilled everywhere from the smashed jars; they just gave up. Meanwhile, I was truly coming up on the hash I had swallowed. Probably not my wisest move, especially when I was interrogated by a seven foot hulk of a man. The Chief D.S, of that part of Cornwall. As he fired questions at me, the hash got stronger and he seemed to fill up the entire room! Scary stuff! The interrogation took what seemed to be forever, but eventually we were allowed to go; with yet another five day wander ticket to deal with. We parked up in

Gunnislake and I remember hardly sleeping that night. The hash was very strong and I had the most restless, troubled night, filled with worry about the ambulance losing control again the next day. I apologized to Alan for eating our stash but he grinned and produced two more chunks of it. He had hidden it in one of the numerous jars of herbs we had that had very fortunately, not fallen out of the herb cupboards during the accident.

It was a nervy and tortuous journey back up to Somerset. I was terrified of having another accident. I think I was still in shock and wasn't thinking straight. It was ironic to be afraid of my own home. I was traumatized for weeks, after that. Alan was fined for his misdemeanors and we travelled around Somerset visiting our friends which was great, apart from the journeys in between. Every time we drove, I felt nerve wracked, tense, scared and so on edge, it made me feel physically sick.

We visited, Sandy in Bawdrip, and Shaz in North Petherton (she was very pleased to see us and eager for news on Helen) especially since she had a baby son herself, since I had last seen her. Then we visited Tonto and Peggy in Burrowbridge, then Jeff and Trish in Stawell. It was on one of these visits, that we noticed an empty farmhouse in Moorlinch. We stopped to investigate and found that yes, it was

completely uninhabited. It was in a poor state, almost derelict in parts with no water or electricity. That didn't bother us. We had quite a bit of water in two five gallon containers plus friends nearby we could refill from, plus tilly lamps and candles. So, it began to look like a good idea. It would give us an opportunity to sort out the ambulance properly, as it was still in a mess from the accident. Alan had also bought a wood burner stove to connect up and the dogs and pups needed somewhere to stretch their legs properly.

The old farmhouse was so run down and had no floor or ceilings in some of the rooms. We found one room upstairs that was ok, at least it was dry and draught free. We settled down for the night and drifted off to sleep.

Chapter Twenty Two.....Autumn '83

The Hunted and the Hunters...

The next morning came with a huge shock! The first thing we knew was ... sheer terror and a shotgun in our faces. The dogs were barking and snarling, but this guy didn't give a fuck "GET OUT OF MY PROPERTY" he roared. This was one ANGRY farmer/landowner! Almost, Armageddon broke out and a lot of shouting and growling and barking from the dogs. I had to restrain Tiny physically and after a while, Alan managed to calm the guy down and told him our situation. The previously furious farmer, actually listened and softened slightly." Well, you can stay here for now, but I'm seeing my solicitor." he said and off he went.

After a couple of days, he returned. His solicitor had advised him to take us to court for re possession, in case we stayed there indefinitely. This was to cover his back from any squatting laws. In reality, the farmer struck a deal with Alan. He would give us three weeks to get the ambulance sorted out and stove put in. By the end of the three weeks, the court date would have come through but if we were gone, there would be no need for a hearing.... win, win all round really. Funny thing was, he turned out to be a really nice guy! He brought us

firewood, food and even helped us with some of the renovation in the ambulance. I remember him giving us a cowl for the chimney!!

It had turned out, that he had heard very bad press about New Age travelers. Probably via the tabloids. (GUN CONVOY) No wonder he had his shotgun on him! I think as surprised as we were that he turned out to be a good person; he was equally surprised to find we weren't going to outstay our welcome, rip him off or make a nuisance of ourselves. We all ended up with a healthy amount of respect for each other. At least he gave us a chance and we proved that not all convoy, were gun toting psychos! As we left on good terms, he even said we could park up there occasionally on his land, as long as it wasn't for more than three days at a time and not to tell ANYONE else about it " I don't want a bloody festival 'ere do I? ". He couldn't have been fairer than that really.

The puppies were getting larger and more hectic by the day. They were on several meals a day and almost ready for homing. A few of them were already spoken for. Alan's plan was to home those spoken for, then head up to the Quantock hills and park up there, for as long as we could get away with.

Festivals were pretty much over with for the year and there had been a load of trouble at the Inglestone common festival, so we were glad we hadn't managed to get there.

We got to the Quantocks and it felt ironic really. This is where Alan wanted us to be, originally. On the Quantock hills. Only we weren't living in a hole, we were parked up in Uinen Este. We had about half the puppies left by this point, which was lucky; as we were getting seriously cramped while they were getting bigger. A few times, we were moved on by angry landowners but after a couple of days, something worse happened. We managed to get stuck backwards down a narrow, leafy and very steep lane, known as Frog Hill on the map. We were stuck, well and truly, down the narrowest part. Either the ambulance was stuck in the mud or it had broken down, I can't remember which. We managed to cope, just about, and got used to living and sleeping on an extreme slope! The worst thing was that the pups were strong and clever enough to break down the barrier Alan had made to stop them getting on our bed and worse still, they were pissing and shitting all over it and I couldn't stand it.

Alan went away for a few days, leaving me with the ambulance, Tiny and pups. I can't remember if he took She or not. Inevitably, the "angry landowner " turned up. He softened , when he discovered I was on my own but was very quick to arrange that when Alan returned, he would tow us out. The next morning, I woke up to Tiny going ballistic, he was barking and growling furiously. I could see why. There was a full scale hunt, heading straight for us. The fox came first, followed by dozens of baying hounds. The fox managed to squeeze past or underneath but the hounds were trapped by the ambulance and the closely surrounding trees, shrubs and foliage. The horsemen came after and were absolutely livid and began to shout at me. Tiny was going totally apeshit at them! He was protecting his puppies and went mental at the crazed, frustrated hounds. It was utter chaos, and the horsemen had no choice but to turn back and take their hounds with them! They were seriously annoyed that we had fucked up their chances of a kill. I was stoked for the fox, as he had got away. The hunt was sabotaged and I didn't have to lift a finger!! Fox 1 Hunters 0 :) Result.

When Alan got back, we were towed off as promised. We got Uinen going and went to another part of the Quantocks. I went to Bridgwater one day, to visit people and get some

supplies and I waited for a bus back to Goathurst or Enmore. The bus stop was next to a television shop. A little boy with his mum spotted the Dangermouse program, on one of them "Look mummy, Dangermouse!" he cried excitedly. "Yes dear, " she replied "If we hurry home, we'll see the rest of it" Then it hit me.... Home. The word home. Although I loved that ambulance, it had become a symbol of fear and dread for me. I was still terrified of another accident and still dreading a winter of angry landowners or curious, promotion hungry police officers moving us on.

One morning, yet again , I woke up in a pool of puppy piss and shit .Something snapped. I realized that I couldn't go on living like this. It was great in the summer, when there was safety in numbers but being moved on all the time really got to me. I ached for four walls, a proper bed, a bath and above all SECURITY. I dreamed of having a flat, a job and a life again, instead of my miserable existence of dodging the police and angry farmers. We went to visit Geoff and Nad, which always cheered me up. Alan went out to the ambulance to get some dog food, in order to feed the dogs and a policeman stopped him.

That policeman gave Alan an ultimatum; either leave Somerset or end up arrested and the ambulance impounded. Basically the Somerset police were fed up with us and wanted us out of the county.

We drove to Devon and I told Alan that I was going to stay with my mum for a few days, to have a serious think about my life. I could no longer stand being shouted at, moved on and the smell of puppy shit. Much as I loved those puppies, it got way too much and was driving me insane. Alan had to go off at times and I couldn't bear the situation with the police. It had all taken it's toll on me, badly. The hippy dream had turned sour. I began to feel sure that I could save the world better from a flat or house, than living in constant fear. Alan heard of a peace camp, starting up in Morwenstow, Cornwall. So he dropped me off in Bideford, at mums and went on to Morwenstow, to the peace camp.

A few days later, Mum and Keith dropped me off at Duckpool, near Morwenstow. There I met Alan. He enthused about a group of people he had met at the peace camp, who were from near Holsworthy, Devon. He spoke of a couple called John and Mary, who had invited us to stay on their smallholding in Pyworthy, a hamlet close to Holsworthy. This was great news. However, I dropped a bombshell on Alan. I told him it was over for us and that I could not sustain a way of life living in the ambulance. I was happy to stay in Devon, but not living in an illegal vehicle. We went to John and Mary's. Alan, to work out what he was doing next and for myself, until I found my own place to live. I had truly had enough of the traveler lifestyle and felt that Alan and I had grown apart considerably. Alan took this quite badly, understandably, but meanwhile; we still had to live somewhere and the smallholding nicknamed "Boglands " was ideal.

Chapter Twenty Three..... Boglands Late November '83

The Reekers

So, I met John and Mary. John was a very tall, exuberant man. He was quite slim, with glasses and was very full on! His enthusiasm was boundless and I couldn't help but like him,

instantly. Mary was petite, dark and calm. She was friendly and bubbly but there was something deeper to her as well. She noticed everything and was astute and intelligent. Through John and Mary, I also met John Allegri, an ex biker from Exeter who was enormous fun. I also had the honour of meeting their friends, that they nicknamed "The Reekers" Marco, Debbo and Tony. They had not long moved down to Devon themselves; having come from Wallington, in Surrey. Debbo was amazing. Tall, dark and a real bohemian. She was the life and soul of the party, with many an amusing story to tell. She was curvy and colourful, an amazing artist, sculptress, singer and dancer and became one of my very best friends, for decades to come. Tony was Asian, tall, dark and interesting to talk to. I found it most amusing that he used to be Here and Now's chef, when they were on tour!! Marco was an enigma. A small but compact blonde haired man, with a cool beard. He was shy, quiet and had a true calmness and inner strength. Somehow with Marco, everything he said always made sense and was perfectly logical, even if it wasn't!!

Debbo and Marco had met at Wimbledon art college in the 70's. It came out about how they had all met Gong's band members including Daevid Allen, Gilli Smyth, Steve Hillage and Tim Blake. Annie Wombat and Suze The Blues too. Debbo got on well with both of them. Even more amazing was the fact that Mark and Deb had been involved in the famous Gong sit in, at Virgin Records, in 1975 (I think).

Apparently, Richard Branson had ripped them off (and the public) for the "Camembert Electrique" album and they had staged a large sit in, at his London office!! They drank all the red stripe beer by all accounts!!! It seemed these new friends of mine had an exciting history. I remember many fantastic evenings spent jamming, until the early hours. Tony and me on guitars and sometimes John. Debbo played penny whistle and sang, she had a good strong voice. Mark, or someone else, would play drums, tambourine or John's famous maracas!! Some nights, all of us would play the Judge Dredd 2000 board game. We had some hysterically, hilarious times playing that game!

The smallholding was four acres of land and two large caravans, with a clear running stream that had drinkable water. I stayed in one of those caravans for three months. John and Mary had, chickens (eggs and meat), Ducks, Geese (for meat), Goats (for milk), two pigs and a donkey. They had an insane but loveable dog called Disco! They also grew all their own vegetables and made their own delicious bread. John's carrots were legendary. Some of them were almost a foot long and proper chunky they were too ! They actually bought surprisingly little from the shops. Tea, Jam , Marmite and bog roll, that was about it! I loved their way of life, as they were virtually self sufficient. My new age traveler days were over but I still wanted to be a Rainbow Warrior and I still firmly believed that a new age would come where everyone would live in peace, respect the earth and love one another. They bred, reared and killed their own meat. The goose eaten at Christmas was undeniably superior, than any bought in the shops. It's oesophagus was converted to a kazoo and played in our nightly jamming sessions!!! It was John's accidental discovery and the source of huge amusement over Christmas '83 They even named it Gus!!!

John and Mary went to Exeter for a few days, to stay with John Allegri. Alan was away and I was left to look after the animals and smallholding. It was an absolute doddle, compared to being left in the ambulance, with angry farmers banging on the door. No one could tell me to

leave or move on. The luxury of staying somewhere safe, secure and with no threat of abuse was wonderful. So, I was glad to look after their animals. Quite a lot was involved. I had to milk two goats, twice a day and I just about got the hang of it! Jackie was easier to milk, as she was a lovely, sweet natured, brown Anglo Nubian goat. Dorwyn was a feisty, British Toggenberg and very skittish into the bargain!!

Then I had to feed the chickens, ducks and geese. That was a feat in itself, as the ducks would literally fly over to me, as soon as they spotted me with their food. Cleaning out the goat pens and Ruftuf's pen wasn't too bad. I was nervous of feeding and mucking out Wonksy though. She was a massive donkey and quite bad tempered. John and Mary had got her from a rescue place and she had been very badly treated by her previous owner. Poor Wonksy. Luckily she only tried to bite me once! It was quite a nip but bearable! Along side doing this twice a day, there were vegetables to pick, water to fetch and wood for the stove. It was a calm, rustic existence and I couldn't get over how self sufficient they actually were. It was like the Good Life for real and I loved it.

Mark and Deb lived in a shared house, at Grimscott, near Launcells and Tony had his own bungalow in Holsworthy. It was called Staddon Villa but we used to call it "Stagger Villa ", as we had many a good party up there. Tony was a generous host and had his own homebrew!!! Mark had three Bantams. A rooster called Charley and two hens called Farley and Barley. They had some lovely eggs from them.

They all belonged to the Holsworthy C.N.D group, which I got quite excited about. I showed them some photos from Greenham and they got enthusiastic " You must show these at the next meeting" Tony urged. The next meeting came and I sat there shyly, with my photos. Holsworthy C.N.D were a funny bunch. Nearly all of them were quite a bit older than me, mostly in their forties and over. Tony spoke up and introduced me, as a bright newcomer, who had freshly come from Greenham and lived the life at peace camps. He, Mark and Deb all thought I would breathe some fresh life into the group, perhaps even inspiring some N.V.D.A (non violent direct action) My photos went down like a lead balloon, they all seemed utterly bored and were more interested in planning the next Folk club meeting!! "What a dead loss" Tony spat " They had the chance to talk to someone real about actually being and living at a peace camp and they stuck their noses in the air" He was appalled, as were Mark and Deb. John and Mary weren't impressed either and they all vowed to give the Holsworthy C.N.D group a miss!

Chapter Twenty Four..... St Mawgan peace camp..... February 1984

Threads.....of fear

February brought another peace camp to go to. This one was at St Mawgan, Cornwall. It was a colourful and busy affair. Never anywhere near as the large demos at Greenham but John, Debbo, Tony , Mark and myself were there. Well, a few smokes and beers soon developed into a mass jamming session and people were loving it. We all ended up pretty plastered and I ended up sharing a tent with Mark. The following weekend; Mark and me went to visit Tony

and Deb, up at Stagger Villa. We sank sixteen pints of Mackesons between us before we got there, so it was indeed Stagger Villa!!! It was then that we became a couple.

I still loved my herbs and my dog and like Alan before, Mark grew a knowledge and talent for Astrology. By March 1984, we found a ground floor flat, in Bradworthy. The landlord also owned Stagger Villa, so Tony put in a word for us. Good old Marsland house!!! I was finally HOME! with no threat of being kicked out or moved on. It was heaven. I felt happy and secure for the first time in months. I started a herb garden and grew quite a variety of herbs.

Including; Rosemary, Fennel, Borage, Lemon Balm, Peppermint, Sage, Lavender, Thyme, Catnip and Chamomile. I loved the flat, especially the bathroom door that had been painted with a large elf on it. I loved it!

We had interesting neighbours too. Above us, lived Steve, Helen and their three kids. They were party animals and enjoyed a good drink and smoke. The next house on, was a bungalow, also owned by Tony's landlord. Braemar was mental because it housed the "Yobs" The yobs were a load of greasy looking, crazy guys, about six of them and two women!! I can't remember all their names but they were totally nuts!!! There was Jez, Nick and Pikey, they are the only ones who's names I recall and they were probably the saner members. Pikey was mental on a bike!!! I often went to the local pub "The Bradworthy arms" for them, to buy their alcohol, as they were all banned from the place!!

One time, Pikey offered to take me on the back of his bike. I agreed, feeling all nostalgic about my biking days !! Bloody hell!!!!.....He must've hit a ton, as I couldn't see a thing and we got there in literally

a second!! He was faster, than anyone I had been on a bike with except perhaps, Nigel from the Burnham on Sea faction of the Headhunters, back in '81!! The Yobs were indeed crazy and got into all sorts of trouble. Their gaff was disgustingly dirty and I even tried to do their dishes once, as they were eating off already used plates. It took a good soaking in very hot soapy water and a couple of good scrubs to get those dishes clean but I only ever did it the once!!!!

Sadly, things got very sour with the yobs, when we found out that two of them had broken into Debs place at Grimscott. Worse still, one of them killed one of Mark's chickens. Poor Farley was found dead, kicked to death :(They ended up seriously pissing off the landlord, Dennis Stevens and he went to court and got them evicted. Meanwhile , I was going through my own fears. We were in the time of the cold war and fresh from Greenham, I was still terrified of a nuclear war. I had a real dread and almost a phobia and having access to TV didn't help. The news was mainly about the miner's strikes but the Reagan/ Thatcher administration scared the hell out of me.

Worse still, was when the drama called "Threads" was televised. Mark and I sat down to watch it and we sat there with ever growing horror. It was a drama, centered in Sheffield, about a nuclear war. Threads left me shattered, stunned and almost numb with fear. It crept into my subconscious and I had recurring nightmares about nuclear war. These went on for months. The worst ones were when we actually got blasted and burned The easier, less frightening ones were where I could be doing anything, when the sirens would go off. That sound in my dream would actually scare me enough to wake up!!

On a nicer note, Haze came to stay with us for a while and it was amazing to see her. She was with Steve W, who thought he was a wizard!! She loved Bradworthy and the Devon countryside. Not long after, I had a visit from Trish, David and her daughters. They needed somewhere to live and Braemar was empty. Good old Dennis Stevens came to the rescue and Trish moved in next door!! Result :) Trish was pregnant again and her baby was due, the following February ('85). Mark had done his back in and David went away for a few weeks, so all the wood chopping was down to me! I actually enjoyed chopping wood and had plenty of experience from living at festivals.

Haze's cat Shiva was pregnant and we were all curious and looking forward to her first litter of kittens. Shiva was quite a striking cat. She was half Siamese and had the classic face and ears and the whole build, yet she was black and white. She was an extremely intelligent, beautiful cat and would accompany Haze, when we went out on local walks. The day came and I can't remember how many were born, but they were so cute. We ended up with two of them. Selene and Kerridwen. Selene was black and white like Shiva. She was hectic, cute and very loving. Kerridwen was more black, with much less white markings. She was the quieter one, beautiful yet more aloof and got on better with Tiny, than any of us!!!

Chapter Twenty Five.....Summer '85

The Beanfield Massacre

Christmas came and went and Trish was enormous! At little over five foot, her almost full term pregnancy made her look like a zeppelin and the poor girl was most uncomfortable. After a couple of false alarms, on February 27th, Trish gave birth to Leif (Lee) One bouncing 9lb 4oz boy, he was a whopper!!! Lee was a good baby, well chilled out and handsome, with his olive skin, dark hair and brown eyes. Kathy and Jenny both adored their little brother. Meanwhile, my herb garden was reflecting the spring and everything was growing beautifully. Trish had been to the '84 Stonehenge but with a four month old baby, she decided not to go this year..... Just as well, it turned out.

June arrived and so did news. Trish was sat in our living room and the ITN news happened to come on. There it was, new age travelers trying to get to Stonehenge. The government had recently changed the laws and the police were instructed to stop the festival. They were also instructed to " Break Skull ". Trish and I watched the footage, with sheer horror, as we both saw people we knew getting truncheoned and brutalized by the police. Trish cried out in dismay, as she spotted a pregnant friend of hers getting dragged out of her bus and being kicked by those bastard puppets of the Thatcher regime :(

It was horrific, seeing those poor people being manhandled and their homes smashed up and impounded. Worse still, some of them had kids, who were terrified. This was assault, criminal damage and purely barbaric. I felt desperately sorry for the travelers, who had done nothing wrong and wanted to go somewhere they had been going for decades. There was no excuse for the horrible way in which this was handled. The police disgusted me, as I realized that this could have so been us there, getting beaten and our home smashed up. The news report upset me greatly and I felt so glad that I was finally somewhere safe and secure but I was

worried for those people I knew, who were still travelers. I hoped that Alan wasn't among them. Horribly, it was not long after that Selene got run over and killed. I was so glad that she had already had a litter of kittens, one of which, went to Debbo, but was sorely gutted to lose Selene, she was such a mad character and I loved her enormously. END OF EXCERPT FOR BEANFIELD

Chapter Twenty Six.....

The After Years.....

Live Aid came and went. Haze was gone and life went on, with Trish next door. I loved Live Aid. At last it seemed that humanity was waking up. I thought Bob Geldof was a hero and Mark and me watched it with relish, in between walking Tiny!! It was perfect for me because it was music and it was for a good cause. I strongly believed that humanity would wake up and people would attain a higher level of consciousness. Everyone would care for the earth and it's people, rather than placing value on money and material things. I believed that we were moving into such an age, which would peak around the year 2000. About a month later, I discovered, very happily, that I was pregnant.....

Steve and Helen moved out, as they were expecting another baby too and Trish moved upstairs as there was much more room. Mark and I got married in the October. When I was five months gone, we moved to Woolsey, to be closer to Deb and Tony. On April 12th 1986, at eight minutes to nine in the morning, I gave birth to my beautiful son Taliesin. He was two weeks early and I hadn't even packed a bag for the hospital!! He was truly golden and lived up to his name, with his golden (radiant) eyebrows. A beautiful, happy and mellow baby. The following year felt like there was a wave of energy coming. Come August, I recognised what it was. This was one of the shifts in consciousness that I was looking forward to. August 17th 1987 The Harmonic Convergence. This was taken from the Hopi prophecy, that there would come a time that a people known as the Rainbow Warriors would heal the earth. A global meditation was arranged at sunrise at the Mayan Palenque, roughly afternoon for us. Special ceremonies were performed at certain sacred sites. Mount Shasta, Lake Titicaca, Ayers Rock, Glastonbury Tor, The great pyramid, Mount Baluka and the Himalayas. These all marked out the planet's earth chakras. These being the root, sacral, solar plexus, heart, throat, third eye and crown chakras respectively. There really seemed to be a huge surge in consciousness and I felt a wave of hope for the planet and humanity. I was also already pregnant with my second baby. :) Beth was born on May 15th 1988, at five minutes past noon, and was nearly two weeks late!! She was darker, with less hair and a lot feistier! She was a happy baby and had a sense of fun from the start.

My marriage with Mark broke up in July '88. Now, I am not going into any details about this here, as it isn't relevant to this story. All I will say is, it was largely my fault the marriage failed and I hurt a lot of people in the process. Not very new age at all eh? :(I was lucky that Alan was on hand to look after Tiny for me when I left for Bridgwater. This he did and very well too, Bless him.

By the end of January '89, I was homeless, in Somerset. Tal was living with Mark and Beth was with me and Tony, living in his car and shuttling between two communities, in Somerset. There were court battles over custody of the kids and it was a vitriolic time, that I won't expound upon here. Still, it was my own fault and I have no room, to bewail the consequences. Tony had a blue Citroen Dyane and somehow, the three of us managed to sleep and live in that car!! My previous experiences of living and surviving in small spaces came in super handy!

We usually only had to do this a couple of nights a week; as we stayed with two groups of people, during this time. Lower Rockes was in Butleigh, near Glastonbury. It was a large, old fashioned, L shaped, beauty of a house. It was massive, with about eight bedrooms and the most amazing attic room ever! Everyone living there was cool. Chrissie and Den Ray, Angie, Tina, Ark who I remembered from '87, at some celebration event going on in Devon. There was Halla, who lived in the coolest room, the attic and her bloke Bernie, who was a bit of a nutter when he hit the sauce!!!

Ferngrove was a large house, set in South Somerset. It was in a village called Woolston, near North Cadbury. Castle Cary was the nearest large town. Ark spent a lot of time here. So too, lived Chrissie (A different one to Lower Rockes), then there was Ian, He was a stocky, dark haired guy who played the most amazing Dulcimer ever. He had a real talent and was a nice guy, really down to earth but sincere. Graham lived there too. He was a tall, balding guy, yet powerful in his presence. He was somewhat commanding and everyone certainly always knew, when he was around. You couldn't miss him, in his cowboy hat!!!! Ferngrove had plenty of out buildings and a bit of land , so there were a few trucks parked up too. We soon got to know the inhabitants. Mike and Yohanna and Paul and Bina. I loved Ferngrove. I loved all the interesting conversations and discussions that took place there. Most people there loved and understood Astrology, so I fitted in well!!! I loved the music and the atmosphere of the community there. It was here that I began to come into contact with Rainbow Circle.

Rainbow circle were formed from the remnants of some of the new age travelers. They organized and set up festival's with a theme. Always agreed with the landowners and well organized, kept clean and well up together. They weren't free, unless you were working there. The themes were: Beltane in May, Music and Dance- summer, Astrology, Healing , Green(all held in summer) and ending with the celebration of life camp in late September into October. Most of the people there were awesome. We met some amazing people and a few pretentious ones too!

I remember Ferngrove setting up a garage sale. I was keen to help and they said anything I spotted that I liked , I was free to make an offer for it first. I helped sort through a load of stuff, stored in a couple of barns. Already, I had bought a couple of pair of trousers and a sparkly jumper! I spotted three large boxes, in another part of the barn that I had been sorting through. I went to investigate and found an absolute treasure trove of Astrology books. These were incredible, as they were no ordinary astrology books. These were for people who already knew astrology and were a lot more advanced, some were on really interesting aspects of astrology that I had been looking at recently. I shouted to Chrissie, who came over to see what I meant. "Oh my god " she laughed, "You've found Palden's Astrology books!"

Palden Jenkins was a name I had heard plenty of. He was a respected and reasonably well known Astrologer and author, having written several books on the subject. "oh shit" I exclaimed in dismay, " I'm so sorry " I flushed red with embarrassment. " Don't worry " said Chrissie, "He's cool " She was right, as I found out later. He turned up in the evening and when he found out I nearly bought a load of his personal books, he laughed and made me feel at ease! He had stayed at Ferngrove a lot in the past.

Occasionally, we stayed in a caravan on a herb farm, in a village called Burtle. This was near Glastonbury but out on the flat moors, somewhere near Wedmore. The guy who owned the farm was very cool. He grew a massive variety of herbs and was most interested in hearing about my time as the Flying Herbal Doctor!!

By May '89, we had finally found a house to live in. Just before Beth's first birthday. It was a three bedroomed house, high on a hill, in Wells. Now I was housed again, I was glad to have Tiny back again. It was a joyful reunion. He looked well and the kids loved him! Plainly, he had thrived well with Alan and I was ever grateful to him. It was wonderful to be settled again but we still enjoyed heading off to Ferngrove, Lower Rockes and various Rainbow Circle camps. We usually only visited those for the day and quite often took Tal and Beth along. I spotted old faces, like Tipi Jean and a few others. It was lovely to catch up with them again. I will never forget, when we visited the Celebration of Life camp in October. We took both the kids who were loving it :) It turned out, that it was Sid Rawle's birthday and there was a massive feast in his tipi, that everyone was invited to. What a sight it was! Inside a huge tipi, was laid out the biggest spread of awesome food you could imagine! The bongos were going, penny whistles, guitars, everything! It was a big celebration and Sid finally spotted me and recognized me instantly. We hadn't seen each other for a good six years! I was stoked to him see him again. After a massive hug, he was delighted when he noticed Tal and Beth. " There see, I knew you would become a mother. Didn't I tell you? " He squeaked gleefully, as I remembered the hot and sunny day that he thrust his newborn son in to my arms, just as we had arrived at Greenham, all those years ago! It was one of those "Full circle " moments.

Things got worse with Tony. Largely, my own fault and we went our separate ways. I stayed on in Wells and he went to Manchester, to start a course on massage. A few months later I met up with Charlie, who lived two streets away. We had been brief acquaintances over the previous two years. I began to notice that we got on pretty well and had a few things in common. Soon after, we became a couple. We didn't actually live together for over a year; but after three months into the relationship, I discovered I was pregnant again! It was now 1992 and I had pretty much lost touch with all my traveler friends. The summer was hot and Autumn was soon upon us. I was large and uncomfortable by now. A friend of Charlie's called Minstrel Mike, came around. He brought another friend around and I made coffee and small talk. At eight months pregnant, there wasn't a lot I could do! Migo was a tall, very slim guy, with wavy shoulder length hair and bright blue eyes. He was gentle, kind and humorous. He spotted my guitar and asked if he could have a go.....

As soon as he started to play, I knew this guy was someone special. The talent positively flew off his fingertips, as he played the most amazing music with absolute ease. Riffs licks and little solos interspersed. The music was harmonious, just oozing with his agile, nimble and

intense talent. I marveled at him, as I hadn't played guitar for quite a few years. We got chatting about Rainbow circle and the free festivals of the early 80's. We found out that we had one hell of a lot in common. Not only did Migo know the rainbow circle folk but he went to a lot of the free festivals , particularly Stonehenge in '82 and '83. "WOW, so we just missed each other" I enthused. "Well " he said "I did used to be known by the name of Mange" I stopped in my tracks, my jaw almost hitting the floor, as I flashed back to Dericote street in Hackney and Free telling me all about this amazing guitarist he had met at Stonehenge '82. A guy called MANGE ! I positively reeled with the excitement I felt. Free was 100% right about "Mange" This guy's guitar playing truly was (and still very much is) outstanding. Migo became a good friend and we always enjoyed seeing him.

Emily was born on her due date, November the 3rd 1992, at twenty five past nine in the morning. A bouncing, apricot haired, star maiden. She was a happy baby too and I felt blessed. When Emily was three months old , we moved to the other side of Wells. We moved in together properly, in a three bedroomed house, which was perfect because Tally could visit us and stay. Although by now, I was pretty much in the mainstream of society, I still had my new age beliefs. I was a hippy in a house!! I was preparing for the Golden Age of Aquarius, as there was less than a decade left

. I also met a friend through Migo. This guy was a traveler and had also done the rounds at the free festival circuit. He worked at Pilton, Green Gathering and other places. This was Gary, otherwise known as Teapot Circus, which was also a band name for the duo of Migo on guitar and Gary on keyboards. Gary is over six foot, a hulking chap with very long, ginger dreads. You couldn't miss him. He was very interesting and occasionally, when it was hot was known to wear a long skirt, and why not? Gary, I found, was an absolute wizard when it came to playing keyboards. He played brilliantly and the combination of him and Migo was awesome :) I loved Teapot Circus.

We had a pleasant surprise one day, I bumped into Paul and Bina in Glastonbury. I introduced them to Charlie and they promised to visit. This they did. It was great to see them again, as I had got on particularly well with them at Ferngrove. They were in the area, waiting for the Glastonbury festival, as they were working there for their ticket. The problem was, dogs had been banned from the festival site, so they couldn't take their puppy Bilbo to the festival. Of course, we offered to look after Bilbo while they were at the festival and they were delighted. They left us plenty of food for him and off they went. Tiny secretly enjoyed having a pup around again. It meant he could go in to " Grumpy/playful uncle " mode again!!! Bilbo was cute, he was black and white and a collie crossed with something bigger!!! After a couple of weeks they returned for Bilbo, very grateful and we decided to make this a yearly occurrence. So when they went to Pilton, we looked after Bilbo.

Chapter Twenty Seven.....Wells Summer '94

Music, Art and, an unplanned surprise!!

Time went on, and I began my next project. Barley Close had a huge garden , but it was severely unkempt, like a jungle. So I dug up the entire garden, kept the shrubs and trees, put

one half down to lawn for the kids. The other half was my pet project. I grew a massive herb garden again. This one was eight times the size of the one I had in Bradworthy, at least. I grew almost every herb you could think of and my garden flourished, grew and blossomed. All my hard work was paying off. We looked after Bilbo, at Glastonbury time again, and he was a lot bigger than the previous year. He was dog sized and I was worried about whether Tiny would tolerate him, now he was almost adult. Luckily, he did remember Bilbo and wasn't too bad with him at all!

The herb garden wasn't the only thing to flourish. After a gap of almost ten years, I began to play the guitar again. Migo inspired me and also Ray, Charlie's ex brother in law. He was a classical guitarist and would often come around for a good jamming session and a smoke. They both inspired me to play again, seriously and I began making a lot of cassette tapes of guitar music, songs I wrote and jams with myself, Ray and Charlie. Through Ray, we bought a keyboard. This was no ordinary keyboard. This was a mini porta studio, with eight recording channels in the memory bank and over 100 voices and rhythms to choose from. This was the Yamaha PS 790. It had actually won the keyboard of the year award in '92. So I was well struck and went on a huge glut of making both guitar music and keyboard tapes

. In all, I made twenty three tapes of the keyboard stuff alone. Also, music for themes, such as the Chinese Zodiac, The Earth Chakras and the Eight Sabbats held over the course of a year. It was kind of mood music, new age but some was different, even heavy in places. The guitar music was new age, folk and rock. I began writing songs that I would be using in the future (Nature will win and Open Door)

On top of the music, I began painting again. I painted several water colours of the Earth Chakras, seven in all. I also began painting pebbles. These , I did with Humbrol enamel paints. I did over fifty of these, in all different shapes and sizes, from a massive boulder for a doorstep painted with a sea life scene, to small pebbles painted with the effigy's from the Glastonbury zodiac. I did allsorts. Some were patterns, some were flowers, peace signs etc and others were again, the earth chakras, but done smaller ! Over the following four years, most of these painted pebbles had gone to various people, all over the UK and also, all over the world. Some of my Earth Chakra paintings went to America, one went to Florida and one went to a healing sanctuary in Orlando. Some of my stones ended up in Australia, Egypt, Russia, Tibet, Spain, France and Turkey. One even ended up in South America. Over the next four years, I had a massive glut of creativity with music and art. Coupled with the garden and the three kids, something else was afoot..... I discovered, I was pregnant, again.

Matty was born on May the fifteenth, (the same date as Beth !!) '95, at twenty six minutes to one in the morning. He was a big bouncer, with brown hair, like a monk. He was born by moonlight, as it was a strong full moon and the midwife felt it would be a gentler light for him to be born into. He was a chunky, comical and very happy soul, adored by his brother and sisters. He was always keen to entertain!

Two years later, we were on holiday in Exmouth and we went to a car boot sale. It was here that I spotted a book, co written by Palden Jenkins, so I bought it!! "The only planet of choice" I am not going to say exactly what it was all about but it became a major catalyst, in my new age beliefs and confirmed to me that a higher consciousness was coming. I was delighted to

find that Palden had co written it !! I still might even have that book somewhere, in my pit of chaos, of today!!

Chapter Twenty Eight..... Spring 1998....1999.. Bath

The Sanctuary of Sulis.....

Things went wrong with Charlie, by '98 and I left and moved to Bath. It took a while to get settled in to a house but I got one, by the end of August. I painted each room a different colour of the rainbow and I had already made a few good friends. Here I was again, on my own but happy. Em and Matt lived with me and Tal and Beth visited frequently. It was brilliant. My mum visited for Christmas and met my new friends and especially loved Julia's Christmas do! Not long after, I developed an irritating, itchy rash on my palms and the soles of my feet. After quite a few visits to the doctor, and several tubes of different medical creams; it didn't get any better. In fact, it got worse and spread. The skin on my feet got quite horrendous, all flaky and it itched and burned like hell. I could barely walk on my feet properly and ended up having to walk on the balls of my feet. If I walked normally, it felt like I was walking on broken glass. I was treated for Eczema, Psoriasis, Fungal infections, Dermatitis and nothing worked. So, I was sent to a skin specialist at the R.U.H. hospital, who frankly, was stumped. They took yet more samples, off to be tested.

Meanwhile, I was concocting, another plan. This plan was an idea I had been mulling over, when I was still in Wells. I wanted to plan and organise a benefit gig, in aid of Greenpeace. I started from scratch, as I had never organised a gig in my life! First, I set about finding a venue. After much searching in Yellow pages for pubs and venues, I wrote down a few and set off the next day. The idea was to see these places and talk to the owners or management. This was before we ever had a computer, so I couldn't go online to find a venue. It took actual phone calls, bus journeys and a lot of walking about to places. After three places, including Moles club in Bath, I found a pub. It was right out on the London road, in Bath. The Porterbutt. It was perfect!

They were happy for us to hold the gig there and had an in house P.A system for the bands already. Bargain!! We picked a date. March 27th 1999. Then, I set about drawing up an advertisement poster, asking for bands willing to play for free. I printed and went about putting these all over Bath. Migo, straight away, offered the services of one of his numerous bands called Yogurt Thrash. This was a duo, himself and Cheesy, his friend of old. Cheesy is a six foot four, hulk of pure niceness. He had long dark hair and played a wicked bass guitar. A couple of days later, I got a phone call from a guy called Kevan. He was the 1999 Bard of Bath and offered to read out some poetry, in between the band changeovers. This was a brilliant idea and I agreed, very gratefully. Not long after that, another band offered their services. They were a duo called Patrol. I was well happy, this was starting to come together. Within a couple of weeks, I had four bands and one Bard !! The running order was: Patrol, Yogurt Thrash, Special Llamas and Ripple Effect to headline. The Special Llamas were an indie rock, four piece band from Bath and Ripple Effect were a five piece plus, rock band, from Glastonbury. The Bard would be reading poems, in between the bands. All set !

Next was the fun part! I designed and painted two A1 sized posters, 50 A4 posters and 100 A5 posters, all advertising the gig, with the date, time, place and which bands were playing. Most of all, it was clearly in aid of Greenpeace :) I then had the laborious job of putting all these up, all around Bath, and I mean every single borough of Bath, as well! This took me a week of taking the bus, to each part of Bath, then walking to every single possible place to advertise the gig. This was extremely laborious and painful too, as my feet were still in a terrible state. I even made 200 tickets, all self designed!!! Then there were the endless, lengthy phone calls with Cheesy and Des (from Ripple Effect). It was mental !!! The day finally came and my plan was to go to Ally's flat, as she lived almost opposite the Porterbutt. Charlie had Em and Matt, in Wells and Tal and Beth were in Bristol, with Mark. The time came for me to go and meet up with the bands. Suddenly, I completely lost my nerve. I started to panic and told Ally that I couldn't go through with it. She laughed and said, "Have this, it's just nerves!" She handed me a mug of Napoleon brandy. I almost downed it in one, and set off. " I'll be over in a bit " said Al. I thought that the brandy wasn't that strong and quite happily, made my way to the pub.

It was already pretty busy in there and I saw no one I recognized yet. " Might as well have a drink ", I thought. I ordered a pint of Stella and got about a centimeter down the glass, when I thought " Fuck, this beer is mighty strong! " quite forgetting, that I had previously necked a whole mugful of very strong brandy!! The four bands all turned up and the bard too! The evening began and the place was packed!! It was a very entertaining night and quite a few of my friends made it too. Patrol. kicked off the show. They were pretty good and did a pretty neat version of "Hit me baby one more time". They went down well with the crowd. By now, the place was packed to the hilt. I was grinning from ear to ear!

Yogurt Thrash were awesome. I was very drunk by this point and went mental between their songs, which were excellent and there were a couple of amusing ones thrown in. The eponymous "Farting in the Sweat lodge" , made me bay and howl like an animal!! I was going nuts with it all :) The Bard of Bath read out some brilliant poetry, that he had written. All his poems were relevant to what the gig was all about. This was clearly a man with the same thoughts and love of the planet, as me. He was an intelligent, articulate and gentle guy. A slim, dark wizard with hidden depths.

The Special Llamas were pretty good too. They went down well, particularly with the younger members of the crowd. Then it was time for Ripple Effect to play. They were brilliant and I was loving their set. This was when the Special Llamas pulled an extremely, selfish and stupid stunt. Unbeknown to me or anyone else; they had been booked to play a club that night. Stupidly, they neglected to tell me this and began to take apart some of the equipment, during Ripple Effect's set. BIG MISTAKE.... Des, was well known for his temper and this absolutely outraged him. I was in the bar buying another drink, when one of the other band members came out panicking, to get me. By the time I got back into the main room, Cheesy had broken up, what nearly turned into a massive brawl. Des was definitely not a man to be fucked with, especially when he is on stage. He took music very seriously indeed. Thank goodness for Cheesy. He managed to calm everyone down and the fracas was averted. What a brilliant night! I was on cloud nine. We made over £300 pounds for Greenpeace and I was delighted :)

The following day, I took a bus to Wells, to pick up Em and Matt. I was extremely hung over but happier than I had been in a long time. Mission successful, I was on a real high. I spoke to the guy from Special Llamas and Des, to make sure they were ok and to thank them for playing. They both had a massive bitch about the other. It was quite amusing. The Special Llamas guy said " Huh, bloody hippies and their bullshit love and peace, they're as violent as anyone else ". Des said " Gah, they just want to be pop stars, they're not serious musicians " It was quite amusing. I also thanked Patrol, Yogurt Thrash and of course Kevan. What an accomplishment. :)

The next plan, was attending an anti GMO rally, in the center of Bath. This was held in Queens square, on the 24th April 1999. I had loved Kevan's poems and he gave them to me written down. One in particular, really got to me. It was brilliant and called the "Child of Everything". It was an anti Gmo poem and warns against noodling about with nature, or "the consequences will be dire". I loved it and playing my guitar one day, I found a melody to go along with it. An idea began to form. "This could be a fantastic song, I wonder if Kevan would mind if I put music to this", I thought.

I had my chance, at the GMO demo. Kevan turned up and me and Migo played him the song. Kevan was delighted and gave me permission to use his lyrics. Here was the Birth of Spaghetti Swirl. This was mine and Migo's band. We soon began writing new material and worked on the songs that I had already written, back in Barley Close. It wasn't long before we were gigging and it was great fun. We always went down well and built a good fan base. Kevan, Rob and Miranda, and Tim Sebastian, head druid of Bath among others.

I had a small garden at my two bedroomed house. it was very small, tiny after what I was used to at Barley Close , in Wells. One half was lawn and the other half was a rockery interspersed with a herb garden. Here, the soil wasn't great but I made do and after a lot of hard work; I had my herbs again and they did well and flourished.

Meanwhile, my feet were getting ridiculous. When I took my socks off at night, the floor would literally be peppered, in flakes of skin. It looked like someone had spilled Lux soap flakes on the floor! I was almost at my wits end , as even the specialist had no idea what it actually was.

I had been preparing for a camp, arranged for the June. Kevan had invited Spaghetti Swirl along to play and I set up a stall selling cool things, in aid of Friends of the Earth and the Whales and Dolphin conservation society. The tent was already pitched and the afternoon went smoothly. I managed to sell a few things, before the procession of the Green Man. The Green Man was in fact, Kevan dressed up! He took the part well and everyone followed along behind him, as the drums and music played. It was really cool and took me back to my festival days :) It had begun to rain again, but everyone was happy. My feet reached an absolute peak of itchy soreness and were burning like mad. In a mad moment of impulse, I tore off my shoes and socks. I followed the procession around, in my bare feet, the rain and cool mud bringing almost instant relief. After about ten minutes, the rain pelted down and got much heavier. Everyone ran to the Bio hut for shelter. I grabbed my socks and shoes and followed suit. Once inside the hut, I put my footwear back on again. I hadn't stopped to clean or rinse the mud off my feet, as the rain had already turned into a torrent. I figured I would be ok until the next day, as then I would be home and be able to have a bath.

After a brilliant time and a well received gig by Spaghetti Swirl; it was time to go home the following morning. When I got home, the first thing I did was run a bath. I luxuriated in the hot soapy water, then got out and toweled myself dry. I got as far as my legs and feet and was astounded.There was not a mark on them. All the sore, ugly, flakes and patches on my feet were gone. Vanished.No pain, no itching. Just proper pink skin . I could walk properly again. I was utterly dumbfounded. I had this skin problem for six months and it had now disappeared even faster than it came!! Bizarre!!

Kevan had given me a copy of his writing, that won him the Bard of Bath '99 award. It was called "Spring Fall " and was the story/legend of Sulis and Bladud. Interestingly, the story goes that Bladud had leprosy and festering feet and was sent off as a swineherd, to live with the pigs. The pigs bathed in the bubbling mud of the hot springs, Bladud followed and was cured of his leprosy. He built the Roman Baths as a homage and tribute to the healing powers of the hot springs and to Sulis, the goddess of the hot springs.

I stopped in my tracks. Why, this was pretty much what had happened to me, up at Rocks East. I'm sure I wasn't suffering from Leprosy, but the wet mud had cured my feet, exactly the same. This sparked a curiosity in me and I set about finding out if any springs of Sulis were in the Rocks East area. A couple of weeks later, I found out that one of the tributaries from the main spring, did indeed end up at Rocks East woodlands. It was official. Sulis, the elements in the spring water and the minerals in the mud had really and truly healed me of an unknown skin disease. I properly felt like I belonged in Bath now, almost like Sulis had accepted me as a daughter.

Chapter Twenty Nine.....Aquae Sulis.....1999/2000
Trees....

The summer camp at Rocks East had been a massive success and it was made clear that we were welcome back anytime, for any other alternative events. This was cool because several plans came into being. Tony Phillips, the owner of Rocks East was a fantastic guy. Although he was in his seventies, he seemed a lot younger and he was very into conservation, nature and the environment. He also liked

alternatives and was an alternative himself, in a lot of ways. The fact that one of the buildings there was called the "Bio hut" should have been a clue!!

It was around the summer '99, that I began a course. This was financed by my mum and involved nine lessons, by post and a postal exam, at the end of it. This was a herbalism diploma, with the British school of yoga. They ran several different courses on alternative medicine but this one was perfect for me, the Flying Herbal Doctor! Funnily enough, they were based in Holsworthy of all places!!! Every month, they sent me study work and a paper to answer. It was an interesting course and although I already knew quite a bit on which herbs were good for what; the course covered a lot more, including the four types of humour, bitters, carminatives and how not to get the wrong combination.

Autumn came along in it's fiery glow, soon followed by the icy hand of winter. Already Spaghetti Swirl had played a couple more gigs and two more were planned for around the

time of the winter solstice. One was held at the Walcot chapel and two days later, we played another one at the Porterbutt. Good times. We loved it. Everyone who came, enjoyed the show and we felt quite rock and roll, especially playing twice in one week!!

Over the Autumn and winter, I began to save food and bottled water. I started a collection of food storing. These were mainly, tins and readily eaten food. I also bought a massive water container and box loads of candles, batteries and toilet roll. These were there, hidden in my under stairs cupboard, ready

for an emergency. Rumor was rife that come the millennium (2000), all the worlds computer systems would glitch and be wiped out. This would affect everything from electricity, water to food supplies and the general consensus would be; that there would be total chaos, uprising, looting and every man for himself. For all my hippy beliefs, I was now a mother of four children and I needed to make sure we would be covered for a while, if the worst happened.

There were at least twelve boxes, full of food, stacked and crammed into that cupboard !

Christmas came and went and it was a good one. We waited for the new millennium, with bated breath but..... everything was fine, nothing happened. Relieved, I went on with my life and my plans, feeling good, waiting for the imminent New age. The Golden age of Aquarius. Tal, who was thirteen by this point, loved his math's and he was bloody good at it. A genius, in fact. He told me, he was convinced that the true millennium would in fact be, the new year 2001. He said he had worked it out mathematically.

So... There I was , stuck with loads and loads of extra food and all for no reason!!!

I was busy with music. As well as the Swirl practices and gigs. I had started work on my keyboard music again. Inspired by the miraculous healing of my feet, I began a new theme. The Sulis and Bladud suite. I also began some guitar work, for Kevan. This was going to be played over some work he had written and was planning to recite. The writing was all about the welsh mythology of Kerridwen, Taliesin, Pryddwyn and the Celtic salmon of wisdom, among others. I worked hard, writing semi classical pieces of music for this work of his. He wrote a poem called the " Birds of Rhiannon " about the legend of the welsh, horse goddess Rhiannon. I instantly found the right chords and in one afternoon, we had written a new song. A new event was planned at Rocks East. This one was a really cool one. It was a tree planting ceremony, involving twelve trees being planted in a circle. Each tree represented a month of the year and was to be dedicated to one person/family each. I can't remember the exact order and variety of the trees. The ones I remember were, Rowan--February, Hazel---March (dedicated to Kevan), the Hawthorn tree was for May (dedicated to my four kids), oak ---June, Holly----July, Alder---October, Elder--- November (Keith Bryan) and there was an ash tree, along with four others. These were planted watered and blessed. I felt proud and honoured to be part of the ceremony.

It was decided that every month, we would come and bless the corresponding tree. Soon after that, we embarked on a plan, made by Tony and Tim Sebastian. Tim, being a druid, loved his trees and knew their lore well. It was decided that an avenue of young ash trees would be planted further down the hill from where they held their camps and events. I was well up for this and a whole load of us waded in with digging, planting, watering and blessing of the trees. We played a bit of music afterwards and Tim enjoyed a cider , or several, in celebration!!

It was now February, and the Rowan tree blessing had taken place. I had finished my herbalism course and had also, done the exam. All I had to do now was wait for my results! It was somewhat nerve wracking and I took a little distraction in the form of an outing with Ally. Ally was a Bath friend, and a nutter into the bargain!! She had spiky hair, dyed a different colour every week, piercings and tattoos. She was super fiery on the outside but soft as a kitten underneath. She was never quite "on it" but she had a crazy boyfriend at the time, called Trev. We went to visit him at his bedsit, in a house down by the river. Rackfield house, it was called. I already knew Trev and spotted one of those spyhole things, in the middle of the front door. Ally knocked and I put my eye right up to the spyhole as a joke, as I knew it would make my eye look huge to the other person!!!

The door opened and to my surprise and embarrassment, it wasn't Trev who answered the door. It was one of his mates, a guy called Dave. Feeling stupid, I went in with Ally and we had a cuppa and a smoke which was good.

Chapter Thirty..... Bath Spring 2000

It's a New Age..... Not..

I met up with Dave a few times and we definitely had a spark, which of course developed. We saw each other, a couple of times a week and he would visit me, at my house in Blagdon Park. On the 24th of March, I also received the result of my herbalism exam and course. WHOOP! I passed my diploma, with a whomping 91%... Yes !! I was delighted and began to harbour dreams of having my own practice, one day.

April arrived and things were going well. A couple of weeks later, I began to feel off colour. I put it down to a bug or dodgy food probably, but it persisted. Everything smelt awful.

Cigarettes began to taste vile and on noticing this; my best friend Jules sent her mate Sam down the chemist, to get a test. Ally had

turned up meanwhile. Reluctantly, I took the test. Deep down, I knew the results. I had felt like this four times before. The three friends were gathered around my test, waiting for it to show the results. I held my head in my hands, as they all began to cackle, like the three witches from Macbeth!! PREGNANT screamed the result.

It was a huge shock to me. I had only known Dave for four weeks or so, and well, it was a shock for both of us. Dave was going through a particularly bad time himself but I wasn't aware of it. I knew that his work was tough and exhausting for him and he had very little sleep but I was not prepared for this, at all. The following day, I had another shock. Dave had disappeared completely, overnight. Luckily, a friend of his rang me and told me. All I knew was, he had to go and he was in Newcastle. I broke down in tears on the phone and Loretta, kindly told me she was sure it was other circumstances that forced him to do a runner, rather than an unplanned pregnancy.

I was totally bewildered and had no idea what I was going to do. This was not my plan for the future and I already had four children and with all of them at school, I had plans for work.

Pushing a pram around was not on my agenda, so I phoned my mum. She was shocked but very supportive, as she always was. She said only I could decide what to do, as it was my

body. I decided that maybe I needed to get away, back to nature, for a few days, so that I could clear my head and decide what to do. There was a Rainbow Circle camp coming up and it was reasonably close. It was the Beltane camp, held in early May. It was at Teddy Stones field near Shepton Mallet. Ally asked her neighbour if she would give me and the kids a lift there and pick us up when it was over. Of course, I offered and agreed petrol money and it was very good of her, as she didn't know us that well. So it was all arranged. I had almost finished my Sulis and Bladud suite on my PS790. I only had one more track to write and record but that had kind of been put on hold, due to throwing up all the time and everything smelling absolutely rank.

We packed a tent, bedding and everything we would need for a camping trip. I also took my electric guitar and a portable amp and plenty of batteries!!! This should fun, I thought. So here we were. Rainbow Circle, Beltane 2000.

It was a colourful sight. Trucks, teepees, benders and tents. I loved the fresh air, things didn't smell so bad! The Golden Moon café was a welcome sight and Fred the guy who ran it was lovely. I paid for my ticket, as I wasn't sure how I could work there. I had my herbal knowledge, but felt like crap and mostly just wanted to rest in the tent, which I why I played safe and paid for my ticket! Em and Matt loved it. They could run about and go nuts, if they wanted. They enjoyed the nature trails that were arranged and the animal workshops.

Fluffy Al was there, which was good. It was nice to see her again. She offered me a yogurt drink, Yakult. I took one sip and had to rush out of her tent, to projectile vomit into the hedge!! YAK , what was that stuff? I knew my unborn child definately did not like it!!! Paula was there, Starcus, Lyn Lovell, Kasha and Kitchen Jim. It was great to see Migo, who popped in briefly to visit. We had a small jam, outside my tent. It gave me the confidence to play more music. After about half an hour, someone came over to me and asked me to turn off the amplifier. " It's acoustic only ", they said, ever so slightly scornfully." Bloody hell " I thought. "Since when are there rules at a festival" This was a very different ball game to the free festivals of the 80's. They did have rules, but they were sensible ones, like not chopping down live wood, no hard drugs, bury your shit properly, no drongo's and no ripping people off. So feeling quite miffed, I put the guitar and amp away.

It wasn't the only time I was miffed as well. Somehow, I felt things were different. A little too different. Now, it was not that I minded paying, but the attitudes seemed to have changed a bit. Some people, I found, were a little pompous, a tad too righteous and pretentious. Maybe , it was my attitude changing. Somehow, I looked at things a bit more realistically. The rose tinted glasses were off and I began to get annoyed at the Yogurt Weavers!!

Chapter Thirty One.....Rainbow Circle May 2000

Out of the Rabbit Hole.....

The Beltane camp was fun but I had trouble with the vegan food. It played havoc with my digestive system! Beans, beans and more beans! Not only was I feeling incredibly sick but the beans gave me stupid amounts of gas and I blew up like a balloon. The bloating in turn, made me feel worse! Although I had paid for my ticket, I did help out a lot in the kitchen. Every day, I

helped with food prep and chopping up vegetables and every evening, I did the washing up for pretty much the whole camp! By lunch time on the third day, I was feeling ropery and emotional and the thought of more beans or chick peas filled me with dread. Normally, I didn't mind "hippy food" but my unborn baby hated it and made it very well known!

Minstrel Mike turned up and bless him, he offered to take me to the café in Shepton Mallet for some pork chops. At the mere mention of pork chops, I burst into tears of relief and off we went. They were the best chops of my life and tasted delicious, compared to chick pea and bean stew!

Back at the camp, I met a fantastic lady called Tree. She was tall, blonde and beautiful. She was also five months pregnant. Her baby's dad had done a runner too, but she looked fantastic and was obviously coping well, by herself. We spoke at length and although, I had already pretty much decided to keep the baby, she sealed my choice.

One thing I did notice and it puzzled me: where was Sid Rawle? He was very conspicuous by his absence and I couldn't bear it any longer, so I asked Tree. It turned out that there had been some sort of riff between Sid and some others; so he had formed his side group, Rainbow 2000. Therefore, he was at all the Rainbow 2000 camps and not at Rainbow Circle anymore. Ah well, just as well. I can imagine what he would have said, on finding out I was pregnant with my fifth child !!

Tree was brilliant and kind of took me under her wing. She helped me one evening, with all the camp washing up. It was a long and tedious process and I found it difficult because I was feeling so nauseous. That night, the weather got bad and it began to pour with rain. The kids and I rushed to the Golden Moon marquee, for cover. After a while, and yet more rain, it began to thunder. Soon enough, came the lightning and more noise, very loud, rhythmic noise. I rushed out to investigate and crazy

upon crazy; there was someone playing a drum kit in the field, in the middle of a thunderstorm !! Mental ! I enjoyed that moment though because it reminded me of the random, quirky, strangeness I often encountered, at the free festivals of the early 80's. " This is more like it ", I thought.

The following day, there were more workshops, followed by the last evening's food and entertainment. After overhearing yet more Yogurt Weaving, I sighed and consigned myself to the kitchen, for carrot chopping, followed by washing up later. The meal was served out in bowls and everyone, gathered around in a large circle. Someone started to gently bang a drum and everyone walked around in a circle, chanting the om mantra. As more people joined the circle, Fluffy Al held her hand out to me, as she joined the circle of chanting hippies.

"Come on " she urged , with a big smile on her face. I couldn't, just COULDN'T ! For some weird, unbeknown reason, I could not join that circle. For the first time in my life, I refused.... I shook my head, smiled and said. "This isn't for me "

I thought long and hard. Why did some people come across as hypocrites? Why did it seem that there was almost as much bullshit and indoctrination in the hippy /alternative circles , as there was in normal society? Why was there no human utopia and why did none of this ring true for me anymore?

Then it hit me.. I didn't believe in any of this anymore. The new age was all a lie. There was no golden age of Aquarius, where everyone would love one another and respect the earth.

The new millennium had arrived and I was left, alone, with four kids, pregnant again and scared. I had changed inside, maybe my unborn child was having an effect on me. For the first time, I stopped believing in the so called new age, the hippy dream of world peace, an end to hunger and a higher consciousness. I was well and truly, out of the Rabbit Hole.

Chapter Thirty Two..... Bath 2000

The return of a very old friend.....

I returned to the kitchen, to do the final night's washing up. It was a long task and someone helped me for about ten minutes, then disappeared. "Great ", I thought. Eventually, I finished and Tree came over. She thanked me for the enormous amount of washing up I had done. She gave me a big hug and I left to go back to the tent, to bed. I almost got out of the marquee, when Fred collared me. " Hey " he said, with a grin, "I noticed, you have helped out every evening in the kitchen. You didn't have to, but I wanted to thank you". What a nice guy. There were a handful of really cool, lovely people there and he was one of them. Out of all those people, he and Tree were the only ones who thanked me for my contribution. Back in Bath, life went on and new plans were taking shape. Tony from Rocks East had invited me to plan and plant a herb garden, up at Rocks East. I jumped at this idea. Although, my new age dream was over, herbs were still good !!! Plus, I wasn't going to waste an opportunity like that. I had been growing quite a few different herbs from seed and those had come on well. I also bought a few herb plants to include. I was well relieved that I was going to be getting the seedlings out of my house and outdoors because the smell of the potting compost was hideous and made me feel bad!! The herb planting took pretty much most of a day. It was hard work but immensely rewarding. I put the taller herbs at the back and the shorter ones in the front. As well as the usual suspects in a herb garden, I tried to include herbs that were good in woodlands. Among those, were Angelica, Woodruff, Sweet Cicely and Wood Garlic. Quite a few people were camped up there and there was a workshop and music later. I was invited to stay but I declined, It just didn't seem real to me anymore. As much as I loved nature, herbs and believed in being nice to people, the age of Aquarius was well and truly over to me. The summer came and I got larger, as my pregnancy became obvious. A scan revealed, I was having a boy. Tal and Matt were delighted to say the least! I was about five months gone. Tal was 14 and Beth was 12. She produced a CD and got me to put it on..... I think she probably thought I was going to hate it because parents are always supposed to hate their kids taste in music. However, this was Korn's "Life Is Peachy" CD . The first track is "Twist"..... it was absolutely mental, fraught and fucking brilliant!! I LOVED it...Who was this Korn?...I'm not sure that Beth expected me to like Korn and was probably mildly dismayed by the fact that I did!

I carried on playing music with Migo. Spaghetti Swirl ended up evolving into Swrrrl and although, we still played most of our old set; a few more songs were creeping into the mix, ones written by Julia and Edward, a friend from Brighton. These were of an angrier, punkier ilk

and more fun to play!! We also spent some time in a recording studio, in the railway arches on the Lower Bristol road, in Bath. This happened because we were spotted by the studio owner at a recent gig we had played. The guy's name was Keith Lunt, (Never try saying that when you're drunk. Trust me!) The other reason was because of Cheesy. He had recently come into a little money and wanted to record a Yogurt Thrash album, "Not Woven ". Soundsfree studio had cheap prices and their own sound engineer. So it was all arranged. I was invited to play on one track "Beltane Fire" and went off to Soundsfree with Migo and Cheesy.

Soundsfree studio was interesting indeed. It had some amazing paintings and several rooms. It also absolutely stank of mould. The smell made me feel desperately sick but we got on with the recording session and it went really well. We went back there a few times to record bits and pieces. These were, the "Child of Everything" and some music for another of Kevan's projects called Biowolf. It was a cool place but sadly didn't last long, as Keith was a major boozier and drank away the profits. It was a shame as he was a nice guy. He was good friends with Tim Sebastian, who also loved a drink. So much so that in one recording session, everyone sang The tune of "What shall we do with the drunken sailor" but our words went like this :

" What shall we do with the drunken druid x 3,
early in the morning.

Give him a sword and tell him he's Arthur x 3,
early in the morning". Good times !

One Saturday in September we were in the middle of practising, when there was a knock at the door. I answered it and to my complete shock, it was Dave back on a visit from Newcastle! Immediately, I was conscious of being unwashed, with dirty hair and in a frumpy dress!!! He looked straight at my protruding stomach and grinned.

To cut a long story short, I visited Dave in Newcastle, in the October. I went up on the 20th and came back on the 24th. We got back together and he basically moved in with me, by the end of November. Christmas came and I was gigantic! David was due on boxing day and I'll never forget being desperately worried that I would go into labour, before the Christmas dinner was cooked and eaten! I was large, uncomfortable and grumpy. We had a good Christmas but no baby arrival, through dinner or after. Boxing day came and went and the next day and the next.....

Labour finally began, at 7.30 am on New Years day!! David was born at one thirty seven pm, January the first 2001, after a difficult and painful labour. He was facing the wrong way round, until just before I was fully dilated. Then he decided to turn around and the second stage went smoothly. Dave was stoked and the kids adored their baby brother. Tal was delighted and stated that David was a true new millennium child.

David was a happy, chilled out baby, amidst all the chaos of the other kids. We discovered the best way to get him to sleep, was to play Nirvana or System of a Down at full blast!!! Seems crazy but it was true. I liked a bit of Nirvana and S.o.a.d. myself and started to watch music channels on my Tv, such as Kerrang and MTV2. Here, I found a veritable treasure trove of excellent music. Although a lot of it was pop punk, some of it was heavy metal which I loved. My best mate Julia, who was now David's godmother, would often come around for the

day and we would watch it together. Here, we discovered bands like Korn, Papa Roach, Killswitch Engage, Lamb of God, Metallica and the Foo Fighters.....

(The Foo Fighters, is another story. One that is very special and close to my heart. It involves my best mate Julia and her life, which I have watched unfold because of this band. I will say no more here, as I cannot give it the justice it deserves)

This phase of my life was a good one. Although I had lost my faith in the new age, I re-discovered an old faith I had, two decades ago and earlier. It was my faith in music. I was a Metalhead at the age of twelve and it got me through some pretty crap times. It was wonderful, rediscovering metal again. It was like being reunited with an old friend, and an old, best friend at that...

Chapter Thirty Three.....Bath 2001

A Daughter of Sulis.....

Spring arrived, then lapsed into summer. I decided it was high time that I finally finished my "Sulis and Bladud " suite. I felt inspired and wrote a cool tune, for the final track.... "Sulis". It was finally complete. Dave started a new job in the July. Julia and I continued with our search for good metal music and we hung out a lot, watching Kerrang and MTV2 . By August, I was feeling peaky again, familiarly peaky and I

thought "I can't be... can I ?" David was only just seven months old, when I discovered I was pregnant again. Luckily Beth was with me when I took the test and sure enough, it was positive!

It was a shock, as I would have conceived when David was only six months old... This worked out to be a fifteen month gap between them, which was going to be tough as I was by now, in my late thirties.

Rhiannon was born at nine forty seven, in the morning, on April Fools day, in 2002! Dave's feisty, Glaswegian mum had gatecrashed the birth, much to his annoyance! Rhiannon was adorably cute with loads of dark hair, dark eyes and rosy red cheeks. She was not an easy baby. She screamed constantly and rarely slept for very long at all. It was almost like, she hated being a baby; as she could see her brothers and sisters, all doing things she could not yet do. As she grew into a toddler and began to speak, she developed a strong and powerful personality! She had an innate sense of humour and very often, inadvertently, would make us all laugh hysterically with the random things she came out with. By the age of one; she had very blonde hair and bright, denim blue eyes and was utterly cute.

A year after Rhiannon was born, I took the step of getting myself sterilised. I will never forget coming round from the anesthetic with the Foo Fighters "Everlong" playing in my head, tears of relief and joy streaming down my face! Six children was plenty enough!!

As an early birthday present for Julia, we bought three tickets to go to V Festival, held in August 2003. The main reason was because the Foo Fighters were playing :) We went up there by train, as none of us drove at the time. It was well exciting, for me because it was a festival with "No new age shit", as I put it and for Julia because of the FOO FIGHTERS !

It was indeed a good few days of partying and good music. Among the line up were The Cardigans, Ash, Echo and the Bunnymen, The Hives, PJ Harvey, Feeder, Coldplay, David Gray, Red Hot Chilli Peppers and Queens of the Stone Age, who were awesome. The best of the bunch were definitely the FF's. :) Unanimously! It literally made Julia's year and was the template for many amazing years to come for her :) Other good surprise acts were, Ash, The hives and David Gray. The price of burgers (yes actual meat burgers!!) was extortionate and they charged £1.50 for a small bottle of water!!....Unbelievable but true.

They even searched people's bags, who were going into the main auditorium. I was shocked but I could see why. They were looking for glass bottles or weapons. I was very lucky that they didn't rummage deep enough in my bag, to find the bag of grass I had in there!!! This was a very far cry indeed from my warm, fuzzy memories of the free festival days. The whole festival, in the main. was highly enjoyable and we met some cool people. I began to realise what I knew all along. That life is meant to be a case of work hard/play hard. We are all meant to look out for one another, to enjoy and celebrate life and what better way to do that than a music festival.

Chapter Thirty Four..... 2003/05

The Three headed Monster.....

I delved deep into metal music and found more and more bands I liked. In particular, one band grabbed my attention. That band was called Chimaira. They were a six piece metalcore outfit from Cleveland, Ohio. They were part of the N.W.O.A.H.M movement in America in the Early 2000's. I absolutely loved them. They spoke to me in their lyrics about stuff I had felt for a long time. They had named themselves (albeit a different spelling) after a Greek mythological monster. The three headed Chimera. A beast of fire, with three heads, that of a lion, a goat and a snake. Interesting stuff!

David and Rhiannon were hard work, being only 15 months apart in age. They got into everything and fought a lot. Rhiannon's hectic nature would constantly cause total chaos. Life was hard going. We had our up's and down's, but the down's hit me hard and I became quite cynical and hard faced for a while. I sank into depression. My back was done in. A torn Sacro ileac joint, caused by having two babies close together at my age, especially having had four children previously! Tal was almost sixteen, when Rhi was born! I was no spring chicken and having a heavy workload, chasing two lively toddlers around was insane! Rhi learned to walk by nine months and once she learned to talk, that was it,(and she hasn't stopped ever since!) Emotionally. I felt very much at sixes and sevens. The babies were hard work and playing music ground to a halt. At least I still managed to listen to music, which is what saved me in the end. I was excited for Chimaira's new album due out in the August 2005. It didn't disappoint! I played it constantly and it helped me a lot with facing my mum's illness. Mum had actually been diagnosed with cancer in 2001 but didn't tell me then, as I was pregnant with David and she didn't want me stressed out. She told me around the time I had Rhi, as she was well into her treatment and had to have surgery by then. We visited her and it was good to see that she had got through the operation ok and was feeling optimistic.

Then there was really exciting news. Chimaira were coming over to the UK on tour... YES :) It was a toss up between Cardiff and Exeter. As I was still in touch with John Allegri, I opted for Exeter! This was going to be an almighty blast. I bought the tickets, two of them. Dave wasn't a big fan of them, so I offered John to go along. November 29th 2005 came. I borrowed Emily's New Rocks to wear to the gig and set off, on the train. I listened to the compilation cd, "Roadrunner United" on the journey and I felt so excited, I just knew something amazing was going to happen.

I got mighty hammered with John, Sue and a few others and the gig was outstandingly BRILLIANT ! :))To be honest, it would take another whole chapter to write about this gig properly! All I can say is that it changed my life for good. Something happened to me that night, that I can't explain. It was almost like I had reached another dimension and all yogurt weaving apart, it was more powerful than any rebirthing or mystical experience, whether drug induced or not. Chimaira were absolutely awesome and I came away from that gig on cloud nine.

The next morning presented me with a hangover the size of Asia! I still felt fantastic though and a steady calm took over me. I came to the realisation that finally, I was happy with the person I was. For the first time in my entire life really, I felt comfortable in my own skin, with myself and it felt amazing. This was more than Gig Afterglow! It was a transformation and I didn't need any hippy shit to get it!

Chapter Thirty Five.....Bath 2006 onwards

And Finally.....

Dave left, in less than four weeks after that gig, still on good terms but he couldn't live with me anymore. We were just too different. I carried on in Bath and went to quite a few gigs, mostly local but the Chimaira gig was just the beginning. 2006 was mental! Swrrrl started up again and there were gigs to plan. The summer was packed with our gigs, other band's gigs and a trip to Nottingham to see Tal. He had started at university up there, the previous year. I proudly wore, Emily's new rocks and we walked nearly seven miles around the university campus. Tal had his own office, which I was extremely proud of. We had a great time together, on my visit. Nottingham is an interesting city, very historical and two great music venues. Namely Rock City and The Old Angel !! :)

Autumn came and with that, sadly, we lost my mum to cancer, in early November. As a family, we were all devastated, but glad that she was finally out of pain. :(Mum's death was a huge blow to me and I struggled with my emotions. I still went to gigs and played music with Migo. Swrrrl played a gig at the King Arthur pub, in Glastonbury. The crowd loved us but we ended up getting banned from playing there again because of "Lyrical Content"..... HaHaHa. 2007 was a mixed year. I was rehoused, finally, which was a good thing. This was a four bedroomed semi detached. It was just around the corner, in Haycombe Drive. However, By late Spring/early summer, I was having a nervous breakdown. I went right off the rails and started drinking heavily and smashing up the

house. I pretty much hit rock bottom and if it weren't for my kids and music, I don't know what would have happened.

Basically, I was faced with a choice. Either go under and let everything fall apart or somehow turn it around. Rhiannon had not long started school and it was time for me to get a job. I had spent the previous few years, volunteering with a local charity called the Southside Family Project. I had hoped for a paid job with them, as a community parent; but they ideally needed me to have a full driving license. I had already started lessons but did not find driving easy. Southside Family Project helped a lot of families in the area, in many ways; from finding them the right benefits, to gardening, cooking, cleaning and child minding, which I did a lot of. I had to be CRB checked and confessed that I had been busted for Cannabis plants and had been to Greenham common. I still passed the CRB check, as these "crimes" were over fifteen years ago and were hardly a danger to children! However, a few people from S.F.P. pricked up their ears, when they learned I had been a new age traveler in my younger days.. There was a traveler site, that had sprung up at the foot of Pennyquick hill, near Newton St Loe. They were hoping for a community parent, to gain their trust enough for the traveler families to be able to access local services and not be left out because they weren't a part of normal society. I was the perfect candidate, having been there myself. The only trouble was I needed to be able to drive, as it wasn't walkable. So sadly, that idea was out.

2008 was an incredible year. In January, I went to see Korn in Manchester, with some fantastic friends I met on Myspace. It was a BRILLIANT night :) In April, I saw Chimaira for the second time in Bristol, and it was as good, if not better, than the first time. I also got a job as a home carer, an actual PAID job!! It was the start of some very good times. In June, Jules and I went to the famous Wembley Foo Fighters gig, where they played with Jimmy Page and John Paul Jones from Led Zeppelin. Even though I got my ribs crushed and broken by a massive crowd surfer, it was one of the best and most emotional days of my life. Three weeks later, I met the love of my life. My soul mate, my other half. This amazing soul is Roger Densham and we are together to this very day.....The rest as they say, is history!!!
Down the Rabbit Hole..... THE END

PROLOGUE

A lot happened over the following six years, some good, some devastating. In 2009, I FINALLY passed my driving test, on my seventh attempt!! In 2010, Rhiannon was diagnosed of being on the ASD spectrum and with ADHD. This explained a lot.

We went to a lot of gigs, over these years and had an enormous amount of fun. So that was my "New Age". It wasn't at all, what I had expected or imagined. There was no shift in human consciousness, no world peace and no end to hunger. In fact the world has gotten a harder, crueler place. I think back to my hippy days and realise just how naïve and stupid I was. The thing was, I really did mean it for the right reasons. I really did want love and peace for the world. I have never known much about politics and have tried to steer away from religion. However, I know the difference between right and wrong and try to treat people well. Music is my religion and I work hard and play hard!

When I joined the convoy, there were two factions really. One was the old travelers from the 60's and 70's who were real hippies. Then there were the punk-new generation convoy.

These were the disaffected youth of the 80's, Thatcher's rejects!! I guess, by my timing, I was one of those. I joined the convoy out of circumstance at first, as we had nowhere else to live. I soon got into the whole idealism of alternative living.

I arrived at the same time, or maybe a bit before; as the Brew Crew and Crusties!! There were some dreadful people among these, who thought it was ok to do nothing but drink all day, and stealing and ripping people off. I'm glad to say, I didn't have much contact with the Crusties, (Though they weren't all bad) I hung about more with the older convoy from the 60's /70's ilk. Despite my murky past with drugs, I do not recommend that anyone should take them! LSD, Speed etc is all bad news.

My time as a new age traveler was, relatively short. Two years, then I settled into a house, had children and lived in a fairly "normal society". The Beanfield Massacre, upset me greatly and my heart went out to all those that were affected.

New Age travelers today, are a very brave bunch. The laws have been changed again to make their lives even harder. I think it's appalling that people are not allowed to live as they want to. It is fast becoming a dictatorial and fascist state. I have never understood war, fighting and the need for more and more money and power, by the greedy corporations and powers that be. In an age where there is still world hunger and innocent people suffering and dying because of this; it is no new age that I EVER dreamed of or wanted. This makes me deeply unhappy. :(

I found that the convoy were mostly a very decent group of people. Genuine, sincere people that cared for the planet and for the greater good of humankind. Most of us really "meant it". We wanted a better world for our children. We tried to look after our planet, in what ever small way we could ("Think globally, act locally ") and had an innate desire for love, peace, harmony and a higher consciousness. So, who meant it? Not everyone did. Sadly, some idiots on that convoy ruined it for everyone else, as we were all tarred with the same brush.. I'll be honest now; Life has dealt me a series of nasty blows, some so devastating that they have changed me as a person. I still have a lot of anger at the world and it's injustices. I have fear for the future, in particular for my children and grandchildren. I am definitely, NOT the fluffy hippy that I was before. I am now a cynical Metal head, but I am still a good person. I will always believe that people should be kind to one another and nature. "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" is one of my main mottos. For very good reason, I am not religious at all, nor do I believe in the Golden age of Aquarius. However, I do have morals and ethics and I do love our planet. I just don't believe in the bullshit anymore.

It's a cold, hard bastard world out there. Yet I have found pockets of kindness and tiny pin pricks of higher consciousness out there too. Sometimes, I fleetingly feel hope but mostly on the whole, I worry for the future.

My therapy today, is going to gigs. They are my medicine and lifeline. Especially, since that first Chimaira gig back in 2005. (I have been to five Chimaira gigs in total !) Gigs are a wonderful way of letting off steam and celebrating life. As the band comes on stage to the roar of the crowd; it is at that point that I know I am truly alive and I'm glad to be alive. This is what life is about. Be nice to everyone and have FUN. It really is that simple! Metal heads are another faction of Counter Culture, in some ways, similar to the peace convoy, with mostly

booze and a bit of Weed; instead of the Psychadelics of the free festivals. Of course, there are always dicks in any group of people but most Metal heads are in fact, intelligent, articulate, moral and gentlemanly, despite their boorish appearance. It is any kind of Counter Culture that both interests and fascinates me. I have always been slightly obsessed with Counter Culture and am very proud of the fact that I have been a part of it.

The only festival I have been to in recent years was Bloodstock, in August 2014. Bloodstock is an annual heavy metal festival, smaller than Reading or Download, but much friendlier. Roger and I took David and Rhiannon with us and we met our friends Rooster and John there, along with many amazing and lovely people. David, now nearly fourteen, is a proud Metal head. I Remember, Julia and me laughing when he was a toddler, he would always go nuts to Black Sabbath or Ozzy Osbourne, so it would be very fitting that he would love this kind of music! David had a whale of a time at Bloodstock and Rhiannon enjoyed it too. She got on so well with all the Metal heads we met, even the very drunk ones. You know, for all the crazy drunken metal heads that were at Bloodstock; we never came across any kind of trouble or any one who was dodgy. I actually felt that the kids were safer there, than outside on the streets, in our local area at home.

It's good to know that festival culture is still well and truly alive and kicking even now, no matter what the theme of them is. It is still a tribal gathering of similar minded people, celebrating life, in their way. It is a freedom and the common denominator is music. What ever genre it is; music is a healing force, a universal language, a gift from the universe(or God if you choose to believe that.) Music also brings people together, people from all walks of life and is always a positive force. Music always was, is and always will be; a major focal point of my life. Only my family and friends are more important.

GLOSSARY:

Scouser.....Someone from Liverpool

Peace Convoy.....A group of travelers, travelling from one festival to the next. Came out of the ashes of the Free festival movement of the early 70's. They were named the "Peace Convoy" in the early 80's at the time of their journey from Stonehenge to Greenham Common on June 30th 1982.

Drongo.....A hanger on, scrounger, sponging off others and someone who never contributes to the greater good of the group.

Dross..... Rubbish, something of very low quality.

Rip Off.....A rip off is a swindle, a bad deal or someone who cheats and steals from others.

Spliff.....A Marijuana cigarette.

Chillum.....A conical, carrot shaped tube made from stone or ceramic to smoke hash or grass in. The chillum is passed around as many people as possible.

Crustie.....Crusties were an even less desirable group of people than traditional convoy.

They commonly had dreadlocks, heavy boots, much less colourful clothing and drank strong alcohol. Brew Crew people were very similar.

Chakra.....An internal wheel of light, the seat of emotions. There are seven in the human body. These are: Root, Sacral, Solar Plexus, Heart, Throat, the Third Eye and the Crown chakra. These are well known of in Hindu culture and many new age factions.

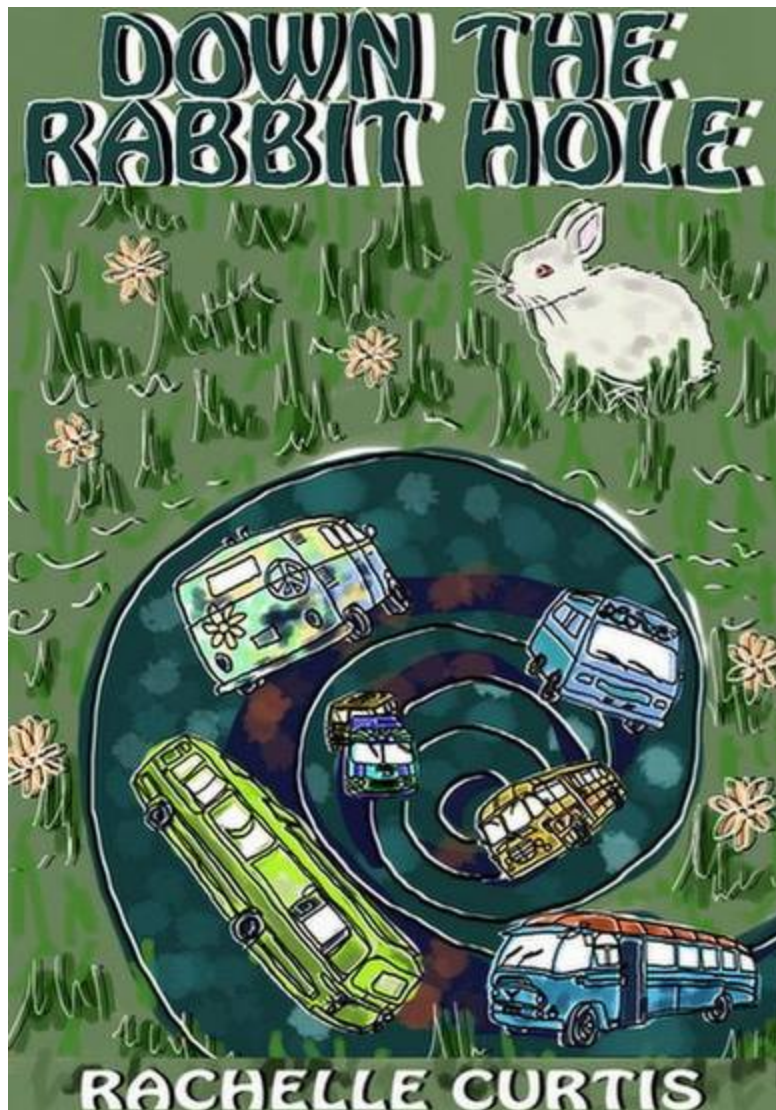
Sweat Lodge.....A Sweat Lodge is an outdoor sauna, usually held in a Tipi, Bender, or wooden lodge. Large stones are heated by fire. Everyone goes inside, who wishes to participate. Then cold water is gently poured on to the stones. This creates plumes of steam and Voila....there is your sauna! The Tipi people used these a lot. I never tried one. I have a dislike of steamy atmospheres and find it difficult to breathe!

Yogurt Weaver..... Someone who talks and preaches all things new age or "Spiritual" but isn't spiritual in the true sense of the word. They think they're far superior to others but are in fact hypocrites. Unfortunately, there are too many of these around.

Chapter index:

1 The Initiation.	19 Tobacco Road
2 The Party.	20 The Crazy Wilderness
3 Music was my first Love.	21 Accidents will happen
4 Personal Jesus.	22 The Hunted and the Hunters
5 Down the Rabbit Hole.	23 The Reekers
6 It's New age *	24 Threads...of Fear
7 Rainbow Warrior.	25 The Beanfield Massacre *
8 We've got the biggest balls of them all.	26 The After Years
9 The Bell end from Bridgwater.	27 Music, Art and an unplanned Surprise
10 The Healing Sea.	28 The Sanctuary of Sulis
11 London Calling.	29 Trees
12 Urban Warrior	30 It's a New Age...Not
13 A Million places to be	31 Out of the Rabbit Hole
14 You can't kill the Spirit	32 The Return of a very old Friend
15 Mugged off(nearly) Tiny to the rescue	33 A Daughter of Sulis
16 Houdini Hound	34 The Three Headed Monster
17 Splitting away	35 And Finally...
18 The Queen of Cups *	First and last chapters of excerpt for Beanfield Anniversary.

Cover for DOWN THE RABBIT HOLE



BOOK COVER DESIGN BY EMILY CURTIS

Also: Please check out on Youtube.....Stonehenge Visions Tipi Valley Dreams, Parts, 1, 2, 3, and 4. Four Youtube videos made by Chris Waite.

When I first saw these, the memories came flooding back and quite a few tears of nostalgia too! Fortunately, I am not in any of the footage but I recognised a lot of trucks and faces that I knew.

