



## Frenchman's Cove February 2013

*Diana Clift*



You know you've travelled when you arrive at Frenchman's Cove. The ten- hour flight is followed by a three-hour journey across the island by minibus, over the mountains on terrible roads in the dark. But our group of 14 took it all in their stride, even the torrential rain which greeted us. As our lovely laid-back driver, Andrew, observed: 'It's liquid Sun'!

The weather soon brightened up and we all adjusted to the slower pace, the warmth and the exquisite beauty of the grounds, with the river meandering through impossibly lush vegetation down to the little beach. It was a perfect setting for a week devoted to 'Connecting Mind, Spirit and Nature'.

We were led by Elleke van Kraalingen, who first visited Frenchman's Cove in 1999 with her partner Hermod Sverre for the Network conference with Dean Radin. After that idyllic event they went to the west coast of the island for a week's

scuba diving course. On their last day, while crossing the road, Hermod was knocked down and killed in front of Elleke. From that terrible moment on, Elleke was taken on an extraordinary spiritual journey which she recounts in her book 'Love Beyond Death'. It was her meeting with David Fontana at Frenchman's Cove in 2009 that enabled the book to be published in English. It was therefore a great privilege and particularly appropriate that Elleke should lead this experiential week, superbly supported by David Lorimer.

We soon adapted to a daily rhythm. Our mornings were silent, starting with an hour's strenuous yoga or panerhythmy on a grassy promontory on the cliff tops with the sea on three sides... moving on to a silent breakfast of tropical fruits.... then to Villa 2, also set on a promontory with the sea on three sides, for two hours of meditation. The last session of the morning





Our speakers David and Elleke at Goblin Hill



Di and Andrew with rum punch at Geejam's



Lunch at the beach cafe

was spoken. David perfectly complemented Elleke's sessions by considering the science of consciousness, Goethean science, and how to link with nature through contemplation.

We then went down to the beach for lunch and delightful afternoons and evenings enjoying the sun, the sea and the local area. We took a boat trip to a coral reef for snorkelling and on to the legendary Blue Lagoon. We went up Goblin Hill to see the humming birds, (including Jamaica's national bird, the doctor bird, an iridescent green humming bird with a long tail), and we were invited to join in a party with live music and rum punch as the sun went down.

We had one major outing, rafting on the Rio Grande. This is actually punting. Each bamboo raft has a 'captain' who punts the raft seven miles downstream through exquisite countryside. The young apprentices then have the job of hauling the rafts back upstream! For us it was pure relaxation with just a break for a swim in the clear cool river.

Most days we also had presentations from members of the group: Nick Nicholls started out with observations on how we create our own reality. Geoff Pullen talked about Astrology, Olga Richterova gave a presentation on lucid dreaming, David Rousseau discussed his work on Near Death Experiences, and Tuvi Orbach showed a film about a spectacular NDE.

No Frenchman's Cove event is complete without a party and entertainment and a calypso written for

the occasion, this time by myself and Julie Rousseau. There is something magical about warm evenings with fireflies and the scents and sounds of abundant life: One of the high spots of our stay was at the beach at night, seeing baby turtles climbing out of the sand and helping them reach the sea!

As with all these events, everyone makes an invaluable contribution, whether they make a formal presentation or not. Each person in such a small group plays a vital role in creating the experience and our group was ideally suited to the location and the event. We all gained from each other's experiences during the meditations, and I think all of us felt it was a life changing week. Sue Minns, Susannah Swiecicka, Pamela Allsop and Christine Carol all had rich experiences to share and Nick Nicholls' astral travels were mindboggling! Special thanks go to my great friend, Patsy Carter, for sharing Villa 2 with me and happily cohosting all the conference proceedings as well as the parties! Every Frenchman's Cove event leaves a legacy of fruitful connections which will become apparent over time. Already Elleke and David are planning a repeat week next year at Elleke's new retreat centre in the south of France.

Shall we be back at Frenchman's Cove again? I feel we have discovered the perfect type of event to hold there. Can we bear not to go there again? I doubt it!

Special thanks to Galvin Weston for his support and enthusiasm for this event, and to his assistant, Victoria Willson, who dealt with much of the administration and bookings.

