



## The History of New Age Sedona (Part 3 of 3)

by Toraya Ayres

### Ceremonies and Medicine Wheels

Some months after she moved to Sedona, Sakina went out to Boynton Canyon and climbed up to the ridge by the rock formation known as *Katchina Mama*. She was showing this special spot of powerful vortex energy to a friend. Raising her climbing staff to the sky, she said to the Ancestor Spirits: "Use me, as long as it's in the Light and to help." While she was speaking, the sky filled with hundreds of birds flying overhead. When she stopped speaking, the birds disappeared.

Since then the Ancient Ones have been speaking, singing, dancing and telling stories through Sakina. She has been doing Blessing Ceremonies for over a dozen years. At first she joined with other people's ceremonies. One was a large Medicine Wheel ceremony held near Camp Verde with a crystal cluster in the center. Sakina remembers when she handed the Talking Stick to a tall Apache man wearing a suit, he said, "I had a vision this morning that I would be standing in the shadow of a Sacred Mountain today. This is that mountain. I'm so happy to be coming back to the ways of my people." He had tears in his eyes.

Another person in the circle, while holding the Talking Stick said, "The star people are watching over us tonight." Later they looked up into the sky and saw something that looked like a satellite--only it zig-zagged before resuming its path across the heavens.



Medicine Wheel



[White Bear Fredericks](#)

[White Bear Fredericks](#) lived in Sedona for many years. A talented Kachina-carver and story-teller, this Hopi Elder provided much of the information to Frank Waters for the classic *Book of the Hopi*.

In 1984, while he was out of town, Sakina heard he was sick, he was dying. In a clearing deep in the woods of Boynton Canyon, about 30 people gathered to join in a healing ceremony for him. Medicine Chief Morning Owl built the circle with tall staffs bearing banners of yellow, red, black and white in the cardinal directions. He honored the Keepers of the Four Directions and the ancestor Spirits with a chanupa (sacred pipe), whose smoke would take the prayers of the people to the ear of the Great Spirit. Heartfelt prayers were said for Grandfather White Bear.

White Bear got well. He lived for another 12 years. He spent his last months back in one of the Hopi villages.

Sakina says different tribes had different traditions about medicine wheels, which were essentially prayer circles like outdoor chapels. Some people say medicine wheels were not used by the local tribes in Arizona and are not appropriate here. But this Sedona area was sacred to ALL tribes of Turtle Island and everyone was welcome to worship in their own way, says Sakina. People came from all directions to seek their vision.

White Bear told Sakina, "*The Hopi had the medicine wheel before anybody else did,*" and showed her an ancient Hopi symbol: a circle with an equidistant cross in the center, and small circles in each quadrant.

Chippewa author Sun Bear told her that on his land they left the medicine wheels in place permanently but someone always watched over them to keep them sacred. Elsewhere they would be taken apart after the ceremony to restore the land to its natural state.

For many years, Sakina did Blessing Ceremonies at the [White Bear circle](#) in [Boynton Canyon](#). There would be 30-80 people at these gatherings as they watched the full moon rise. She would speak for the Ancient Ones of the canyon, and dance or sing, as moved by spirit. People would stand around the circle and sometimes they would do a friendship dance. Sakina gave a message to each one.

Sometimes people would be invited into the sacred circle and place something on the altar in the center. The energy of the place and prayers that were said would go into that object. Then they would retrieve it at the end of the ceremony and take it with them.

The most memorable of Sakina's medicine wheel gatherings was her husband Sundance's memorial service. It began to rain. Brilliant light would flash when her husband's name was mentioned. She and the group got the rain to stop inside the circle, though they could still see it coming down all around them.

After his death, Sakina began traveling, doing workshops and ceremonies in other places. She was invited to do one in Crown Point, Indiana, by Dr. Heather Harder, who was a US Presidential candidate in 1996. Dr. Harder has come to Sedona many times. She says she loves the energy here and the people.

Sakina traveled extensively with Cherokee Elder [Thunder-cloud](#) on the East Coast, doing ceremonies and teachings. They did the opening ceremony at a medicine wheel for the World Peace Prayer Day in Amenia, New York, with 6000 people attending. When Grandfather Thundercloud came to Sedona, he and Sakina did a medicine wheel ceremony on [Rachel's Knoll](#) by Long Canyon where a Peace Pole was later installed.

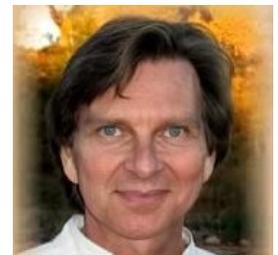
Sakina wrote a lively account of the traditional inter-tribal Pow Wow held in Sedona in May 1997. The significance of the event was seen as a return of the Native Americans in brotherhood to a region from which they had been forcibly removed in the previous century. "The Hopi, Yavapai and some of the Apache trace their presence in this area back for thousands of years," she wrote. "*The Fancy dancers are quite spectacular in their fringed and feathered regalia, and the older women do a graceful step-dip, step-dip as they go around the sacred dance circle, to press love and healing into the body of Mother Earth.*" Representatives from many tribes came to do their traditional dances, or to watch them, and Sakina and her friends rejoiced at the return of the Indigenous People to their ancient homeland.

### More Music

[Oman Ken](#), musician and recording artist, came to Sedona in January 1987. At the time he felt a strong desire to do some soul searching and shifting in his life. He had been in San Diego giving concerts for some years. His idea was to stay in Sedona for six to nine months, living a quiet life and getting a new sense of direction. He ended by loving the community so much he stayed.

Oman's musical career began in 1975. Over the years he played keyboard, guitar, flute and harp. He is also a singer and songwriter. Since 1995 he has been recording World Beat instrumental music and not traveling as much.

At the time we talked in the spring of 1997, his most recent recording was [Echoes of Ivory](#) (piano instrumental). Oman says it has a more mainstream kind of energy, gentle, relaxing, lyrical. Asked what he was known for the most, he replied it was the recording with Shanti, his former partner, called [Let Me Remember](#). Oman considers all his music to be New Age. He has about 12 recordings out now.



At the time of the Harmonic Convergence in '87, Oman was planning to go to Machu Pichu with a group. That trip didn't happen. Five or six weeks before the big date in mid-August, he began to take a leadership role. He had organized big events before, had directed a theater company, and led solstice celebrations in other places. His spiritual guidance encouraged him to help provide music as a focus for the Harmonic Convergence celebration. He worked with a group. They organized four celebrations at Posse Grounds over two days. Two at sunrise, two at sunset. Solara was with another group performing on Airport Mesa.

The events were oriented to lots of group singing participation. Oman organized a band of six and a choir of 20-25 to sing simple songs of the heart. In the mornings, a flow of prayers, ceremonies and songs created a time of reverence. In the evenings, there was also group participation but the event was oriented more to celebration, people sharing their creative energies.

Up to 600 people came in the evening, 400-500 people in the mornings. They were very beautiful events of the heart. People attuned deeply into their intention for Earth to emerge into a place of harmony. There was some advertising, posters in town, fundraisers beforehand, two or three dances given to raise money for facilities. Out of town people came through word of mouth, local connections, some flyers. No national advertising was done. A basket was passed to pay expenses.

Most of Oman's active involvement in community events occurred during the first two and a half years he was here. "I thought that I was going to be very quiet. And I was -- for the first two or three months..."

One of the first people Oman met was **Ani Williams**. They played a little together and she introduced him to Guy who played guitar, mexican style. Guy was organizing the weekly concerts at El Rincon. Oman did a Sunday night concert there. Then he was asked to participate in a weekly concert series. El Rincon was the other favorite hangout beside Food Among the Flowers. Everyone would be there on Fridays. I met a lot of people quickly. Oman became involved with summer solstice celebrations in '87 and '88 at Red Rock Crossing. About 150 people came for a potluck dinner. Women picked flowers and decorated the meal space and altar. I met collected wood and made a bonfire. No permit was needed from the Forest Service in those days. They didn't interfere. There was nobody around then. The group made a circle and prayed before the meal, then celebrated with music and group singing. There was a lot of circle ceremony and movement including some dancing. This was done for two years on the Upper Red Rock Loop side.

In 1987 Oman was involved in two other things that helped to bring the community together, Dance Jams every Friday night at Sunset Inn (now Super 8), in the meeting room; also, dances at The Ridge in the VOC (Village of Oak Creek) in the aerobics room. In 1988, Oman obtained synthesizers and began holding monthly dances at the Elks Club with original dance music. He played drums and other instruments with friends for the 100-150 people who would come. It seemed as though there was just one New Age community then, he says. You put the word out and everybody knew about it.

Every four months or so, Oman gave an individual concert, mostly at Sedona Arts Center. He would play guitar and sing original New Age songs. Mia, his wife, would present slide shows with the music using photographs, symbolic images in the background.

That first period in Sedona, Oman sees as a cycle of its own. It was a different kind of community then, smaller. There were a lot of events and gatherings. The same community of people, a family of folks, came together over and over. They were the people who had participated in the solstice ceremonies and dances. Sometimes Oman brought his synthesizer and played at parties.

In mid-1989 Oman had some personal experiences that told him he was overdoing, putting out too much energy. He had been traveling around the country for 12 years, playing concerts, especially at Unity and Science of Mind Churches. He stopped the circuit and began to travel just when necessary for income. From 1990 on the energy shifted. More people were coming to town. There were fewer focalized events to attend. The New Age people divided into varied groups, some active, some quiet and less visible. Nevertheless, Oman found Sedona a nurturing space for himself after his travels.

Occasionally, Oman still participates in a big event like the very successful Autumn Solstice program that **Lhesli Dove** organized in 1994. He also played a concert at Unity Church in 1995 with her. Now he is more focused on recording and some traveling events.

When **Ani Williams** left town, it opened up a space for Oman. She had been the only performing harpist in town. Recently, Oman has been doing a lot of weddings playing harp. Lots of people come here to get married, he says.

He has reached a place in his own unfolding where he is not looking for gatherings now other than tuning into his own community of friends. "We nurture ourselves with friendship and support," he comments. It's a change from the active kind of role he took in the past. Oman Ken plays at Muse Cafe in the



**Robin Miller**



**Chris Spheeris**

**Robin Miller** is another Sedona musician with a fine reputation. He has contributed a great deal to the community and played keyboard or guitar at numerous fund raisers. When playing keyboard, he seems to be channeling the music straight from his angel guides. The music soars.

Robin's music is greatly appreciated by people all over the area. Among his most popular tapes are: *In the Company of Angels*, *From My Heart* and *Transcendence*. His channeled book is called *Talks With Jonathan*.

I asked Christine Bryson, local promotional agent for Hozo Productions, to tell me about other Sedona-based performers who have become well known. She reminded me of Alexander McFee's tapes, **Tom Barabas**, who records for Soundings of the Planet (Sedona Suite and other favorites), **Rick Schonberg**, who does modern folk songs with New Age lyrics on guitar and vocal, **Chris Spheeris**, who records for Essence Records and is known for his CD's *Culture*, *Pathways to Surrender*, *Enchantment*, **Claudia Tulip**, flute player with the New Bedoins, a local group of three people. Claudia also plays with another group, the **William Eaton Ensemble**. She has made a popular recording called *Migrations*.

## After the Harmonic Convergence

**Christopher Jelm** came to Sedona in November 1987, as part of a wave of people arriving after the Harmonic Convergence. He perceived the New Age community as different groups "doing their thing" although on the social level, there were lots of networking activities, potlucks, and parties. The community was more cohesive when it was smaller.

Thousands of people had descended on the town to celebrate the Harmonic Convergence. It was a turning point for the whole town. Business people began to see economic possibilities in New Age activities. There was, however, no central community focal point, for the New Agers. Christopher kept hearing people say, "**We need a Center.**" That was what made him think of starting the original **Center for the New Age**. His was the first attempt to pull together the various groups and establish a community-based Center under one roof. The blueprint that was created carried through all the years that the original organization existed.

"We began with a circle of 20-30 people meeting in homes," he says. The project started on limited money, a few personal loans. It broke even in about five months. In terms of community service it was viable almost instantaneously.

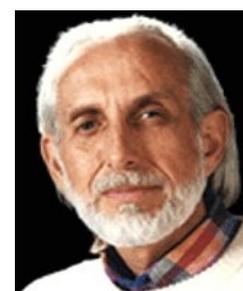
The Center for the New Age opened at the Keller building in March 1988 and had a Grand Opening in April. There was a marvelous turn-out from the community, says Christopher. The new business had a limited lease, knowing construction of Hillside Shops and Galleries would start in 1989. The



**Oman Ken**



**Ani Williams**



**Christopher Jelm**

location worked well for that first year.

They ran into only two problematic incidents. On one occasion, a polite man sitting at the back of the lecture hall, asked Jelms, "Do you folks take Christ as your savior?" Christopher felt it was not a time to discuss the matter and asked him to call at his office later to talk about it but the man didn't call. Another time a rowdy New Ager who was being loud and boisterous had to be put off the property.

One of the biggest upsets in the Sedona community had to do with the "A" team. They preceded Christopher Jelms. Ten or 12 of them were riding around town. One person remembers mopeds, another bicycles. They wore white jumpsuits with a big "A" on the chest, and cloaks which flapped in the breeze behind them. They claimed to be channeling Arcturian energy and that some were ET walk-ins. The "A" team managed to obtain a huge truck of crystals from Arkansas. They rented space, a table in the parking lot of the [Center for the New Age](#), to sell them. The owner of [Crystal Castle](#) nearby was said to be very unhappy about the competition and felt they were taking business away from his store. This all happened before sign laws and incorporation of the city in 1988.

The "A" team under the name Extraterrestrial Earth Mission developed tapes, seminars, a newsletter and a mail order catalog business aimed at helping people discover their true strengths and gifts. Regardless of the dramatic trappings, the material presented in their seminars, printed material and on tape was inspiring and helpful to many people. The ET entities they were channeling changed several times and withdrew in the 1990's, saying their work was complete. The group dispersed.

When Jelms first came to town, [The Tibetan Center](#) in VOC was just getting ready to move to Colorado. It was a school for channels linked to an organization there. One student, a woman named Cheryl Funk became a local channel. Jelms recalls that a couple of good channels were getting messages from [Djwhal Kuhl](#), the source of [Alice Bailey's](#) books. Djwhal Kuhl was also known as The Tibetan.

When the [Center for the New Age](#) had to move in 1989, they decided to occupy the space in the Village of Oak Creek above the Mandarin Restaurant which The Tibetan Center had used previously. This choice did not work well at all for a business which depended upon public customers. Unfortunately, it was the only place they could find at the time. After about six months at that location, the Center returned to West Sedona in the summer of '89, moving next to where Pietros restaurant would come later on Highway 89A.

Jelms, who had a business background, says the Center experimented to discover what worked and what didn't work. The key functions for the Center, those that were most useful and productive were: some retail sales for cash flow, fairs once a month, (they were almost a trade show), lectures almost every night of the week, rooms for rent (as long as they were located in the Keller building) psychics and healers on duty and a food coop (which lasted only a few years). There were Sunday morning church services, and major monthly concerts. The Center became a focal point for several New Age comedy groups.

In 1993, when I moved to Sedona, the Center for the New Age had been operating successfully in its West Sedona location for some years and was looking for a new manager. I became a volunteer. Christopher Jelms was retiring from active association with the organization but he stayed to oversee the interview and hiring process.

Then the building was sold and the new owner refused to renew the lease, making it plain that he did not want a New Age oriented business there. For months the newly hired manager, Julian, searched the region for a viable location at a reasonable rent. Several potential landlords were quite plain in their prejudice against renting to a New Age-oriented business. The Center was unable to find reasonably priced rental space anywhere in Sedona. Since the Center already had a national reputation and regularly received phone calls from out-of-state people who wanted to visit or present there, it did not make sense to consider moving out of the city.

Finally, forced to move, the Board decided to take the risk of renting a much larger and more expensive location on the opposite side of Highway 89A. The rent was going to be more than twice what it had been before. The Center moved into its new quarters in 1994, attempting a major expansion. For a while, it looked as though the experiment would succeed. There was a wonderful Grand Opening celebration on the solstice in June attended by several hundred locals who enjoyed musicians, songs, dance and food. However, financial problems led to the final closing of the center in January 1995. Anita Dalton then took over the name Center for the New Age and started a private profit enterprise. It is located next to Crystal Castle.

Jelms remembers that when the original Center for the New Age moved to West Sedona there was a restaurant called Food among the Flowers nearby. It served natural food and had a garden area in back where you could sit outside. The restaurant became a New Age gathering place. It was the only natural food restaurant in town at that time.

Food Among the Flowers was located behind the Darling shops, then moved to where Pietros is now and finally closed. After the restaurant left, the Angels, Art and Crystals store started in the same space and now has moved to a much larger location on 89A, next to where the Center used to be. Meanwhile, another angel store, Angel Treasures of Sedona, has opened near the "Y" on 179.

Christopher had a lot of visions for the first Center. He felt that they broke ground on community outreach and acceptance with the Chamber of Commerce and City Hall. In the period when I served as Program Director, I took a full schedule of events to the Chamber of Commerce every month and they posted it under glass on the outside bulletin board. We also kept a lot of flyers available for pick-up inside.

[The Red Rock News](#) used to carry a New Age events calendar once a month as did the [Sedona Journal of Emergence](#). These functions are now carried by local free publications: [Good Times Sedona](#), [Four Corners](#), and [Open Mind](#). The SJE has become a national rather than regional publication and it no longer makes sense to carry the local events calendar.

## The Next Incarnation ... And Other New Age Centers

[Celeste and Jananda](#) came to Sedona in the summer of 1990. They both joined the [Center for the New Age](#) when [Pete Sanders](#) was president. Celeste, an artist, began organizing visionary art shows and Jananda worked as a volunteer until the closing in January 1995. They supported the Center through all its ups and downs because they believed in working and serving as a group. During these years, they recall very successful celebrations were organized at the Flicker Shack for the Wesak Festival in the spring and the 11:11, which like Harmonic Convergence, was celebrated in many parts of the world.

I first met Celeste and Jananda on my scouting trip to Sedona, in 1993. They used to have weekly meditation gatherings in their home and sometimes potlucks. Invited by a friend to the potluck on Memorial Day weekend, I was impressed by the 45 people who had come. We went around the circle introducing ourselves and saying a little about what had drawn us there. The magnetic quality of Sedona was startlingly evident. Only a few people had been in Sedona more than two years.

Six months after the original Center for the New Age closed, Jananda called a meeting to begin a new organization based upon the best of the old Center ideas. About 40 people attended that meeting, many of them people associated with the original Center for the New Age. Within three weeks the doors opened on W. Hwy 89A. They bought 30 chairs and a used glass counter, put up some shelves and a sign and were in business under the name [New Age Information and Services](#).

After they opened, Anita Dalton complained that the name chosen was too similar to the name she had taken over for her private business. Not wishing to get into a legal fight, the new group became [The Hub of the New Age Community](#). As before, it is non-profit and relies heavily upon community volunteers. [Jananda](#), the founder and manager, continues to devote his time and energy to developing this organization. There is a smooth flow between the Hub, the newly established [Earth Mother Father Foundation](#)



[Jananda Korsholm](#)

[The Hub](#) is a member-based service organization in support of the New Age community. [Jananda](#), the founder and manager, continues to devote his time and energy to developing this organization. There is a smooth flow between the Hub, the newly established [Earth Mother Father Foundation](#) (1997) under teacher/healer [Margareht-Rose](#) and [Crystal Sanctuary](#) which was founded by [Rev. Gwen Monique-Richland](#) in the same year as the original Center for the New Age.

Each of the centers has a different focus; the Hub as a community resource center, Earth Mother Father with a focus on healing work and Crystal

Sanctuary with more of a focus on spiritual education. However, the latter two have now combined.

**Crystal Sanctuary** was established and is managed by white-haired Gwen who calls it a transformational resource center. It operates in West Sedona with a full calendar of events. Both local and out-of-town people make presentations. Gwen ran a center in Las Cruces, New Mexico for three years before coming to Sedona. "There was no doubt in my mind that New Age activities, while certainly not new, are the pathway to human expansion," she says.

In the years since 1988, Gwen has participated in many seminars and retreats and taught a variety of classes on metaphysical subjects. However, "in the whole metaphysical world," she writes, "crystals are my first love."

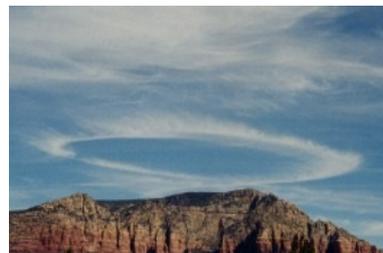
"Crystal Sanctuary," she writes, "is chartered through the Church of Malabar, the second oldest church in Christendom. The first church was founded by Paul in Antioch in 38 A.D. In 58 A.D. the apostle Thomas went to Malabar, India, where he established the church; it is still a beautiful active place today. It came into this country from Malabar in 1940. It is a metaphysical church, wide open at the top. We have no set dogma; everyone is welcome with no concern as to your past or present religion."

Gwen feels "the New Age movement has gone through its beginning, explorative stage, then a period of confusion and now is becoming a much more solid, viable, and accepted philosophy..."

## Writers and Publications

**Tom Dongo**, author and investigator, also came to Sedona in the year of Harmonic Convergence, 1987. He felt drawn here to write. Like many others, he gave up everything to come. Tom says he spent his first year involved with channeling. Since then he has been reporting UFO and ET events and other unexplained happenings in the area.

The highlight of these Sedona years for him was having an ET ship fly within 200 yards of him. It was round with flashing lights, about 50 feet in diameter. He recalls this as happening in 1995. He has written five books, all available in local bookstores and has been involved mostly with his own interests rather than community activities. His books are *Mysteries of Sedona*, *The Alien Tide*, *The Quest*, *Unseen Beings*, *Unseen Worlds*, *Merging Dimensions*. They have sold well in other countries as well as the USA.



Unusual sky phenomenon over Sedona



[Robert Shapiro](#)

**Robert Shapiro**, channel and author, also came to Sedona around 1987. He lives very much in the present moment and says he is not good at precise dates. His chief project lately has been channeling a long history of the Explorer Race (people as they have evolved) given by **Zoosh**, a spirit being and End Time historian. Robert is working on the 8th book in the series! The first volumes have reached local bookstores, *The Explorer Race* and *ETs and the Explorer Race*, both of them exceedingly interesting reading.

Robert's first book was *Allies*. It was a small collection of channeled messages from different Extra-terrestrial groups. It is out of print in the USA but still in print in Brazil. Robert then produced *Awakening to the Animal Kingdom* and *Awakening to the Plant Kingdom* with Julie Rapkin. He has been a main contributor to the *Shining The Light series* (vols 1-4) published by Light Technology and also to the *Sedona Vortex Guide Book*.

Sometimes Robert takes people out on the land, and teaches them how to expand their perceptions. He teaches whatever feels right, he says. He has taught a workshop on invisibility. One person who attended was a young woman whose lover was in prison. She wanted to visit him and couldn't do so for more than a few frustrating minutes at a time. Robert says he taught her how to use invisibility to visit him at prison.

Robert has shared this information with a retired Police Officer who then shared it with at least one member of the Border Patrol for protective purposes. It's about how to go unseen and to extend your feeling body to be aware of other surroundings. He says it is learning how to touch things at a distance. But this is designed only for spiritual and benign purposes. It comes under the heading of shamanism.

The military and other people are still recruiting psychics for Remote Viewing warns Robert. A friend of his had this experience. It was subtle but definite. Robert uses a technique of discernment which he calls "the wand." He points his finger at a person and psychically extends it to get a feeling of that person's energy. He then knows immediately the nature of the person's intentions.

Be aware who you get involved with, he says. This is very important. It's easy to compromise your integrity in New Age activities without meaning to. Integrity is the number one issue that people need to be conscious of. It will be tested. It's really important to set your standards.

Robert remembers *Emergence* before it became the *Journal*. Publisher O'Ryin Swanson lived in a house in West Sedona. There were stacks of paper everywhere in the basement. That was the beginning of *Emergence*. The first issue was a packet of information. Gradually it turned into a monthly magazine, a calendar of local events together with articles. In 1996 the calendar was finally dropped. *The Sedona Journal of Emergence* had become a national and international magazine. A very fine edition is published in New Zealand for the South Pacific region and another edition in Brazil [*Amaluz*]. The print run is about 7000 in Brazil and 14,000 in the USA.

Shapiro says he doesn't get much into group stuff but he supports the Hub and he supported the original Center for the New Age. Recently he did a channeling for the 1996 Sedona Conference of Light sponsored by the Hub.

Robert says **Tom Dongo**, who has been here longer, is the first line local expert on UFO and ET sightings, the strange and obscure, the wild and bizarre. When you read Tom's book *The Quest* it gives you a feeling for people who had mystical experiences in Sedona. But, says Robert, "I was all mysticaled out by the time I got to Sedona!"

**Lyssa Royal Holt**, internationally known author and channel wrote, "I moved to Sedona from Los Angeles in 1988." "...As with so many others, Sedona was calling me. Once I got settled in Sedona, I began giving presentations [as a channel] for **Light Technology's Sunday Night Salon** organized by **O'Ryin Swanson**. This led to an increase in private session work and the teaching of my ongoing Learning to Channel classes. I also began hosting weekly channeled events at my home. The weekly channeled classes ran from 1989-1991, until the time I moved to Phoenix. These weekly, intimate channeled sessions...provided the bulk of my material for the books *The Prism of Lyra*, and *Visitors From Within*. The tapes of these early Sedona sessions are still available to the public and remain popular with my clients because of their deep explorations into all aspects of metaphysics and personal empowerment.

"In 1989 I also began working full-time for O'Ryin Swanson as her only secretary and office support. O'Ryin wanted to begin a journal of channeled material and so I was responsible for gathering the channelings and transcribing them to be used in our new venture, a magazine called *The Sedona Journal of Emergence*. To this day I am very proud of the success of that magazine because being there at the beginning, I saw how hard it was to implement and how dedicated O'Ryin was to its birth. *The Journal* was intermittent at first, being published when we had the opportunity, and even then it was very thick! Today *The Journal* is an ongoing monthly, filled with an array of fascinating material each month. Whenever I see that *Journal*, I think of its humble beginnings and feel extremely proud of O'Ryin's efforts.

"Back then my impression of the New Age movement in Sedona was that it wasn't cohesive. There were many



factions who didn't communicate with other factions, and that was a disappointment. Also back then, there wasn't even a health food store! I felt very isolated and because my work takes me to the airport sometimes many times a month, it seemed feasible to move to Phoenix."

[Lyssa Royal Holt](#)

The Phoenix airport is 120 miles from Sedona. No wonder Lyssa had to move! Today she takes groups to sacred places all over the world and is author of four books, many articles and hundreds of channeled tapes.

### An Example of New Age Business

The story of [Tanya Bloch](#) and [Lana Grimm](#) is another example of success beginning in Sedona. Lana came from Houston, Texas in 1993, Tanya, her sister, came early in 1994. Both women had visited many times before. They formed a company called [Bee Unlimited](#) in April 1995. The name came from a dream that Lana had, of a bee with the world on its wings. They looked up the symbolism of the bee and found it to be very meaningful.

Tanya, a yoga teacher, had the idea of doing a yoga video in nature. The two sisters, both of them very attractive, with long hair and lithe bodies, completed the filming among the spectacular red rocks of Sedona. Immediately afterwards both of Lana's legs were smashed in a terrible car accident. For months, she was unable to walk at all. Tanya devoted nearly all her time to caring for her sister. They worked together using yoga and other spiritual healing techniques to help Lana's recovery. Many local people prayed for them and helped in various ways. As of this writing in mid-1997, Lana is walking again, though with a slight limp, and is still in some pain but she has made a near-miraculous recovery.

The video [Spirit of Yoga in Sedona](#) came on the market in 1996 and has become a great success. The video was not only well done it was well packaged and has become available in Book of the Month club and Reader's Digest catalogs, and on the TV Home Shopping Network as well as through New Age and mainstream stores. The combination of beautiful scenery, inspiring Yoga, Tanya's voice, and original music is irresistible.

Lana is teaching other handicapped people how to use yoga to help their bodies, adapting the positions according to what individuals can do. As people heard of her story of recovery, there was much interest and she now plans to become a yoga teacher for handicapped people. The sisters will be teaching regularly in Phoenix as well as Sedona.

Bee Unlimited is developing other products, too. They have taken the theme of teaching children to be all they can be and to accept who they are through toys and stories.

#### Summary

What are the common elements of the New Age community in Sedona? It's hard to say. There is a high degree of individuality. Almost everyone is a pioneer in some respect, either in the creative arts, healing work or the world of organization, education or business. They have moving stories to tell about how they came, and what happened afterwards. Often they have been through horrendously challenging experiences and cheerfully talk about the lessons they learned from them. The sense of continually growing and changing is almost universal. It is discussed in the grocery store aisles and at the Post Office. The latest UFO sighting or lucid dream, channeled guidance or recall of another life are ready topics for conversation. At the same time, as people gain a foothold in the community and work through the first years of scrambling to earn a living, often losing any money they came with, there is a maturing which happens.

They learn to maintain balance, to center into the light, to pay less attention to outer things and unusual phenomena. Gradually they learn to hold a steady focus upon service, their work in the world.

There are times of networking, mutual support, celebration, and ceremony. There are times of hiking in the canyons, solitude, meditation and prayer. There are times of stopping in delight to watch coyote go slinking through the brush, or a quail family dart across the road. They learn to live in trust and to love ever more deeply, helping the healing of Earth and all her people. Personal transformation becomes so profound, that ultimately nothing can shake them from the paths that spirit has opened up before them.

Comments are welcome. Contact Toraya at [torayaayres@yahoo.com](mailto:torayaayres@yahoo.com)

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Note: [Iris Clark](#) died at the age of 103. She taught the Keys of Enoch class until the last week of her life. [Mary Lou Keller](#) completed her memoir in 1999 and it has been published as Echoes of Sedona Past.

[Rev. Gwen Monique-Richland](#) has retired and sold Crystal Sanctuary.

[Jananda](#) handed over The Hub to Arina in 1998.

[Sophia Tarila](#) has retired from New Editions International and sold it to Pat Bush.

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