



Four years in Greece

By Sallie Rose

In 2003 my children left home. I was practising as a homeopath and ran a yoga school with my daughter Sunnah in East Finchley. A single parent for the last 25 years, I had always harboured a secret dream to buy some land in Greece and write from my little window over the sea. I decided to take a sabbatical.

On mainland Greece near Kalamata, famous for its olive production, I found an olive grove in a small mountain village with the most spectacular view of the sea. It was beautiful but isolated, without a telephone or television, and only the sea for company.

As I did not feel ready to build a house I bought a caravan and had a 16ft square Mongolian yurt shipped over to live in. Despite the cold winters, the felt insulation and central wood fire kept me warm. I was the proud owner of 85 olive trees and I planted 25 fruit trees.



Sallie's yurt. Picture by Sallie Rose.

I learnt to feed, prune and pick the olives and take them to the local co-operative olive press where they were squeezed into pure, virgin organic oil. I husbanded chickens, geese and ducks, and for a while cared for a homeless donkey.

The neighbours were unbelievably welcoming, feeding me most nights and constantly arriving with eggs, chickens and excess vegetables. Before

Easter I baked biscuits with them at dawn in their wood ovens. They taught me how to make cheese in huge pots on outside fires and how to identify medicinal herbs.

Before I knew it, I had fallen in love with a man from the village and we spent four years living together. Sadly the relationship ended and I realised that, despite the beauty and tranquillity of the place, I missed my

family and friends too much to stay. Before leaving, I published a collection of poems, *Echoes of the Mani*, which describes my time there.

I recently returned to my cottage in East Finchley and resumed my practice as a homeopath and a teacher of yoga and meditation. Back in Greece, however, the olive grove still flourishes. I will visit in November for the harvest.

Feed the goat first

By Sallie Rose

'There's something I need to say to you dear,' he sits down and lights a cigarette. I close my notebook and replace my pen 'but I fear it's something I may regret.'

'Your priorities are all wrong,' he says. 'You take a pen before you wash a dish, head for the hills before you mop the floor, can you imagine if my poor mother saw?'

You are not doing your job well I feel, a poem cannot pour food down my throat a novella does not get the olives picked, a sonnet does not milk the goat.

Wake up and do your homely duties first, then if there's time whilst there's still light, and all food is cooked and animals are fed, then my dear, by all means write.'

I stand up and walk to the sink and pause, I pick up the plate of green beans and bread, I remove his cigarette from his hand And pour the food right over his head.



Tarted up taxi to tie the knot

This black cab was spotted parked outside the florist and gift shop 2 Destino, 128 High Road, where it was being decorated for a civil ceremony at the end of July, with big pink ribbons giving the taxi a touch of romance. Our best wishes to the happy couple.



Rosie Jones with her recycled jewellery.

A load of old rubbish

By Diana Cormack

One of the stalls which created a lot of interest at the East Finchley Community Festival back in June was run by 19-year-old Rosie Jones. Like some others she was selling jewellery, but this was jewellery with a difference, for it was all made from recycled materials.

At first glance the bracelets, cuffs, necklaces and pendants did look slightly unusual and on closer examination it was possible to pick out objects such as stamps, container tops and even Lego blocks which Rosie had used in her creations. Always on the look out for things to make use of, Rosie finds some scattered in the street or comes across them in charity shops. She also makes greetings cards - from recyclable material, of course.

Rosie's father lives in Long Lane and this was her first foray into selling her home-made products. Whether she will be able to continue with

it when she starts her studies at Cambridge University is as yet not known.

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