

Creating a Reiki House



Left:
Renovated
Tavistock
Reiki Centre

Right:
Reiki class
with Wanja
Twan

I recognised my house as mine long before I bought it. At the time it wasn't even on the market. I used to walk up the hill, just to take a look at it. One day, walking down, I met an Estate Agent. He knew (all the Estate Agents knew) that we were looking for somewhere to live. "I'm just going to value a house," he said cheerfully. "Which house?" said I, breathlessly, "Not that one? That one's mine!"

And so it was. Viewing the house and garden properly simply increased my conviction that the house was ours. It was calm and peaceful and friendly. Friends often comment on the atmosphere, and assume it's the Reiki, but I know it was always like this. "A place of pilgrimage", said Wanja later, when she stood at the top of the garden near the old well.

The house never got onto the market. We made our offer, and then we waited. Winter turned into spring. The deeds got lost and the Land Registry declared they had no record of house ownership. Just send Reiki. A solicitor

kindly eased himself out of retirement to find the deeds in a dusty basement. Spring turned into summer. Completion dates rolled past without completion. Why? I can no longer remember. The lease on our flat expired and we camped out in my sister's house, in my little niece's bedroom, surrounded by boxes. Estate Agents shook their heads and advised us to look elsewhere. We looked, but somewhere deep inside I knew our house belonged to us. No other house would do.

We went off to Prague, and while we weren't looking Completion actually happened. The elderly couple who left had cleaned the house thoroughly, but without their pictures on the walls it was easy to see how shabby it had become. "I'll have that carpet out within a fortnight," I vowed. Four years later, the carpet is still there, complete with even bigger holes.

People come here for Reiki, for classes, for treatments and for shares. They don't seem to notice the paper curling off the walls or

the holes in the carpet, or if they do, they are too polite to say anything. Except for certain wonderful Reiki students who take things in hand. Over time, exchanges began to happen. Reiki for hedge cutting. Reiki for pruning the roses. Reiki for demolishing the pantry – how did that happen?

Living in a beautiful Georgian house has its own particular pleasures. Bits fall off. Live wires are found dangling behind lath and plaster walls. Whilst I live by the philosophy that it's best not to look too hard at anything, my partner Gill insists on doing everything properly, and dealing with what lies beneath, and that sort of restoration takes time. We choose to do things slowly, room by room, as finances permit. So far, we have two rooms done, along with the downstairs electrics. About the time that bits started falling off the parapet, I felt things sliding out of my control.

We hadn't meant to do the outside of the house, which looked fine, but falling masonry is something of a hazard when you have regular visitors. Fixing the parapet meant the render had to come off, which meant the roses had to come down. It was April, and the roses were in full bud. Fortunately Robert and Dianne, lovely Reiki students who used to work at Kew, knew how to prune the roses to save them from the builders and make sure they would flower again later. I left the builders to it and went off on a Silent Reiki Retreat. By the time I returned the house was full of spectacular holes. The render had been holding up the walls.

Moments after the last builder left, when I was just drawing breath and reeling from a bill three times the estimate, because once you have found spectacular holes you have to rebuild the walls, Robert bounced up and down on the lino in the pantry. The pantry is essentially a long corridor, which runs the length of the house. "You'll go through this," he said. "Don't look, don't look," I begged him. "It's rotten beneath, it's going to give way, you could be hurt."

I shut my eyes and refused to contemplate disaster. I couldn't bear any more disruption and anyway, we were absolutely out of money. Undeterred, Robert looked beneath the lino, called Dianne and Gill and planned when to take action. "But I'm teaching Reiki then", I protested. "Carry on," said Bob.

With my eyes firmly shut to what was happening, I taught a Reiki class in an adjoining room. The lino was ripped out. I told the Reiki stories and gave the first initiations. Rotten boards were pulled up. I showed the head positions and gave the second initiations. Rotten boards were threaded through the windows and the Reiki class retreated to another room. Buckets and disinfectants were called for. I gave the third initiations whenever I could find a quiet moment. I fielded a foul nuisance call. My new Reiki students got into the mood and replaced our ancient telephone with one with caller id. I gave up trying to control anything, as Reiki firmly re-organised my household. "Come and see," called the workers. I went and saw ancient flagstones where rotten boards had been. It was clean and fresh and beautiful. I gave the fourth initiations.



I felt a huge smile welling up inside me. Somehow, this house no longer belongs just to Gill and me. My Reiki students have a part in it. The house has evolved into a place where Reiki happens, and where Reiki makes things happen, and the energy of the house holds it all together. There is a flow. When I teach a class, I sit back and let things happen. People turn up without notice – grandmothers from Plymouth and 9 year olds from up the road. All I have to do is Reiki. And sometimes, people don't turn up and that's OK too. When Anneli and Don were here I expected a crowd for an evening gathering and instead there were just seven, perfect for Reiki blessings in the Reiki room and a sacred Pipe Ceremony in the sitting room. Anneli Twan put her finger on it. "This is The Tavistock Reiki Centre", she said. "All it needs is the name". That, and a little more paint. □

Louisa Booth, December 2011