

Festival / Camp / Conference

Louise Page

So which was it? A bit of all three, I guess. For me, the camp aspect was strongest with the beautiful village set up by Green & Away providing the perfect setting for deepening and connecting with the subject matter of the conference. I felt my wild nature emerging more and more as the weekend progressed - bubbling its way up from under the weight of hospital counselling and teaching work. The words of a poem kept going through my mind and became an inner mantra for me:

What would the world be, once bereft
of wet and of wildness? Let them be left,
O let them be left, wildness and wet;
Long live the weeds and the wilderness yet.

Gerard Manley Hopkins

I love to be outdoors and I love camping, so for me the environment was probably a lot less challenging than for some. I take my hat off to those who tried camping for the first time or who went ahead despite misgivings, and I totally take my hat off to Julian for having the vision of combining a conference with a camp and for carrying it off so successfully despite the threatening weather conditions. I want to say thank you again to everyone who was involved with initiating and organising the event - Julian, Tony, Maxine, Green & Away, the speakers, the workshop leaders and everyone else.

Vicky and I had an amazingly good time sitting by the fire and in the bar and getting to know the Green & Away team, who were incredibly dedicated and hard working as well as being great fun and good to talk to on all manner of things.

'And all shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of
things shall be well'

It felt very fitting that at the end of the conference Tony spoke these words - long time favourites of mine, especially in difficult times.


My impressions of the conference are many and varied and have not yet had time to settle into any kind of coherent whole. A friend of mine says I live a kaleidoscope life, and for me this is a good image for the conference. One definition of kaleidoscope is: 'a constantly changing group of bright or interesting objects'. The camp was this for me: the people, the tents and yurts, the delicious food, the

endless tea and coffee, the mud, falling over in the mud, the conversations with friends and strangers, the laughter, reading my book, treating it as a holiday, the depth and breadth of the talks and workshops, the security and sharing of the home groups, Seize the Day, their lyrics and actions, deepening friendship, slight homesickness, yellow trees, flood water very nearby, browned fields from recent destruction, differing levels of consciousness, people of different ages and backgrounds, slugs of course. I could go on, but that's enough for now.

Clearly I had a good time and hope that you did too, and that we can do it again in the future.

A poet friend today sent me a quote that seems very appropriate:
From Heaney: 'It could not be done and had to be done'.

Louise Page: I live in Devon and work as a hospital counsellor and in private practice. My work is in counselling, journey therapy, healing, massage, supervision, tutoring, and running workshops that combine shamanism, therapy and the celtic tradition of following the year and working with the elements. Telephone: 01392 860509



"Thank you very, very much for a truly splendid, enriching and inspiring time"

"Most interested in an annual event emerging"