



Organising the summer festival

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It had always been my goal to bring two strands of my experience together: the Camp/Festival scene and the cerebral exploration of humanistic psychology and psychotherapy. I believe the AHPB Summer Festival of 2007 did just this. The Camp/Festival scene, represented by singing, drumming, meditation, chi kung, bio-energetics and other less cerebral expression, blended with stimulating and challenging talks from John Rowan, Nick Totton and Brian Thorne and thus provided a centred balance within each one of us attending the Festival. The fact that the elements were somewhat against us did not overshadow our sense of complete immersion in a shared experience many of us, to judge from the feed back forms, had not had before. For me this has been the greatest joy of all – that the two strands of my experience did merge and complement each other in a way I had only dreamed about before this summer and that in doing so produced a third entity stronger than either one of them on their own; a kind of vibrant harmony, just like in a healthy relationship.

The actual organisation of the event took time, of course, and energy. I must have re-drafted the programme twenty or thirty times to try and accommodate the different aspects we wanted to see within the programme. Not everyone was happy with the amount of space between workshops but as near as dammit we got it right. Next year we hope to start before lunch on the Friday but do not intend to add any greater number of workshops thus allowing more time between things. We shall also endeavour to set up discussion groups following any keynote speech, to allow for proper assimilation of talks given.

I was very touched by the amount of appreciation I personally received for helping to organise the Summer Festival but it would not have been possible without the constant support and facilitation of Maxine Linnell, Tyagi, Tony Morris and Timothy McMichael. We shall be without the latter two's input next year but I hope others will come forward to help – I feel very strongly that AHPB is an association of people with ideas, passions, insights and culture and that for such a society of people not to meet every year would be a heinous waste of resources. Let us commit to meet next year – we were 110 strong this year, let us be 200 strong next - wherever it be, tented or housed (in fact we are attempting to find a site which offers both) where we can share our wisdom and our love.