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# Guardians of the Forest



# Unforgettable weddings in paradise!



April 2012

Live  
encounters

Dear Readers,

We are proud to announce that our **readership** has crossed **15,000** and **unique pageviews** now touches **100,000**.

Thank you dear contributors and readers from around the world for continuing to support our endeavour to bring people together. *Knowledge is free and should be shared with everyone.*

This month's issue features an in depth **Special Report** on the **Guardian of the Forest** aka **Vishnu Narain**; An overview of **Bannerghatta National Park** and the prevailing human-elephant conflict; and an interview with the **Matriarch of the Herd, Carol Buckley**, on her life, work and the setting up in India of an **Elephant Care Centre**, the first of its kind in Asia,

**Robin Marchesi** writes of a trip to Goa in 2007.

**Terry McDonagh** announces the imminent launch of his latest book, **In the Light of Windows – Hamburg Fragments** to be released on April 26th in Hamburg: [www.blaupause-books.com](http://www.blaupause-books.com)

**Natalie Wood's** short story **A New Passover Sacrifice** comes eerily close to the Toulouse murders in France (though it has been written much earlier). Truly captivating.

**Joo Peter** has sent in smashing photographs of **Holi**, the Festival of colours, in **India** and a peak into the Buddhist world in **Laos**.

**Candess M Campbell's** Creating your Life through Trance is essential reading for all.

**John Chester Lewis** pens a poem in honour of the great musician, Jeff Richman. Please check out his **video of Jeff Richman**, which is posted under his profile.

For those eternal bikers **Santosh Rajkumar** writes an interesting profile of the Royal Enfield motorbike. This is followed by **Sam Lovett's chat with Liveencounters** on biking across the Indian sub-continent on an Enfield.

We request you to kindly pass this magazine on to everyone you know.

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti Om

**Mark Ulyseas**  
Publisher/Editor

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# CONTRIBUTORS & CONTENTS



## Vishnu - Guardian of the Forest Mark Ulyseas

The face of modern India is pockmarked with environmental damage that is sadly progressing along with the expanding economy. Human-Animal conflict appears to be the rule rather than the exception. Development is usually human centric without much thought given to the denizens of the forest, whose rights are abused and habitat, plundered. Amidst the cacophony of rampant growth a few good people stand up to be counted as Guardians of the Forest. Vishnu Narain is one of them.



## Carol Buckley - Matriarch of the Herd Mark Ulyseas

This lady has been working with elephants for the last 38 years. She had set up an elephant haven in the USA for rescued animals from circuses, zoos etc. Carol has won many international awards. She is Founder of Elephant Aid International. Presently, Carol is in India to help set up an elephant care centre, the first of its kind in Asia.  
<http://www.elephantaiddinternational.org> <http://www.carolbuckley.com>  
<https://www.facebook.com/elephantaiddinternational>



## Goa 2007 Robin Marchesi

Robin Marchesi was born in Hampshire England. He was educated at Oxford and London Universities. He has lived 'on his wits' throughout the world and has several published works including Kyoto Garden A B C Quest and A Small Journal of Heroin Addiction. He has worked on and off for the Sculptor Barry Flanagan OBE, a Rilke to a Rodin. At the moment he is living in London completing his latest work entitled: "Prospero's Cell." <http://www.robinmarchesi.com>



## The Sculptor Terry McDonagh

Is a poet and dramatist from Cill Aodáin, Kiltimagh, Co. Mayo, has published six collections of poetry, a play, a book of letters and a novel and poetry for children. His work has been translated into Indonesian and German, funded by Ireland Literature Exchange. With piper Diarmaid Moynihan, he completes poet/piper duo, Raithneach. Twelve of his poems have been put to music, for voice and string quartet, by the late, Eberhard Reichel. His most recent poetry collection is The Truth in Mustard (Arlen House). He was a runner-up in 2010 Fish poetry prize. He shares his time between Ireland and Hamburg. <http://www.terry-mcdonagh.com>



## A New Passover Sacrifice Natalie Wood

Born in Birmingham, U.K. Natalie began working in journalism a month prior to the outbreak of the 1973 Yom Kippur War. She continued in regional Jewish journalism for more than 20 years and left full time writing to assist her husband open a bargain books business. A year ago, Natalie emigrated to Israel.  
[www.alwayswriteagain.blogspot.com](http://www.alwayswriteagain.blogspot.com) - [my.telegraph.co.uk/perfectlywriteinisrael/](http://my.telegraph.co.uk/perfectlywriteinisrael/)



## Photo Feature - India and Laos Joo Peter

Aka Joachim Peter is a Visual artist and writer based in Southwest Germany, presently working on documentary & travel photography in Asia right. He loves to explore and combine all arts in his work. Joo has studied Arts; painting and graphics, worked for theatre (designing stage, costume and light), did some work for television and film, went into teaching. He writes essays and a blog in his native tongue, German, for he feels his language combines philosophy and humour. <http://joo-peter.photoshelter.com>



## Creating your Life through Trance Candess M Campbell

Candess M. Campbell, PhD is an internationally known Intuitive Life Coach, Licensed Mental Health Counselor, Seminar leader, Hypnotherapist and Author. She specializes in assisting others to gain their own personal power and to live a life of abundance, happiness and joy. Early 2012 she will be releasing her book 12 Weeks to Self-Healing: Transforming Pain through Energy Medicine. <http://www.12weekstoselfhealing.com>. You can reach her at <http://www.candesscampbell.com>



## Old Room John Chester Lewis

Lewis was born in Southern California and began writing poetry during university in Colorado. He lives in Ubud, Bali, Indonesia where he works on his poetry, music, and painting, when not running JL Galleries fine art.

[www.poempress.com](http://www.poempress.com) - [www.jlgalleries.com](http://www.jlgalleries.com) - [www.johnniechester.com](http://www.johnniechester.com)



## A Tale of Two Singles Santosh RajKumar

Santosh Rajkumar is a senior automotive researcher for a private consultancy based in Goa, India. His love for language and internal combustion fuelled a career in motoring journalism that began with Autocar India magazine in 2008. Santosh currently writes a column for the print and web editions of the Deccan Chronicle and Asian Age dailies. He is equally passionate about music, and can often be found crooning inappropriately at a certain watering hole in Panjim, North Goa. Email: [santoshrajkumar@gmail.com](mailto:santoshrajkumar@gmail.com)



## Biker Sam Lovett chats with Mark Ulyseas about his bike tours across the Indian sub-continent

Sam first visited India about two years ago. He bought a Royal Enfield 350 Classic and travelled by road across Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Goa, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, and Delhi clocking thousands of kms. He met lots of people, visited many Indian homes and fell in love with India. <http://www.samlovett.co.uk>  
<http://www.facebook.com/WorldMotorcycleAdventures> Email: [adventure@samlovett.co.uk](mailto:adventure@samlovett.co.uk)





## Vishnu - Guardian of the Forest

by Mark Ulyseas

The face of modern India is pockmarked with environmental damage that is sadly progressing along with the expanding economy. **Human-Animal** conflict appears to be the rule rather than the exception. Development is usually human centric without much thought given to the denizens of the forest, whose rights are abused and habitat, plundered.

Amidst the cacophony of rampant growth a few good people stand up to be counted as Guardians of the Forest.

Vishnu Narain is one of them.

He has worked for over 15 years to acquire land of around 150 acres bordering the Bannerghatta National Park, South of Bangalore, in the Indian State of Karnataka.

So what has he done with this land?

"I prefer animals to human beings. Animals have a code by which they live. They take only what they need and leave the rest for others. They do not hoard nor destroy their environs.

Humans don't know how to live with Nature. Our senses are dimmed by technology. Do you know animals send and receive infra sound that humans can't hear? They warn others in the forest of their presence. You won't see wild boar walking through a herd of elephants. We have become physically and spiritually disconnected from Nature that is why we can't hear these infra messages/warnings, which results in human - animal conflict. Often it ends in the death of an animal.

Therefore, I have returned this land to these wonderful creatures. I will not commercially develop this area. It is exclusively reserved for the flora and fauna, particularly for the Asian Elephant whose habitat is continually being encroached upon. Except for a few staff no one is permitted to enter this area.

**This is my way of giving back to Mother Nature."**



**It is claimed that India has around 13% forest cover.  
The reality – it is not more than 5%,**

Vishnu Narain's love for Nature came from his Primary school teacher, Edith Tenbroeck, a Theosophist and follower of Madame Blavatsky and a close friend of Mahatma Gandhi. Her childhood was spent living with Native American Indians who had kidnapped her at a very young age. She left them at the age of 17 or 18 years. Edith instilled in Vishnu a deep passion and respect for Nature and the importance of living in harmony with it.

"Mark, I feel the Native American Indians are the only people who truly understand how to live as one with Nature, with the earth...the Bisnoi Tribe in India come a distant second.

The problem we are facing is unchecked growth in population coupled with unfettered development...corruption being the chief motivating factor. Also, around 400 million Indians live on or below the poverty line.

The rapid dwindling forests rich in natural resources are seen as easy pickings for unscrupulous people like poachers, timber smugglers etc... Even indigenous people who have been displaced or divested of their lands have to resort to pilfering from the forest to feed their families.

This is the chief cause of growing incidences of Human-Animal conflict.

It is claimed that India has around 13% forest cover. The reality – it is not more than 5%, " says Vishnu.

"So what are you doing about this?" I ask hesitantly.

"Over 15 years ago I had decided to create a bubble, a rich biosphere, protected from marauding humans; one that is left to the animal kingdom; an untouched area that is allowed to succumb to the embrace of Nature; the natural growth of root and stem with no outside influences like pesticides/fertilizers/or non-indigenous species; solar powered electric fencing enclosing the biosphere to keep out humans, their cattle and other anti social elements!"

**A pathway through Geedee. It is dangerous to walk around the area during the night as there are often wild elephants and wild boar that roam the territory not to mention the occasional panther.**

**Pic © Mark Ulyseas**

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Yellow throated Bulbul  
Click on pic to weblink  
© www.1200birds.blogspot.in



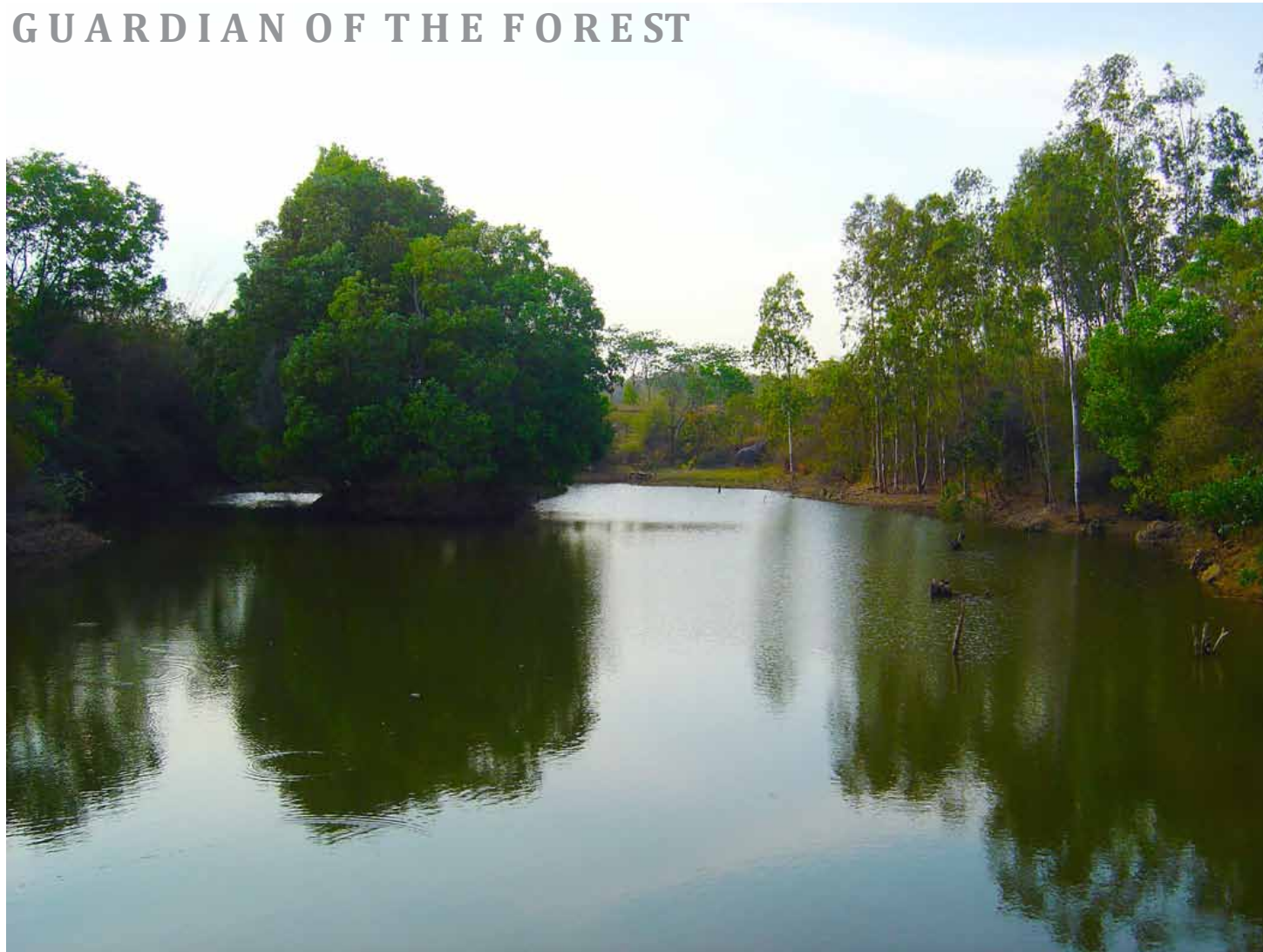
Vishnu's horses at his man made pond Pic © Mark Ulyseas



Brahminy Kite  
Click on pic to weblink  
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One of the two large ponds that Vishnu has made. This one measures around 3 acres and is 25 ft deep. He rears Rohu, Catla, Silver Carp and local fish which are sampled by a host of Herons, Egrets, Brahminy Kites and King Fishers. Pic © Mark Ulyseas

“Over the years, as I have acquired tracks of this land adjacent to the Bannerghatta National Park, I have planted thousands of trees: Jamun, Jackfruit, Mango. Though the mortality rate is high they should take root and blossom in another 3 to 5 years.

You must understand that much of this area was over cultivated land so the soil will take time to regenerate through a natural process. But the scourge that interrupts this process is the Lantana scrub.”

- *Lantana camara is a terrestrial weed of South and Central American origin introduced as an ornamental plant in 1809 to India. Usually this weed invades disturbed natural ecosystems and adversely affects biodiversity. The weed is distributed throughout India.*

- *In forests, Lantana is considered as a potential fire hazard in deciduous forests and it is combustible even when green. Thus this weed can be dangerous in national parks and sanctuaries. Lantana also competes with agricultural crops and has an allelopathic effect – inhibiting the growth of other plants. This weed is reported to be of concern in teak, eucalyptus and coffee plantations in India.*

“In addition to planting trees, I have built two large ponds (dug 25 ft deep and filled the foundation with clay and sand, a natural mud dam) which are ideal for rain water harvesting. In these ponds I am rearing Silver Carp, Rohu, Catla and local fish. These attract herons, egrets, kingfishers, Brahminy Kites, cormorants and wild animals passing through the area. This does not include the many small check dams and watering holes across the area, which are all replenished during the monsoon.”



A view from atop a small hill which is a part of Geedee, Vishnu’s property. Notice the dense lush jungle. This is due to the intense reforestation work that has been done by him over the years. Pic © Mark Ulyseas

**“Years ago this land had a forest cover of only 20 to 30%. Now, it is 60 to 70%. Because this land borders a national park it acts like a buffer zone and offers wild animals additional space to roam. In fact many denizens pass through or have setup home here e.g. wild elephants, wild boar, mongoose, snakes, barking deer, panthers, over 180 species of birds etc.**

But my work is far from over.

**I plan to convert this biosphere, which is called Geedee, into Asia’s first Elephant Care Centre and seek the help of Carol Buckley, founder of Elephant Aid International, a world famous woman who has worked with elephants for the last 38 years to train staff. She has pioneered the method of rescuing injured and abused captive elephants and rehabilitating them through the process of mutual respect, gentle handling without threats, beatings and chains. In fact she leaves the elephants to roam free in a designated area with minimal human interaction.**

But before the centre is set up I need to dig a trench around the entire property and build specialized solar powered fencing to keep out the wild elephants, humans and their cattle. This would protect the rescued elephants in the biosphere. I need to create a fire line as every summer fires are deliberately started by the villagers so that areas can be cleared for grazing.

A plan is being drawn up to cultivate grass for the elephants and also to involve the nearby villages in growing the same. At harvest time we can buy it off them at a predetermined price. This will go as fodder for the elephants and help in building a relationship with the villagers – making them stakeholders in the preservation of the environment.”





#### A Thank You Note

Derrick, the pet dog of Vishnu and Mridula, stood guard over me while I slept alone in a tent in the wild. He kept me company wherever I went and ate whatever I gave him. Thanks mate!

*Pic © Mark Ulyseas*

**“This Elephant Care Centre will be a pilot project that can then be replicated across the country and elsewhere in Asia.**

However, this biosphere is not exclusively for the elephants. Other wild animals will coexist with them because animals do not recognise man made boundaries,” laughs Vishnu

“Kindly give us a glimpse of your life not related to this project,” I ask.

**“I am married to Mridula who shares my passion for Nature. We live in a one bedroom house with a Peacock and other critters that drop in from time to time depending upon whether they need food or water or love. I have done my Msc. in microbiology and studied for a Phd but never completed it.**

I head a company [Ibex-Gallagher, an Indo-New Zealand joint venture](#) that sells state of the art solar powered electric fences for agricultural lands, national parks etc. - a vital component in the prevention of Human-Animal conflict. We have four horses – 2 Kathiawari and 2 Marwari. Two crows have adopted us and when my wife goes for a walk they join her! My salary goes into the upkeep of Geedee, our biosphere.”



Sunset over Geedee Pic © Mark Ulyseas



Ancient graves atop the hill in Geedee. It is believed that the bodies of the departed were buried under these stones. Elephants often visit this place. It offers a panoramic view of the Bannerghatta National Park. Pic © Mark Ulyseas





Wild elephants enter Mysore City and go on a rampage. Click on pic for weblink.



A pair of elephants separated from the herd



Death of a photographer. Click on pic for weblink.

## An overview of Bannerghatta National Park and the prevailing human-elephant conflict

The South Deccan Plateau ecoregion includes the cities of Bangalore and Mysore in Karnataka, and Coimbatore, Karur, Erode and Salem in Tamil Nadu. The forests in these regions are included in India's most important elephant conservation areas. **Bannerghatta National Park** (South of Bangalore) is home to several species of mammals, amphibians, reptiles and birds apart from the endangered **Asian elephant** (*Elephas maximus*).

The other prominent mammals seen in the park include **Indian gaur** (*Bos gaurus*), **sambar deer** (*Cervus unicolor*), **spotted deer** (*Axis axis*), **leopard** (*Panthera pardus*), **wild dog** (*Cuon alpinus*), **wild boar** (*Sus scrofa*), **sloth bear** (*Ursus ursinus*), **pangolin** (*Manis crassicaudata*), **common mongoose** (*Herpestes vitticollis*), **slender loris** (*Loris lardigradus*), and **black naped hare** (*Lepus nigricollis*). And more than 222 species of birds!

The indigenous trees are **Acacia catechu**, **Albizia amara**, **Anogeissus latifolia**, **Boswellia serrata**, **Cassia fistula**, **Chloroxylon swietenia**, **Dalbergia latifolia**, **Diospyros montana**, **Hardwickia binata**, **Pterocarpus marsupium**, **Shorea talura**, **Sterospermum personatum**, **Terminalia belirica**, **Terminalia paniculata**, and **Terminalia tomentosa**. **Sandalwood** (*Santalum album*) was an important species of the forests at one time, but has been selectively removed.

Here is an excerpt from an article titled **Asian Elephant and Bannerghatta National Park in Eastern Ghats, Southern India**, authored by **S. P. Gopalakrishna & R. K. Somashekar** (Dept. of Environmental Science, Jnanabharathi Campus, Bangalore University, Bangalore, India), **Vijay D. Anand** (A Rocha India, Austin Town, Bangalore, India), **Surendra Varma** (Asian Elephant Research and Conservation Centre, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, India) which gives us a overall view of the prevailing conditions in this fragile ecosystem.

- The **Asian elephant** (*Elephas maximus*) is the largest living land mammal and is presently endangered. There are only around 50,000 elephants in the wild and another 16,000 in captivity distributed across 13 Asian countries today. **India has approximately 50% of the total population of wild elephants (20,000 to 25,000) distributed across 18 states/ union territories; with South India supporting around 10,000 elephants in the wild (Project Elephant 2008).**

The confluence of the Western and Eastern Ghats at the Nilgiris in Tamil Nadu state supports the largest Asian elephant population in southern India. These two ranges of mountains are unique in terms of the diversity of species and habitat. **While the Western Ghats is one among the 25 biodiversity hotspots of the world, the Eastern Ghats represents the last largest remaining scrub forest for elephants.** This major elephant habitat of southern India has been declared as the '**Nilgiris and Eastern Ghats Elephant Reserve**' by Project Elephant; a conservation initiative of the Government of India (started in February 1992).

- The Nilgiris and Eastern Ghats Elephant Reserve is one of the largest Elephant Reserves in India with an area of 11,000 km<sup>2</sup>. The Karnataka part of this reserve is called the '**Mysore Elephant Reserve**' which includes the Bannerghatta National Park (BNP). **The BNP although administratively one of the smallest National Parks in India, geographically is contiguous with the largest remaining scrub forests of the country.**







The relatively small size of this park, already fragmented and degraded, coupled with a high density elephant population is increasing human elephant conflict. Illegal mining, cattle grazing and theft of natural resources from the forest continues unabated.

- It is linked to the Hosur forest division of the Tamil Nadu state to the Southeast and the Kanakapura forest division of the Karnataka state to the Southwest. These forest divisions further connect to the forest tracks of the Cauvery Wildlife Sanctuary eventually joining the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve of Western Ghats forest at Nilgiris, stretching through Malimahadeshwara hills, Biligiri Ranga Temple Sanctuary, Kollegal Forest Division and Sathyamangala Forests.

- **The Bannerghatta National Park area has been divided into three wildlife ranges, viz. Bannerghatta, Harohalli and Anekal Wildlife Range** for the convenience of administration. It is highly irregular in shape and measures a maximum of 26 km in length from North to South and varies between 0.3 and 5 km in width from East to West.

- The geology shows that the rocks are of the oldest formation revealing crypto crystalline to coarse granites and complex gneiss. The terrain is highly undulating with a mean altitude of 865 m and ranges between 700 and 1035 m above msl.

- The park receives an average annual rainfall of 937 mm ranging between 728 and 1352 mm spread across 8 months (April- November) with the maximum rainfall (50%) normally occurring between August and October.

- **It has no rivers originating or flowing through it but has several streams. There are more than 50 water holes in the park and many of them are natural and are constantly renovated to augment their water holding capacity along with a few manmade ones.**

- There is also seasonality of elephant presence in the park leading to fluctuation in their number. The fluctuations facilitate the presence of more elephants in Bannerghatta and Anekal ranges of the park. To move between these two ranges, they have to traverse through Harohalli range. The Karadikkal-Madeswara elephant corridor located in Harohalli range is acting as a link between the two. The corridor measures about 1 km in length and 0.3-0.4 km in width connecting northern and southern portion of the park.



The over cultivation of agricultural land bordering the Bannerghatta National Park and the resultant erosion of top soil continues despite the best efforts of the Forest Department to educate the villagers.

- The South India synchronized elephant census conducted during 2002, 2005 and 2007 by the Project Elephant, Government of India has estimated a mean density of 0.68, 0.71 and 1.41 elephants/km<sup>2</sup> respectively for the park. The mean density results suggest an increasing trend in the elephant population. While the recent census estimates a population of 148 elephants for the park, the forest staff involved in the elephant driving operations and farmers living adjacent to the park boundary opine that the number to be more than 200, with the migratory elephants moving in, during the harvesting season.

- **The relatively small size of this park, already fragmented and degraded, coupled with a high density elephant population is increasing human elephant conflict... Not mention the [Illegal mining](#), cattle grazing and theft of natural resources from the forest. The seasonal migratory elephants also coincides with the peak harvesting season, thus making the crops highly vulnerable to raids. All these factors result in the increasing number of encounters between the man and elephants, leading to loss of crops, human lives and of elephants.**





# Carol Buckley

Matriarch of the Herd *speaks to Mark Ulyseas on her life, work and the creation of care centres for elephants*



Carol Buckley with Tarra

“Through her (Tarra) I came to understand the wisdom, complexity, intelligence, sensitivity and intensely social nature of elephants. She has been the force in my life that has shaped me into the person I am today and I am eternally grateful.”

Often it is a single person with a passion and a love that transcends human barriers of selfishness that bridges the gap between human and animal. Carol Buckley is a wisp of a woman with a strong heart and a deep affection for [her beloved Tarra](#), an elephant she rescued as a teenager.

It is now thirty eight years since her first encounter.

Much has happened. Much has changed.

But Carol has never deviated from her goal to rescue and rehabilitate elephants. She spoke at length about her life with Tarra. No amount of information spiced by adjectives can truthfully describe the enormous work that Carol has done.

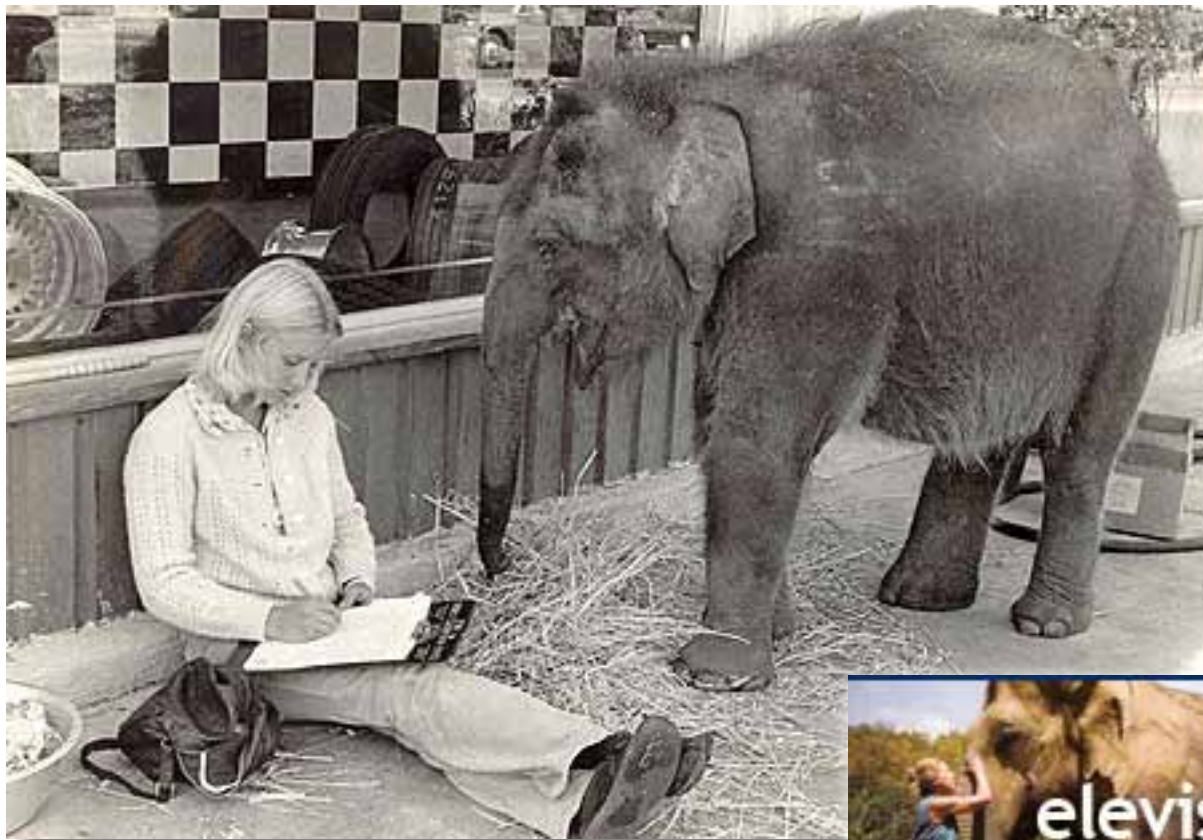
Presently, she is in India to help set up an elephant care centre, the first of its kind in Asia, to rescue injured and abused elephants in captivity: to release them into a designated forested area to roam without any shackles and to live out their lives free of fear from human cruelty and domination... of course under the watchful eyes of staff specially trained by Carol to look after the elephants with tender loving care and not by beating and threats.

***Read on...***



Click on pic for weblink





Carol Buckley and Tarra, teenage years.



**Could you share with the readers a glimpse of the work you have done with elephants in the past?**

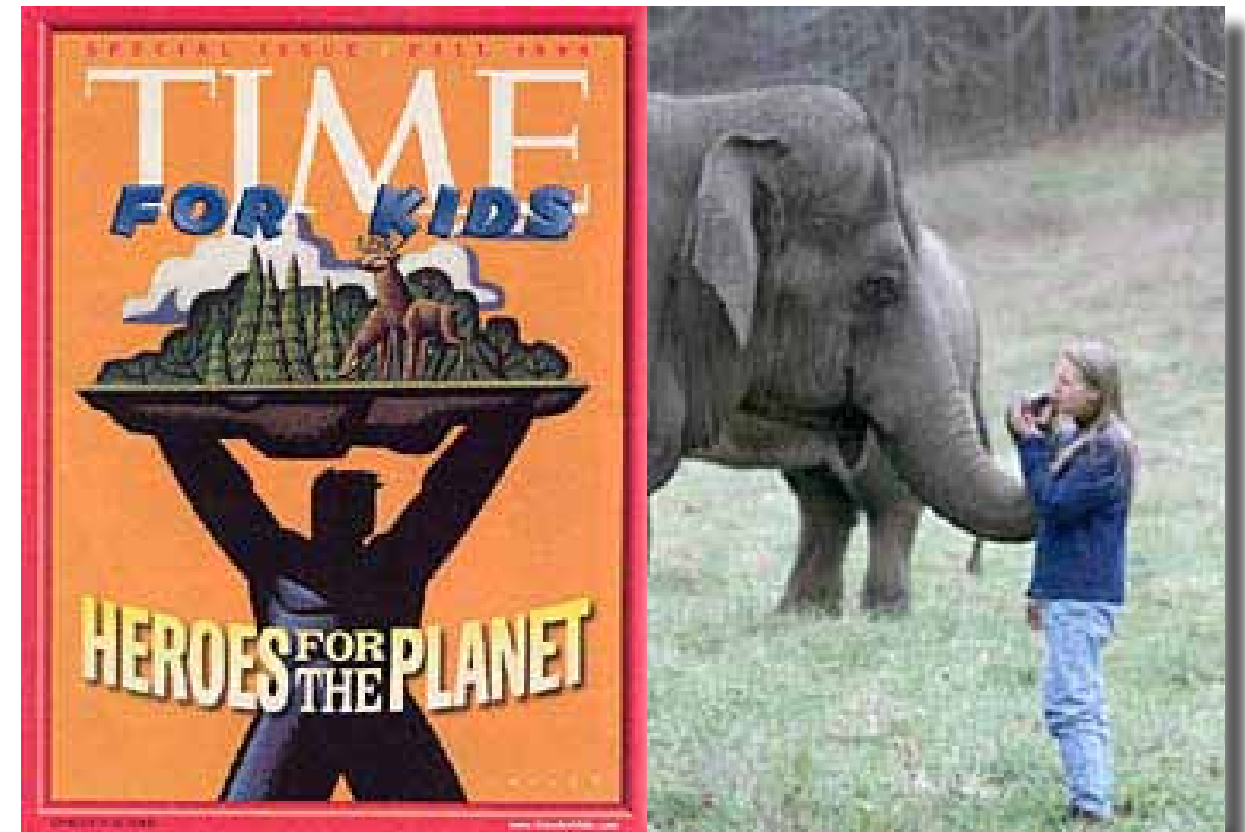
For the past 38 years I've been blessed to live my life in service to captive elephants, first in America and more recently in Asia.

In my early career I focused on elephant training and performing. For fifteen years I traveled and performed with my elephant Tarra on TV, in motion pictures, stage shows, live appearances for special events and the circus. For a short time during Tarra's late teens we worked in zoos and elephant breeding facilities.

In addition to training Tarra, I trained and worked with both African and Asian elephants, and taught keepers and caregivers how to properly care for captive elephants.

In 1995, I pioneered a new standard of captive elephant care when I founded the Elephant Sanctuary in Tennessee. This facility, designed exclusively to meet the needs of captive elephants, is the first natural habitat refuge for captive elephants. Situated on 2700 fenced acres, the Sanctuary provides a safe and healthy environment for elephants rescued from zoos and circuses in North America.

To facilitate the rehabilitation of rescued elephants who came to the Sanctuary, I designed and used a non-dominant approach to management. Passive Control is a positive reinforcement system that relies heavily on relationship building and a keen knowledge of the species to provide autonomy and build respect, both of which are crucial to an elephants' rehabilitation.



Carol Buckley named along with 10 others Time Magazine Heroes for the Planet, October 12, 1998

For the past two years I have traveled throughout Asia providing elephant foot care training for mahouts and pedicures for hundreds of elephants and positive reinforcement training for elephants and their mahouts. I am currently collaborating on the creation of elephant care centers in India and Nepal.

**Tell us about your relationship with Tara and how it has affected/changed your life?**

Meeting Tarra was the beginning of my life, the first step on a fantastic journey. I see Tarra as my mentor and guide as much as she sees me as surrogate mom and friend. I cannot image having a more blessed or purpose-filled life than the one I've shared with Tarra.

I was nearly 20 years old and she was a year-old orphan when we met. At that time in her life, Tarra was dependent upon me for nearly everything. Caring for her gave my life purpose and direction.

As she grew, I willingly accepted the continually growing challenge of making her life worthwhile. I struggled to provide all she needed, unwilling to compromise on the quality of her life, which is the general rule for elephants in captivity.

**Early on I began to rely on Tarra to guide my understanding of her and her species. Through her I came to understand the wisdom, complexity, intelligence, sensitivity and intensely social nature of elephants. Tarra has been the force in my life that has shaped me into the person I am today and I am eternally grateful.**





**Why do you feel it is important to rehabilitate elephants in captivity when there appears to be an increase in the population of elephants in the wild in India?**

Solid research continues to document a decline in the population of Asian elephants in nearly all in-situ environments, including India, since the species was put on the endangered species list in 1974.

Wild populations are facing their most difficult time in history with habitat fragmentation, poaching and human/elephant conflict. Wild elephants' drive to survive has put them on a collision course with humans. In their need to secure food and water, they are forced due to unabated human exploitation of forest resources to search outside their forest home for sustenance. Agriculture and grazing livestock have taken over the land that borders the forest that was once was the elephants' home, exerting pressure on the forest's resources to the breaking point. The rapidly shrinking forest can no longer sustain this ancient indigenous resident.

Creating a healthy environment for captive elephants is a separate issue.

Captive elephants have been removed from the wild, are being used by humans and should be maintained in a healthy environment. Those that can should be removed from harmful situations. The rehabilitation I envision does not send captive elephants back to the wild; there is too little habitat left for the remaining wild elephants. My vision is to revitalize denuded forests, thereby creating a healthy place for captive elephants.

But even if the wild population was not under siege, captive elephants would still require a safe and healthy living environment. The diseases that plague captive elephants - osteomyelitis, arthritis and tuberculosis - are all caused by captivity and under normal circumstances do not occur in the wild.



As the dominant species on the planet, humans continue to use more resources than we need, create more waste than we can dispose of and cause extinction to more species than we even know exist. In my opinion, if we can create a small oasis for a few suffering captive elephants, it's the least any of us can do.

**How can one change the attitude of people towards pachyderms with respect to the engrained socio-economic-cultural mindset?**

Humans tend to turn a blind eye to problems when the solution is inconvenient or the problem too far removed. I do not know how to change people's attitudes; that is for another to pursue. My work is to create safe havens for captive elephants and hope that the work itself will have a positive effect on people's attitudes.

I have found that just by doing my work and telling people about it, by sharing my love and respect of elephants, spreads awareness and the beginnings of understanding.

**How can governments actively participate with NGOs in resolving the continuing man-animal conflict?**

Human/elephant conflict is not my forte and I don't suggest that I know the answer to how the government can actively participate with NGOs.

The issue of human/elephant conflict is simple; there is not enough forest both for wild elephants and humans but the solutions are complicated. If the government were able to reclaim and restore the forest, open the elephants' ancient migratory paths and protect the indigenous wildlife, elephants would survive. But what would then become of the human population that for generations has survived off forest resources? What is the solution for their survival? Humans have the ability to devise solutions to these pressing problems. My hope is that elephant care centers will become part of the solution.





## Goa 2007

Robin Marchesi

"At the moment I am in Goa. We are here for the International Film Festival of India, which is taking place in Panjim, Goa's capital. The architecture and style of Portugal dominates the Promenade and buildings that surround the Festivals opulence. The locals talk proudly of their Roman Catholic roots. They are simple people wishing to please often saying 'Yes' and meaning 'No', quite innocently, but it does lead to all sorts of complications. They never take 'No' for an answer and often, at the hotel have insisted a place is closed or open, when the opposite is the case.

The three religions of Christianity, Hindi and Muslim seem to live harmoniously. Pictures of Jesus and Mary in huge churches, sit side by side with Temples and Ayurvedic Medicines. Massage is everywhere.

"Lady massage, 500 rupees Sir," my driver throws in, as we pass, yet another sign for the Healing Arts. He smiles and speaks of sight seeing. I ask a question or make a comment but he misses the point completely, like my English is a foreign language.

In the 1970's the hippies arrived here. For people I know from this time, such as Robin Brown or Johnny Cairo, when they first discovered Goa they felt as if they had died, and gone to heaven. The clean Christian houses with families that welcomed them. Beaches where they made simple bamboo homes under the stars. They sought wisdom from Sadhus and bargains to trade in Europe. They basked on gleaming white sands by the lapping waters of the Arabian Sea. 'Chilling' to the vibration, the simplicities, to God and the blessings of the land.

30 years ago when Robin Brown roared in here on his motorbike he must have appeared like an unknown from a distant planet. After all independence from Portugal had only been achieved in 1961. The roads were dirt tracks, hence the prevalence, even now, despite tarmac, for motorbikes and scooters, rented at 400 rupees a day.

But for those pioneers it was bliss, paradise, living for nothing with smiling, gentle people who tolerated everything. They were happy with the fresh fish of the sea, coconuts, religious harmony and a search for inner silence...

Now the tours have arrived, beaches are crowded, clubs mushroom. It has mirrored Ibiza's worst developments yet the actual 'people' have not benefited.

As coffee is sipped at the IFFI and money sought by the million, Suresh, our driver from last night, hobbles home on his wages of £45 a month, to share with his wife and child, a sum spent in moments at the Marriot hotel.

Suresh smiles, is happy says:  
"God provides".

Perhaps Suresh is happier than the scions of Robin Brown and Johnny Cairo who roar round the coastline gobbled up by their Western envies, jealousies and comparisons? He may have little money and by European standards be poor, yet his face is full of wonder and peace, despite his painful foot and meagre earnings.

Even if, as we decided, his foot injury might have been an elaborate scam, to extract a sympathetic 500 rupees tip. It might have been possible we decided, last night at the party near the beach, in the open air as we sipped champagne and danced. In the background the waves pounded the shoreline and stars twinkled in the Goan skies to the beat of the DJ at the IFFI bash, where lawyers, accountants, media people and 'film stars' rubbed shoulders under the universe.

Quite a journey a voyage much longer than the Space encompassed...





Terry McDonagh's latest book,  
**In the Light of Windows – Hamburg Fragments,**  
is to be launched on April 26th in Hamburg:  
[www.blaupause-books.com](http://www.blaupause-books.com)

### The Sculptor

On my way up to the top of a great mountain  
I met an old man with deep grey eyes

and skin like a spent drum. It was autumn.  
He's spent most of his life cutting stone,

he said. We stood listening. He looked  
like one who'd left the crowd in his youth

and gone to the mountain to shape it  
into lonely pieces. He's begun with music

composing notes from the straining wind  
in scrub and low-sized bushes. Later,

he felt the tug of the hard anxiety in stone.  
He did leave in his young and lanky days,

but the burden of returning to blue and grey  
rock sang him home.

When a black cloud unveiled the full moon  
there were raging sculptures everywhere.





## A New Passover Sacrifice



St. William of Norwich

In the Spring of 1144, the Jewish community of Norwich, England was charged with the ritual murder of a 12-year-old boy.

It was the first such accusation to be made anywhere in Europe but there was no allegation of blood being used as a Passover ritual. Such an allegation was first made in Blois, France about 25 years later.

These imputations possibly migrated slowly from the Middle East where a late 4th Century blood libel in Syria, recorded by Socrates Scholasticus, went unquestioned.

As present-day Israel supporters often equate hostility to the Jewish State with these ancient libels, my story here attempts to portray how such a calumny would affect the modern Anglo-Jewish community.

### **Easter Saturday March 25 1144**

William, a 12-year-old apprentice tanner of Norwich, East Anglia, England, was found dead in Thorpe Wood, a beauty spot on the eastern outskirts of the city.

William's body was first discovered dressed only in a jacket and shoes, bearing strange wounds with a wooden gag pushed into his mouth.





## Chapter 1

### Easter Saturday Evening, April 07 2012 (Second Night Passover)

Ricky was picking miserably at his food.

“What’s the matter? Aren’t you well?”, asked his mother. “It can’t be that we’re not observing Passover too strictly – that never seems to bother you!”

“Sorry, Mum. I’m not hungry. I’m really upset by something I saw on Facebook before I came downstairs.”

“Nu?”

“It’s about Walid. Y’know ...”

“Of course, I know.

“Mum, you don’t know.” Ricky put down his fork and pushed his plate away.

“Walid’s not been seen since you drove him home on Monday – he’s not even replied to any messages or voice mails. Now Kevin Mason has posted a status update saying he’s been found dead in Thorpe Wood.”

“Walid? Thorpe Wood?”, echoed Ellen Lever.

“But that’s out of town. You remember that he didn’t want to hang around here while you had your barmitzvah lesson? Well, when we got into town he asked me to let him out near The Tannery. He wanted to buy his mother a coin purse for Easter designed like those he’d seen at the souq in Acco. He must have been saving hard. They’re not cheap!

“He’s such a sweet kid. If your Dad were still here, he’d be delighted that you’re good friends with the Ibrahim family. It’s the sort of relationship he’d worked so long to promote ...” Ellen broke off and sighed.

“I won’t call Samira as I don’t want her to worry for no reason. There’s probably a good explanation for everything – and I’m still looking forward to seeing them all in synagogue on your big day. Now let’s look at television to see if there’s an item about Thorpe Wood.”

But even as she switched on, Jonathan Wills of Anglia Tonight was speaking from the wood in front of a tented area cordoned off by police barrier tape.

**“The body of a boy, estimated to be aged 11 – 12 years-old was found today here in Thorpe Wood. Police have confirmed that the corpse was covered in sand but have released no further details.”**

Ellen’s phone rang.

“Mrs Lever? Hi, this is Alex Bennett from the synagogue. I’ve got to cut this short. My call is not directly about Ricky but about an Arab lad named Walid Ibrahim. I believe the boys are – or were - close friends at Norwich School.”

Ellen, finding it hard to comprehend what was happening, did not know how to react.

“What? Can you tell me exactly what’s going on and I’ll relay the details to Ricky as gently as possible?”

“I can’t do that. As the lay minister at Norwich Hebrew Congregation, the Police came to me first to help them liaise with potential witnesses. They prefer to meet us at the synagogue than at Bethel Street Station.

“But why ...?”

“Mrs Lever, I urge you not to ask me more questions now, but to bring Ricky to an emergency meeting at the synagogue at 8.30 a.m. tomorrow.”

## Chapter 2

### Easter Sunday, April 08 2012 (Second Day Passover)

When the Levers arrived at the synagogue, they found Mr Bennett with other committee members and Rabbi Stephen Howard representing the Progressive Jewish Community of East Anglia. They were in deep conversation with police personnel and Steffan Griffiths, the recently appointed head master of Norwich School.

“The news could not be worse,” Chief Superintendent Les Parrett was saying as they entered the room.

“It is difficult in the first instance to describe the Ibrahims’s grief at their loss. What’s happened to Walid almost defies description. As it is such a delicate matter I will lead the investigation myself.

“Under the exceptional circumstances, William Armstrong, the Greater Norfolk Coroner, has ordered an emergency autopsy for tomorrow so the family may then arrange to take Walid home to Acre (‘Acco’) in Israel for burial. It is the custom for Christian Arabs to arrange a western-style funeral a couple of days after a death. We feel we must allow them that privilege.

“Abbud and Samira Ibrahim are PhD research students in Language and Communication Studies at the University of East Anglia.

“I understand, added Mr Parrett, nodding at the Levers “that they were friendly with local Jewish academics and that Walid and Ricky were very close.”

“That is correct”, interjected Mr Griffiths. “Walid was a popular Year 7 student and intellectually most able.

“Norfolk School is a ‘cathedral school’, but we ensure that pupils from minority backgrounds feel comfortable. It is interesting that our roll of distinguished past pupils includes Lord Mancroft – a scion of a distinguished Jewish family.”





## Chapter 2 (Continued)

Chief Superintendent Parrett chatted to Ricky and then asked the community support officer to take him home while he described the police findings in full.

“Walid’s body bears all the hallmarks of a ritualistic paedophile attack. His body was only partially dressed, as we expect in these cases. But his head bore a crown of thorns and the initial forensic examination by our police surgeon based at Thorpewood Medical Practice also discovered stigmata-type stab wounds on his body and a wooden crucifix-shoved in his mouth. Was the murderer simply mocking the Easter Passion or was it an attempt to implicate others? These are questions we must answer if we are to solve the case.”

Mr Parrett continued: “What I have to say now is also distressing. Do any of you know a Professor Theo Sutton from the University of Cambridge? He has been among the first to suggest possible Jewish involvement in Walid’s disappearance and has made staggering allegations concerning Jewish practice.”

Ellen snorted. “That won’t surprise many Jewish people here, Mr Parrett. Professor Sutton – né Tuvia Ben-Tzion Schlager – is from a family of noted Talmudic scholars. He renounced Judaism, converted to Christianity and is – hmm – most vocal in his criticisms of our community and the State of Israel. I’d like to know if he’s put any of his allegations in writing!”

“We’ll take note of what you’ve said but I must advise you that we’re also concerned that unauthorised persons may have been at Thorpe Wood. All news outlets have received disturbing pictures of Walid sent anonymously via iwitness24.

“They have agreed not to publish them but they may be from the same clown who has circulated a note reading ‘The Jews are the men that will not be blamed for nothing’ and signed as ‘Jake The Ripper’.

“And there’s another reason why I arranged for us to meet here. While British news outlets have agreed not to publish the pictures, we have no control over the social networking sites which are heaving with speculation and innuendo about Walid. Many people automatically believe he was Moslem so along with tribute pages there’s a noticeable overall increase in online antisemitism.”

As Mr Parrett stopped speaking, everyone else felt paralysed by the spiralling events and looked on helplessly while congregation elder, Eliezer Baum rose as if to speak but collapsed in pain.

“Call for an ambulance,” he croaked. “I’m having an angina attack. Please don’t let me become another statistic of anti-Jewish hatred.”

## Chapter 3 Easter Monday and Tuesday, April 09 and 10 2012 (Third and Fourth Days Passover)

Prime Minister David Cameron was in private session at Chequers during the Bank Holiday when the Chief Rabbi called.

“Good morning, Chief Rabbi. I’m going to Norwich later today and would appreciate your company,” he said.

“I believe the riot there last night was relatively short but that the synagogue in - let’s see - Earlham Road - sustained quite severe damage. I’ll ensure the congregation receives a financial grant to make good the losses.”

“A grant?”, exploded Lord Sacks. “One of the community elders is dangerously ill following a heart attack; several of the congregation’s most holy items have been desecrated and many people in public life are now spreading anti-Jewish hatred quite freely.

“Some of my lay leaders, knowing what happened in Norwich during the historic past are saying that once more, they are being challenged to stand for ‘trial by ordeal’. I don’t think it’s the time to talk about money – but moral restitution.

“Yes, I too would appreciate your company tonight, when I will conduct a service in what remains of the synagogue and you will witness a community in mourning that is anxious to learn what you can do for them as fellow British citizens.”

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To help restore some calm, British media outlets again agreed to an almost total news blackout and on the morning after the memorial meeting only brief details from a Downing Street Press Release were published..

So the public was largely unaware of the wall of almost stifling warm support that local Jews received from official sources. Councillor Jenny Lay, the Lord Mayor of Norwich, offered a 24-hour police watch on private Jewish property and also invited particularly vulnerable Jewish residents to have an over-night stay in a city-centre hotel “where they can be looked after.”

“We mustn’t have this very gracious help made public,” said Vivian Wineman of the Board of Deputies of British Jews. “We don’t want more talk of an ‘international Jewish conspiracy’ or of our ‘exerting undue influence.’”





**Chapter 4**  
**Wednesday and Thursday,**  
**April 11 and 12 2012**  
**(Fifth and Sixth Days Passover)**

On Wednesday morning, Ellen was clearing up after breakfast when Mr Parrett called to ask her to visit the station for ‘a chat’.

“We’ve got a bit of a problem, Ellen,” he said inviting her to sit down. “You’re welcome to call your solicitor if you wish.”

“Please tell me why I am here and why I may need a lawyer.”

“Do you know Maria Hadley?”

“Only very slightly. She’s the cleaner at the B & B across the road from the synagogue and also works occasionally at the synagogue.”

“I need you to tell me again exactly what happened when you drove Walid into town last week. ”

“I was going to take him home but he asked me to stop instead near The Royal Arcade so he could buy something for his mother from The Tannery. I did so; he thanked me very politely and that is the last time we spoke.”

“What time was that?”

“About 5.15 p.m. Walid hoped the shop would still be open when he got there and said he would get a bus home.”

“But Ellen, Mrs Hadley has a different version. She claims that as she left Beaufort Lodge at 6.00 p.m. after doing an extra shift, she caught a glimpse of you and Mr Baum with two younger men leaving the synagogue.

“She says you were all struggling with a cumbersome-looking bag which would have been big enough to hold a child of Walid’s age. She saw the bag being loaded into the back of a silver Skoda Estate car which then headed in the general direction of Thorpe Wood.”

“Superintendent, please let’s talk common sense here,” Ellen retorted.

“I can prove that I was back home on Monday evening by 6.00 p.m. Further, I drive a small Fiat which would have been left in the street if I had been driven away in another car.

“Last, it would have been impossible for anyone to judge the vehicle’s intended destination as it turned out of Earlham Road. I think Maria’s desire to be public spirited has overtaken her sense of ... her ability to tell the truth. Her story is a pack of transparent lies.

“If the events of the past few days had not been so dreadful, many of us in the Jewish community would begin to indulge in some black humour.

Mr Parrett, I realise you’re anxious to find Walid’s murderer and I wish I could help you further. My deepest regret is that I left him vulnerable to attack by not taking him home. I’ve already been punished. I’ll live with this for the rest of my own life.”

-----  
 Late on Wednesday evening, Chief Superintendent Parrett was about to clock off after a long, fruitless day when he got a call from officers on ‘active patrol’ near Thorpe Wood. They had arrested a couple of men who had pushed their way through the barriers and had got as far as the original burial-site.

Mr Parrett removed his coat and made himself another coffee. It was going to be an even longer, harder night.

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 At 8.10 a.m. on Thursday a news flash on BBC Radio 4’s Today programme brought the tweeters out in a frenzy.

Presenter Evan Davis broke off an interview with the Chancellor for a live report from Graham Barnard of BBC Radio Norfolk:

“We’ve just learned that two men in their 40s have been arrested in connection with the Easter murder of Walid Ibrahim. A woman aged 63 has also been taken in for questioning.

“The police have released no further details and as yet there has been no statement from any Jewish spokesperson, either in Norwich or London.”

**Chapter 5**  
**Saturday Evening December 08 2012**  
**(Eve of Chanukah)**

“Mum”, said Ricky, “I feel like going out this evening. D’you mind if I ask Keith and Greg if they fancy a few games at the Hollywood Bowl?”

“Wow! Of course not! I’m relieved that you’re starting to pick up on your social life again. But my lad - cool – or un-cool – you guys are going to be driven there and back by me or one of the other mums. No argument!

“Meanwhile, I’ve got some really good news for you,” added Ellen.

“As you didn’t have a party for your barmitzvah, we’ve got the cash for a trip to Israel during the school holiday.

“I had a long chat with Samira and Abbud by Skype this afternoon and they’ve invited us to spend a couple of days with them. So it’ll be a multi-stop tour – Eilat, Jerusalem and then Acco – a great first taste of Israel for us both.

“The Ibrahims’s have decided to stay in Israel to complete their research at the University of Haifa but will maintain links here. I’ve also invited them to stay with us when they return for the start of the court case in February.”





**Chapter 6**  
**Wednesday March 20 2013**  
**(Eastern Daily Press Report)**

***‘Easter ‘Paedo Killer’ Given ‘Whole Life’ Term’***

The notorious ‘Easter Passion’ killer was today jailed for the rest of his life.

Roger Mason, 45, of Elm Hill, Norwich was convicted at Bristol Crown Court for the murder of 12-year-old Norwich resident, Walid Ibrahim in April last year.

Mr Justice Field, summing up “one of the most difficult and painful cases of my career”, described Mason as a “remorseless and bestial sexual predator without conscience.”

The case had received so much pre-trial media attention, both in Britain and overseas, that it was held in Bristol rather than Norwich to allow a fair hearing.

The court heard that Mason, a part-time University of East Anglia lecturer with links to the University of Cambridge was apparently a contented family man with a 12-year-old son. But he had a secret life as a sexual predator.

The police snatched thousands of pornographic pictures of young boys on several computers, both at his home and in his rooms at the UEA and even at Cambridge.

Mason knew his victim, Walid Ibrahim, through his own son, Kevin. They were both pupils at Norwich School. When he spotted Walid at the Royal Arcade, Norwich, in the early evening of 02 April last year, he offered him a lift home. Instead, he took him to Thorpe Wood on the outskirts of the city where he raped and murdered him before subjecting the corpse to a mock crucifixion.

What has made this case different from similar child sex-related murders is that Mason was also a member of several extreme neo-Fascist groups throughout Europe and the U.S. He viewed the murder of Walid as an attack on Moslem Arabs (although the boy was Christian) and a chance to implicate Jews in an ‘international conspiracy’.

Mason took pictures of Walid’s corpse after the attack and posted them on several news-sites, even using his son’s Facebook account to spread the story.

He was aided and abetted by Professor Theo Sutton, 48, a senior colleague at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, who had seized an opportunity to wreak vengeance on the Jewish community into which he had been born.

Sutton, of Madingley Road, Cambridge and 63-year-old Maria Hadley, a domestic of Earlham, Norwich who is also implicated in the affair, have not yet been sentenced. Their cases have been adjourned until after the Easter holiday.

This story was conceived and written before the recent murders at the Ozer HaTorah School in Toulouse, France and in no way relates to that incident.  
– N.I.W.





[www.joo-peter.photoshelter.com](http://www.joo-peter.photoshelter.com)

Holi celebrations in Barsana, India. Pic © Joo Peter





Holi celebrations in Barsana, India. Pic © Joo Peter





**Mountains in Laos bear a magical underworld.  
There are spirits in nature everywhere,  
so these places are considered holy.  
People built buddhist shrines here,  
and in times of war took refuge here.**







**Buddha statue in Tham Pou Kam Cave, Laos. Pic © Joo Peter**





## Creating your Life through Trance

In this series of articles I have been teaching you how to manage your energy system, increase your intuition, and create the life you desire. Another great tool is the use of trance. Many people go to hypnotherapists to learn to develop a strength such as playing sports, stop a behavior such as smoking, or be able to pass a test. It is important to know you have the ability to use this trance tool, a form of self-hypnosis for yourself whenever you want.

There are a several ways to enter trance. One is progressive relaxation, either active or passive. Active progressive relaxation involves tensing the muscles and then relaxing them while practicing breathing. Passive progressive relaxation involves focusing on a part of the body and relaxing through the use of imagery and releasing tension via the breath.

Eye fixation is another way to enter trance. You focus on a certain spot, preferably a little above eye level, while giving yourself suggestions to move into trance. You may say, "I feel relaxed and am moving deeper into relaxation." Allow your eyes to glaze over and slowly close.

You can also use imagery. Imagine a place you have already been or a place you would like to go. You see yourself walking down a path or a stairway. Imagine yourself walking slowly downward; notice your breath slowing. With each step downward, give yourself suggestions concerning things that you would like to accomplish, or see yourself experiencing what you would like to experience. The more you use trance, the more helpful it becomes. A while back, I experienced some mild anxiety and decided to close my eyes and imagined a ruler that went from 0 to 10. I started with my anxiety at 10, the highest number, and saw the ruler moving down to 0, or no anxiety. As I took a deep breath, my anxiety decreased and I felt more relaxed.

Music is one of my favorite tools for entering trance. Give yourself suggestions before you start the music concerning how you will respond when the music begins. You can also tie the suggestions into the rhythm of the music--for example, when the music is quieter, you may give process suggestions, such as My body relaxes with each note. As the music becomes louder, you may give the end result suggestion, such as I move easily and have the energy to complete my tasks each day, or post-hypnotic suggestion, such as When I have my tea in the morning I become pain-free. When you become familiar with a certain piece of music, you can orchestrate the self-hypnosis session to the music creatively. If this particular technique is not of interest to you, you can choose among many hypnotherapy CDs available on the market to find one that seems right to you.

To increase your success with self-hypnosis, you may want to practice deepening your trance. This occurs naturally when you put yourself into and out of trance repeatedly. Each time you put yourself in trance again, the trance deepens. We are often naturally in trance when we first awaken and right before sleep. These are great times to give yourself suggestions, or to visualize the behavior you would like to accomplish. If movement is difficult for you, you may lie in bed and see yourself getting up easily. Imagine yourself going through your whole morning routine pain-free and with ease.

Enjoy practicing and creating what you desire in your life!

This is a modified re-print from my upcoming book *12 Weeks to Self-Healing: Transforming Pain through Energy Medicine* to be released in the summer of 2012. <http://www.12weekstoselfhealing.com>.





### Old Room (for Jeff Richman)

When ever I hear you are playing in your old room, I start thinking about your old room from back when you used to live in Hawaii and how you sat in that room ignoring the beach for an entire summer churning in every thing they taught you during that first year at Berkley School of Music, as you worked through melodies, comping and solos while transcribing every song in the Realbook into every key signature. But I have never seen your old room, so I start thinking about my old room, not the room I shared with my brother Mike but my first 'own' room. A single bed elongated narrow room off the garage of my parents home, the room with a dream catcher where Rob Mehl had stayed before my folks tore that house completely down to build their new home where you played the jazz duet gig with Bryan Bromberg for my wedding party. And I picture you playing guitar in this old room on the sturdy, skin peeled pine stool from my current furnishings, as it is tall enough that you can see out of my old window with your dark curtain pulled to the side revealing skies of blue yonder over some great beach in Hawaii where you are practicing guitar while surveilling numerous Hawaiian Babes with perfect tans that only speak with guys like you, that are from their own area code, due to extreme adherence to localism enforced by area boys and of course there would be those sun burnt hot tourist girls who would gladly sleep with any real live Hawaiian local that was sharp as a marble even if he didn't have a tan and surf, or play guitar in an untypical wondrous way that was uniquely so familiar, sliding dirt spotlessly, rubbed clean in cosmic holographic little star reverberations, as theoretical subatomic particle waves rainbow-infuse audio vibrations through a synthesis of interstellar righteousness and confidence that drips with love and boils of raw beauties in-composite hybrids, like the giant chrysanthemum's thunderous growl of a hungry alpha lion, slank throw of season, in lustful pillage marked of benevolence and grace, engaging in post-assimilation of a storm before the calm.

**Click on pic for John's video of Jeff Richman on Youtube or go to John's profile in Liveencounters to view video.**



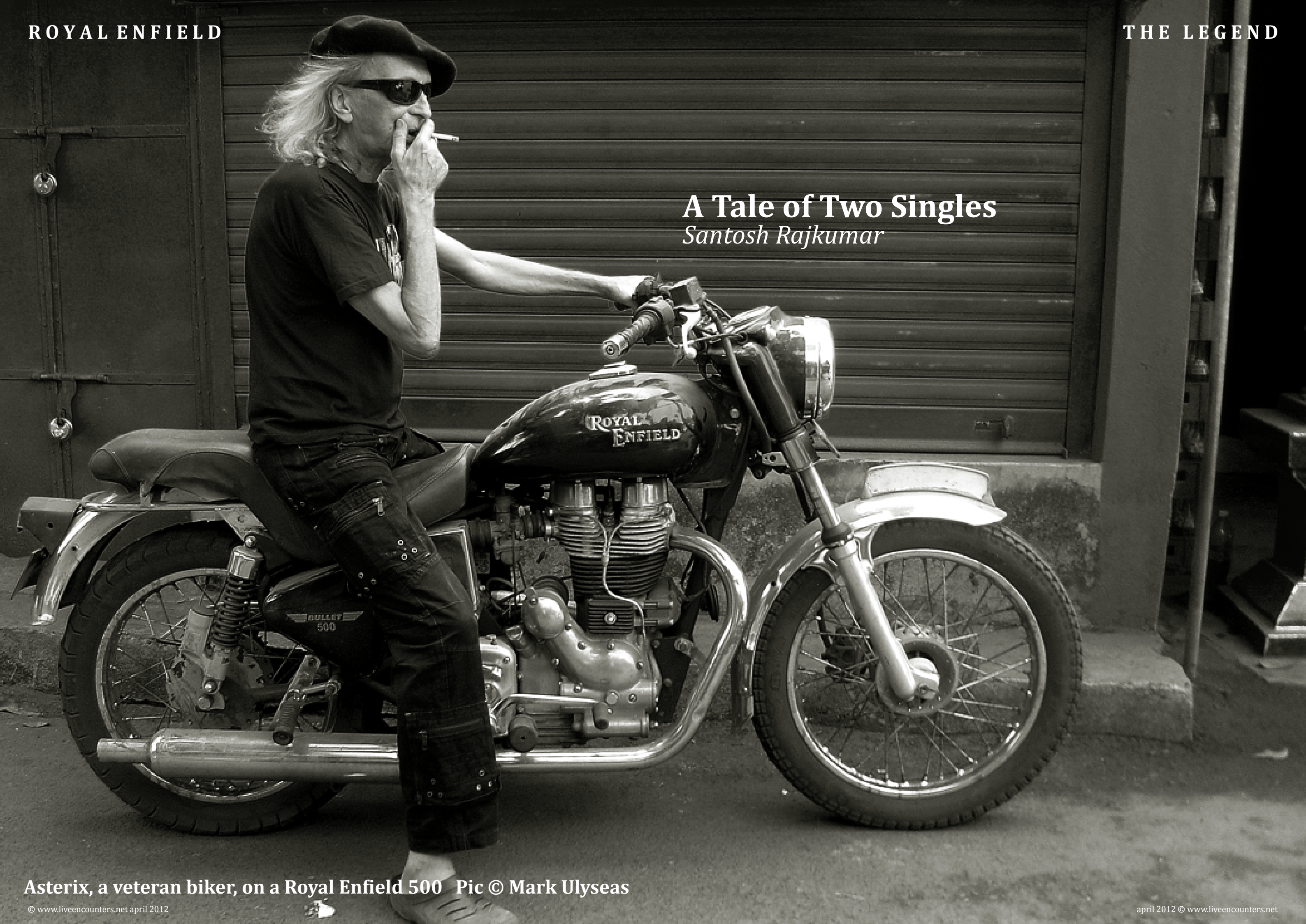


ROYAL ENFIELD

THE LEGEND

## A Tale of Two Singles

*Santosh Rajkumar*



Asterix, a veteran biker, on a Royal Enfield 500 Pic © Mark Ulyseas

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Royal Enfield 1927

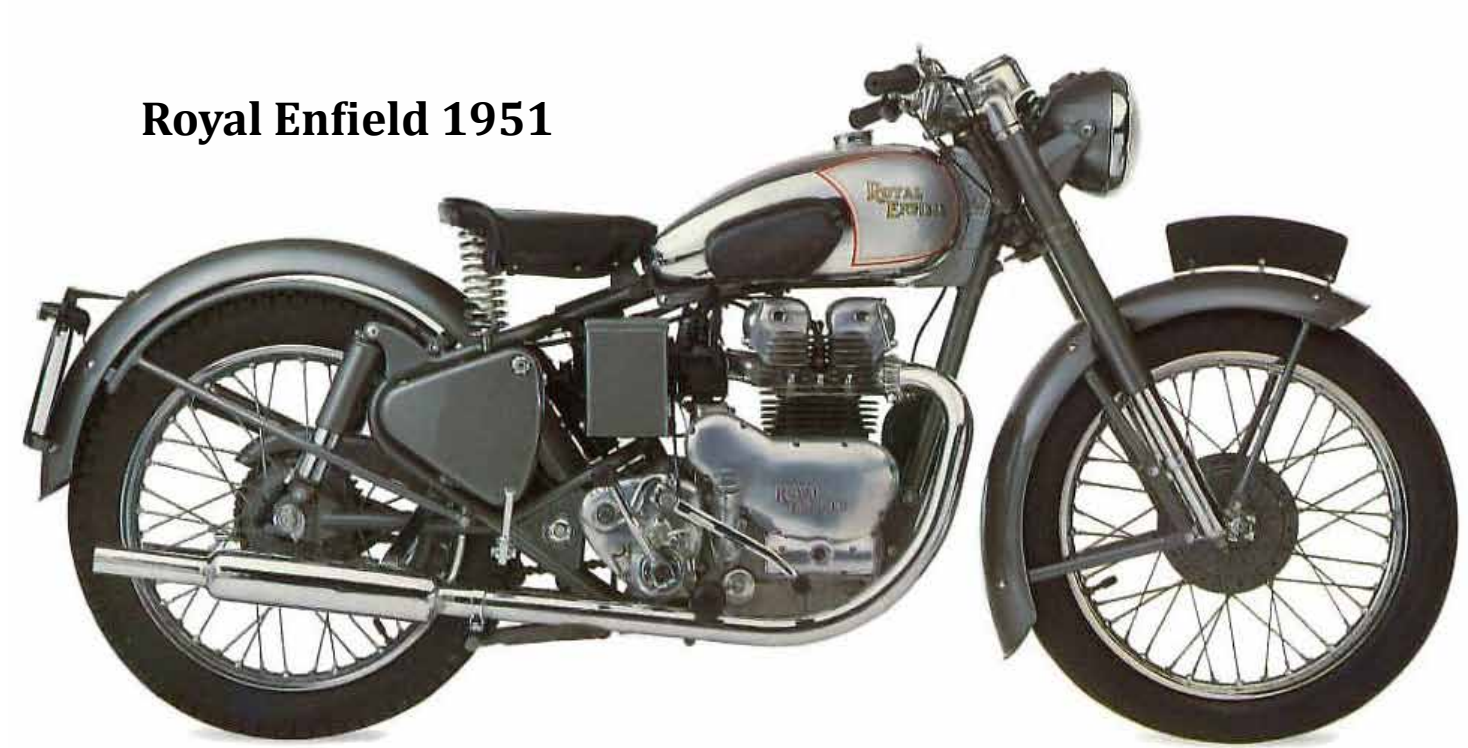
At around half past three on Tuesday afternoon, Mohan knows he's very near closing an important deal for his airline, which would get him out of his unfamiliar low sales rut. Just before the day's end, he loses out to the rival player, this after three days of persistent sweat and sweet talk. His calm expression hides a downed heart as he says bye to the guys, and rolls back home on the 5:46 AC, nodding slightly to a Steve Winwood playlist. It's been a rough day.

Mohan ducks in and out of the shower, then heads down the elevator into the basement, and walks towards a little glint of chrome in that unlit corner. As he nears the two wheels he's proudest in the world to call his own, a small smile melts away all his previous intestinal by-product descriptions of the day. A decompression and two kicks later, he's off to buy bread at Satya's bakery twelve kays away, after deciding against getting it delivered home. Because somehow that beat his silver Bullet orchestrates never fails to soothe his stressed neurons.

Chicken and cheese sandwiched for supper, he sits on the single couch and places his prized book on the coffee table, feeling the familiar nirvana of slowly turning the glazed pages of that particular Royal Enfield collector's edition hardbound...

It was around the time Sir Arthur Conan Doyle introduced Dr. John H Watson to Sherlock Holmes when the gods smiled down on the vision of a sturdy frame for the bicycle that would mature into a rather famous motorcycle. In the early 1880s, George Townsend Jr. had evolved the "Townsend Cyclists Saddles and Springs" company from a producer of a local inventor's single coil saddle to a manufacturer of complete bicycles remembered for their robust scaffolding. Around ten years later, after bagging a valuable contract to produce precision rifle parts for an arms factory in Enfield, Middlesex, the newly-named-and-controlled Eadie Manufacturing Company Limited commemorated the occasion with the release of the "Enfield" bicycle. The link to 'royalty' began when the specialised company producing these bicycles became "Royal Enfield Manufacturing Co. Ltd."

Royal Enfield's initial foray into mechanised vehicle manufacture began with three and four-wheelers with an unimaginable gross output of 1.75hp. Quite soon after the hype and hangovers of the biggest parties the right side of the 19th century had died down, French designer Louis Goviet penned the first ever Royal Enfield motorcycle. With the remarkably small Minerva engine mounted over the front wheel, it went into production immediately in 1901.



Royal Enfield 1951

The front-engine design soon lost 'traction', since the first wheel was overtaxed for grip around corners due to excess weight up front. The engine was moved to behind the front wheel on the frame and came to temporary rest under the rider's rear. Royal Enfield then furthered a division purely for production of cars and motorcycles called the Enfield Autocar Company. The Alldays and Onions Company took over proceedings of the soon cash-strapped Enfield Autocar from 1907 up until 1924, when the name "Bullet" was first adopted for car models produced under "Enfield" and "Enfield-Allday" badges.

Where there is a wheel, there is usually a way to compete. In 1909, Royal Enfield produced a quality set of two wheels that used a strong 297cc, Motosacoche V-twin motor coupled with a belt drive. The V-Twin went on to become very successful, winning prestigious reliability trials like the "Edinburgh to London" in 1910. Two years later, the Royal Enfield Model 180 with a 770cc JAP engine and sidecar competed convincingly in the famed Brooklands races. Some versions were exhibited with a machine gun fitted to the sidecar to garner public awareness of their versatility. This publicity did not 'stunt' the company's growth by any means, because when World War I ensued, strengthened Model 180s realised huge demand not just from the UK, but France, Belgium and Russia as well.

However, the motorcycle we so fondly know actually spawned in 1934 when 350cc and 500cc displacement iterations were released with exposed valve gear - the first true Royal Enfield Bullet. Post-WWII in 1947, Enfield reintroduced the 500 Model J with kinder-to-spine front hydraulic damping system. This economical workhorse sold good numbers, while revolutionary rear spring suspension was introduced on Bullet 350 OHV and 25hp 500 versions shortly afterwards. Wonders never ceased with Enfield around that period, it seems, as the manufacturer is credited with producing in 1959 what was possibly the first 'superbike' in history - the 700cc Constellation Twin. Some Enfields even crossed borders into the US, rebadged as red-liveried Indians. The Yanks, however, did not take too warmly to the immigrants.

Efficient Japanese motorcycles were to become all the practical rage around when the world's best concert ever took place in that ranch near Woodstock, New York. What was to follow could have been forecast the moment the first frugal import was successfully tested. The demise of British Royal Enfield occurred finally in 1970 when their Bradford-on-Avon factory was shut down, meekly aping the Redditch facility's end in 1967.



Mohan pours a stiff whiskey and lights his post-meal smoke.

India, meanwhile, had more than twenty years of familiarity with the good ol' thumper before Britain's Enfield fabrication ground to a halt. 1955 saw the government order an 800-strong consignment of Enfields that were to be mainly pressed into border patrol service. Working to lower production costs, the Redditch firm chose Madras Motors as partner to assemble British-built components into the largely unchanged Bullet 350s under the "Enfield India" title.

By the late fifties, the Indian offshoot was manufacturing Royal Enfield components locally after purchasing the necessary tooling. Enfield India became wholly independent producers of Bullets in 1967. The company kept churning out examples of these singles for almost thirty years, till Eicher bought over the company in 1994, and obtained the rights to the "Royal Enfield" name the following year.

Unfortunately, there was a long time when a Bullets was not "Made Like a Gun" like their original 1893 trademark advertised. Worrying oil spills occurred anywhere they were parked more than momentarily, and the itch to ditch lube from any supposedly-sealed joint had the knack of creating brilliantly random black streaks on just-laundered attire. Not too much complaint was made at the time, since there really wasn't too much choice in the market at the time to threaten shifting of loyalty to a competing bike maker.

However, demographics of buyers have changed especially over recent years. Younger, 'sophisticated' buyers in spotless chinos began demanding improved-everything, adding to the safe and more silent customer base of yore. Enfield sat up and took notice of its shoddy workmanship which turned out to be a good thing for the company. Royal Enfield can't keep up with current demand and is ramping up production capability. Steps in the right direction are constantly being made, and though most Bullets today still ride on that basic 1960s design, they are exponentially more reliable, and easier to ride and live with now. A lot of buyers presently even use them as daily commuters, something that even the bravest enthusiast couldn't have been bribed to do previously.

The relatively simple-to-modify Bullet sparked local chop shops aplenty. Results, sadly, have not always been entirely delectable due to bank statements often taking precedence over quality personalisation work. However, a handful of low-profile mod-gurus do still take pride in keeping national customisation colours at full mast. Aftermarket jobs like silencer replacements to attain that perfect pipe length and pump out the right acoustics are almost unwritten requirements of new Enfield owners today. Let's not forget world-renowned names like Swiss Enfield distributor and tuner, Fritz W. Egli, and Englishman Andy Berry, who transcend geographical boundaries to showcase their skill and passion on the Bullet canvas.

The Royal Enfield portfolio today has a dozen single-cylinder models in 350cc and 500cc displacement variants, true to their unique mechanical upbringing. The engineered protagonist holds the longest continuous production cycle for any motorcycle in our spinning sphere's two-wheeled history – the Bullet has become an obvious stalwart in the Motorcycle Hall of Fame. Glory put aside, there quite simply isn't an alternative to that iconic bass resonance sending jitters down the chassis of predominantly characterless new-age competition during a nonchalant pass on open tarmac. Since often parroted are phrases like "glorious history" and "timeless heritage" in the same breath as "Bullet", this unflinching single-cylinder icon warranted a small excavation into Royal Enfield's time capsule.

Mohan swigs the last remnants of his second drink, clinks the stubby glass down on the balsa table, and reads the handwritten 'epilogue' on the back cover he remains deeply rooted to:

A family in the nineties,  
An ailing man in his fifties,  
And a Bullet from the sixties  
Finally went separate ways.  
It was an emotional goodbye,  
But the next meeting's on lay-by.

A stretch, a scratch, and few steps later, he's under the covers with the fan at full tick. It's one in the morning and he's exhausted, but fulfilled. Mohan's day improved by night, when he grabbed those valuable couple of hours to exercise a blessing he knew was his – being able to sample and understand why only some legends will be truly fit for royalty.



Pic © Mark Ulyseas





Pics © Mark Ulyseas

## Biker Sam Lovett *chats with Mark Ulyseas about his bike tours across the Indian sub-continent*

History between coloniser and colony refuses to be diluted by the years. Friendships, marriages, customs, business and even modes of transport appear to be an integral part of the Diaspora that links the two like an un-severed umbilical cord.

Just the other day I encountered a young man from Cotswolds (near Oxford), England, biking across India on a Royal Enfield. The ensuing conversation was a lesson in goodwill with deep respect and affection for Indian culture and the legend on Indian roads – the Royal Enfield motorbike.

After ordering a second round of drinks we sat down to talk the talk.

“I grew up in Cotswolds and began riding bikes when I was 12 years old... without a licence. And how did I get hold of a motorbike? Well, my friends and I would locate old abandoned bikes and repair them. Then we would drive around in the nearby fields and woods.

My first ‘proper’ bike was a Triumph Tiger Cub, a four speed single cylinder 200cc.

At 17 years I got my licence and immediately bought myself a Norton Commando 850cc. I used to race with my friends on the road. Often the Police would chase us quite unsuccessfully.”

### Did you get any formal training?

I did a four year engineering apprenticeship in a machine shop. I used to work on bikes. I liked the British motorbikes; Nortons, BSAs, Triumphs...always playing with them, riding them, customising them...going away for weekends...travelling around Britain with my friends. Later we took trips across Europe and met lots of people! I was part of a larger biker community.

I worked at BSA for a while building frames for some of their later models...

We all did a bit of sex, drugs and rock n roll ...a little bit of everything else. I never had a problem picking up girls on the back of my big bike. Unfortunately, when we started doing long distances we experienced problems like oil leaks etc., so we graduated to Japanese bikes because they were more reliable...they do distances without any problems.

My 15 year old younger son has decided to learn to ride a motorbike...maybe if he comes to India he can ride an Enfield.

*The Spiti Valley is a desert mountain valley located high in the Himalaya mountains in the north-eastern part of the Indian state of Himachal Pradesh. The name "Spiti" means "The Middle Land", i.e. the land between Tibet and India. It is 3800 above mean sea level. Pic © www.samlovett.co.uk*





Pics © Mark Ulyseas



Pic © Sam Lovett

### What did you do for a living?

Jobs in England are hard to come by and so one cannot be too choosy. Whatever came my way, I took to pay the bills.

I worked in engineering jobs like welding to get by.

When I was 30 I joined University and studied media communication and this introduced me to the world of cyber space...computers. I then began working on the net and designing for businesses.

### What is your India connection?

I always dreamt of coming to India right from the time of leaving school. I had a choice to make--spend my money on travelling or spend my money on motorbikes....so motorbikes it was!

A few years back I started to do a bit of travelling, which I had longed to do when I was younger. So two years ago I arrived in India, I came for 5 months...bought a Royal Enfield 350 Classic. First time I rode it...great for travelling...best way to see India. Travelled by road from Goa through Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and then onto Delhi.

I clocked over 6000 Kms. Met lots of people, went to many Indian homes, and fell in love with India.

### Tell us about the Indian roads and Traffic?

Chaotic...but it's got a rhythm and if you are riding an Enfield (it's a lazy bike)... you've just got to relax, slow down your pace and connect with the rhythm. The bike is easy on the highway. They use the bike for everything here...hahahaha.

After my first trip to India I returned home and set up a website to sell motorbike adventure tours in India.

### What are the things you have seen on Indian roads?

Cows, dogs, elephants, camels, goats, bullock carts, people and celebrations - you come around the corner and suddenly there are people dancing and drumming in the middle of the road... always something new to see.

It's not the destination that is important but the experience of travelling by road in India. Stopping in villages that don't see tourists...villagers gathering around us...touching our faces...welcoming us.

### Tell us about your motorbike adventure tours?

My tours are for individuals and very small groups of up to maybe four bikers (with pillion riders). I create my tours individually through process of discussions with my clients of what apprehensions they may have and/or something specific they want to see in India. I advise them on road and weather conditions in India and put together a tour itinerary best suited for them.

I have conducted four tours to date. Two tours in the Himalayas – in the Kulu Valley, Spiti Valley, Leh and Ladakh (3000 to 4000 mtrs above msl). In these areas there are some motorable roads and some very difficult ones because of landslides.

There were never any security problems.

The bikes were Royal Enfield 500. The nature of the bike is a very simple design so with its basic tool kit and some carefully chosen spare parts most problems were overcome.

To do the Spiti Valley you need to carry extra fuel...each bike carries about 5 litres of fuel...in addition to the fuel in the tank.

I arrange the bikes, board and lodging. Cost per head all inclusive 14 day tour UK £ 140-200 per day depending upon the tour itinerary.

To avoid altitude sickness etc...I create my itinerary in such a way that people get acclimatised. So far I haven't had to stop the tour.

### What are the basic requirements for those that want to do the tour?

- Need a full motorcycle licence from the home country and an international driving licence.
- Need to be in good general health and have appropriate travel insurance.
- When I start a tour I start easily...cover short distances so that the bikers get used to the Indian roads, driving the Enfield and Indian traffic.

### And now to the final frontier - Food and Water. How do the bikers cope?

Clean bottled drinking water is available everywhere. But some of my customers had a little problem with the food and were known to eat only eggs and packets of crisps on a 14 day tour! This is a shame because there is a wide range of Indian food...not all the food is spicy or oily.



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# Live encounters

Temple to Ganesha in Bannerghatta National Park

Pic © Mark Ulyseas

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