

Many Firewalk participants meet again on other courses run at the Centre



What do *you* think is possible?

Firewalking for charity is a novel and daring way to raise funds

Firewalking has been a rite of passage since ancient times, and with Wiltshire's history as a place of ancient rites, perhaps it was only a matter of time before locals were again given the chance to experience this life-changing practice.

The Martinsell Centre, a holistic retreat venue in the Pewsey Vale near Marlborough, regularly celebrates the art of Firewalking, and in age-old tradition, there is always a very important reason to do so.

"Our Firewalks are either for a charity group or organisation, or are open to individuals who are raising money for a personal cause," says Samantha Honey, a partner of the centre. "One thing all our Firewalks have in common is that people attending want to overcome a limiting belief, or attain a great

sense of achievement."

One would expect an evening Firewalk to be daring and intense, yet, according to Samantha, most past participants speak first of their experience as having lots of laughs and a feeling of real calm! "It's because here at the Martinsell Centre we have the perfect location for Firewalks. We have a ley line running through the gardens and fully trained, caring instructors leading the group," says Samantha.

The actual walk is the climax of the evening, which involves belief-testing abilities such as an 'Arrow-break', drumming or music, and a shared meal. Then, under the moon and stars, up to 30 people walk across a bed of red-hot coals.

But how do they not get burned? Samantha answers, "There are many scientific and metaphysical theories on how

Firewalkers stay unharmed, but at the end of the day, it's mind over matter. If you think you can do it; if you believe that it's possible, the Firewalk becomes powerful proof of your ability to do anything."

Wendy, 42, is an outreach worker, and walked on fire at The Martinsell Centre. This is her account.

"The first time I walked across the fire, a great feeling came over me. It was a feeling of achievement, like my whole belief system was expanded. It taught me that if you want something, you may as well go for it, because otherwise you'll never know if you can do it or not.

"In the moments after I'd crossed the fire, my mind was calmer than it had been in years. To anyone who's curious but a little scared, here's the truth: the group became real friends, and the leaders really cared. It's a great atmosphere throughout and you'd not lose face if you decided against it. It's your choice up to the last footstep.

"Knowing I had walked on fire has given me the confidence to have another go at things that didn't go well in the past. I applied for a job I'd previously not got, and after three interviews was offered the position. Even if I hadn't got it, I would have had the confidence to have kept on trying!

"Since the Firewalk, people see me as more sure of myself. My Mum, who is 72, wants to Firewalk next; she can't believe how much more upbeat I am. The lad I mentor, who's been labelled a youth off-the-rails, is curious to give it a go too!"

Kelly, 40, is a glass engraver. She also achieved positive results from her experiences at Martinsell.

"When I heard about the Firewalk at Martinsell, I decided this

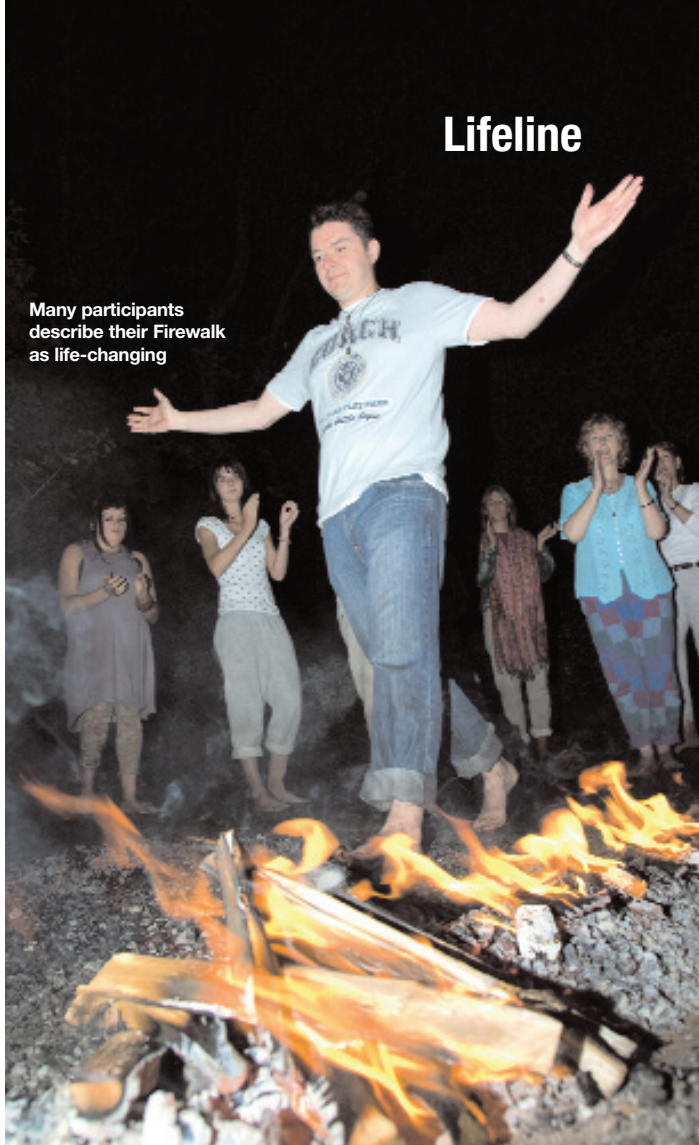
was the challenge I was ready for. I'd had PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) after an accident and had been quite antisocial for the past five years. It was exciting to think of being able to walk over fire, but the idea of joining a group of people I'd never met was the biggest test for me. I set a goal that if I could just turn up, regardless of what happened, I would have achieved.

"The Firewalk itself was life-changing. I walked twice, and then two more times in memory of friends and family that couldn't be there. It challenged my beliefs about what I could and couldn't do, and also what I was ready for. Now, a month later, I've stopped wearing both the ankle and back brace I had worn since the accident, and I'm starting to run again, which I haven't done in five years.

The Martinsell Centre has a ley line running through the garden

"Practically, it helped me to take a leap and enrol in the NLP (Neuro Linguistic Programming) course at The Martinsell Centre. I never thought that I'd have the confidence to go back to study, but now I've this confidence in many situations, especially around new people. Two months ago I wouldn't have thought it possible! Now, I think, if I can walk on fire, what *can't* I do?"

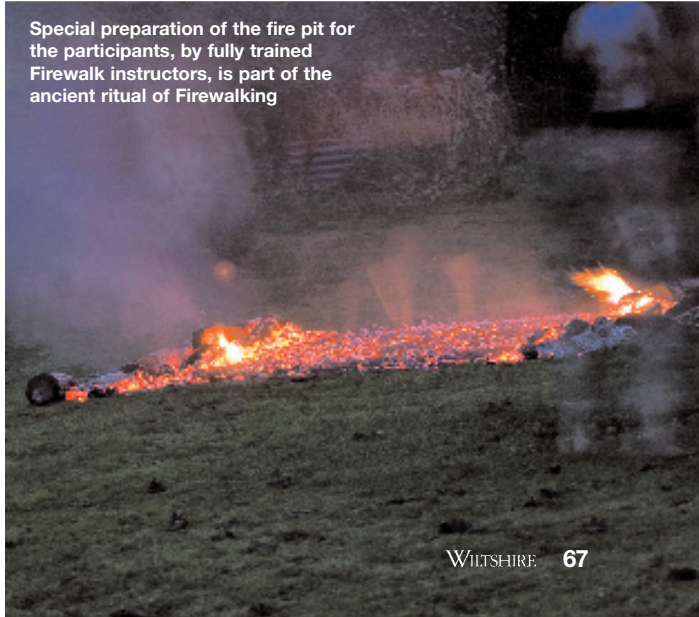
For more information on holding a Firewalk at the Martinsell Centre for your organisation, or if you'd like to book as an individual to be part of the next Firewalk evening, visit www.martinsellcentre.com, or call ☎01672 564259.



Many participants describe their Firewalk as life-changing



The Martinsell Centre at the foot of the Martinsell Hill in the Pewsey Vale, is a holistic centre offering retreats and life-changing courses



Special preparation of the fire pit for the participants, by fully trained Firewalk instructors, is part of the ancient ritual of Firewalking

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF MARTINSSELL CENTRE