

# My Somerset Life

## A diary by Brian Snellgrove

- My Somerset Life
- Diary Entries
- Writing a diary
- About, and User's Guide
- Creative Listening service
- Privacy Policy
- Contact
- Thoughts
  - Blood clots
  - Enlight and Godlight
  - Interacting with others + the disadvantage of being nice.
  - Is Jesus only our local hero?
  - Loneliness or enjoying your own company?
  - Mobile phones – neutrinos and everything
  - People of different nationalities – the myth of separation
  - Personal energy and life readings
  - Quantum Entanglement
  - Sanity and Insanity – where do we go when we die?
  - The Second Coming of Jesus – where is he?
  - The twisting of space and other matters
  - What is sin?
  - What is the brain?
  - What vibrations can improve our lives?
  - Will the truth survive?

# A real Christian group with a purpose



Amazing talent. This is a Somerset baker by the name of Jane Taylor who runs a firm called Taylor Made Cake Courses. **See article here.** I can scarcely believe that this are not real flowers.

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Saturday I attended the occasional Frome men's group. Rise and shine early for an 8 am start but surprise surprise people were all there and we enjoyed a hearty cooked breakfast followed by a talk. Mike Adams has had many jobs including the very challenging task of installing radio stations in such areas as Gaza. He is also a triathlon.

An abbreviated transcript of his speech appears below.

I recently participated in a challenging race that included a half marathon at the end of a full marathon. The bike ride was a grueling 56 miles over hills and Downs, starting from the beach, climbing the hills, and returning to the beach. The swim was a 1.9 km (1.2 miles) ocean swim. Last year, the swim was canceled due to heavy rain and thunderstorms, so I was anxious about the weather as I prepared for this race.

I've been doing triathlons since my 30s, starting when I lived in the tropics where the ocean was much warmer, and wet suits weren't necessary. I initially signed up for a half Iron-man in Vietnam, but the pandemic canceled those plans. This race was my chance to finally achieve that goal post-pandemic.

My goals for the race were simple: finish and not be the last to cross the line. I completed the race in 8 hours and 8 minutes. During my training, I swam the equivalent of crossing the English Channel, biked the distance from Dover to Athens, and ran the equivalent of Southampton to Edinburgh. I also climbed the equivalent of Mount Everest twice.

Throughout the race, I learned several important lessons. Preparation is key; if your race includes hills, you need to train on hills. Weather can be unpredictable, but you must adapt. Last year's swim was canceled, but this year we had perfect weather. Perseverance is crucial; many participants didn't finish within the cutoff time, but I kept going. Helping others is important too; I stopped to help fellow racers with bike issues, which made a big difference to them.

Gratitude is essential. Acknowledge and thank those who encourage you. Smiling, even when it hurts, can make a significant difference. Enjoy the race and engage with supporters. Self-care is vital; you need to eat, drink, and

take care of yourself to finish well. Sometimes, taking breaks helps you go further. My coach advised me to run for 4 minutes and walk for 1 minute, which helped me maintain my energy.

Motivational signs along the course kept me going. One read, "It could be worse; you could be doing burpees," and another said, "Your dog believes in you." These little boosts of encouragement were invaluable.

In the end, everyone can afford to encourage others, no matter their own challenges. This race taught me that perseverance, preparation, and a positive attitude can help you overcome even the toughest obstacles.

There were about 16 of us there, mostly of pension age and we had a wonderful time because I think that only those with the strength of character to endure would have lasted with a spiritual life intact. The speaker was a pleasure to hear, someone who was walking their talk and not just saying about what we should do but about what we have done and this is oxygen to my soul. Enough talking! Let actions begin.

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I have decided to split with the old vineyard group of which I was a member until recently. The local center in Bath was destroyed by monumental incompetence from the regional management and the destruction has repeated itself on a local level with the falling apart of our local group who are leaderless.

I found that most people in the group were hierarchical in their thinking and not recognizing that the Spirit of God in all His glory resides within us all for us to use or not as we please. I shall keep contact with one or two people but in general will not be attending the meetings again.

It is so easy for a church to become a cult with its own

hierarchy which is just as devastating and dysfunctional and dis-empowering as being hypnotized by the hierarchy of the Catholic Church. I believe that the current pope will be the last.

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Today Sunday we were going to go to Glastonbury to celebrate the autumn equinox but lastly elements were against us and we had almost continuous rain so we decided to stay at home.

I am getting enthusiastic of the many ways of cooking potatoes, and Francoise is becoming enthusiastic about making curries so we experimented for lunch and started – just started – to appreciate the benefits of herbs and spices and how they are probably a complete cure for the many medical and physical conditions suffered by mankind in this society alienated from nature.

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