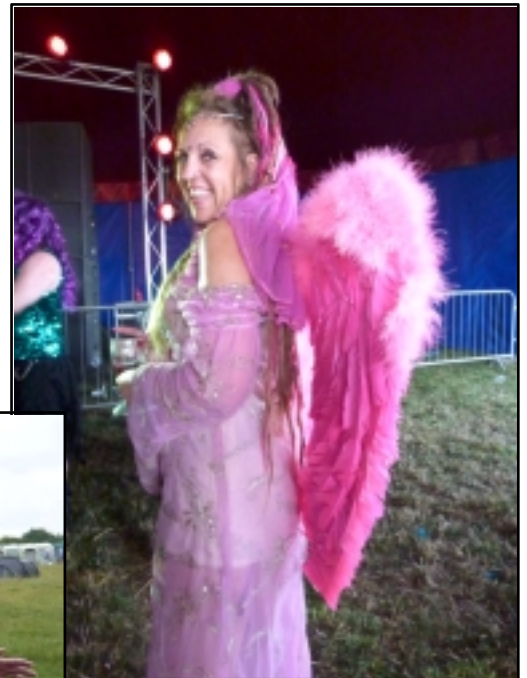


I Endorse-it 2010 (get it?)

This really is now my favourite festival and I have to say I've been to a few, stretching back into the musical mists – Phun City; Isle of Wight 1969 and 1970; lots of Glastonburies, Big Green Gatherings and more. So, why do I think it's so special?

Firstly, it's so friendly. It is inhabited by such a positive variety of vibes. The day-trippers with green wellies seem perfectly happy to consort with pink fairies, elves, heavyweight punks, crusty-types and scrumped-up guys in dresses on the Sunday. That's for Ladies' Day, when all the guys can be the ladies that they always fancied being. Fun, frolics and frocks indeed. My mates and myself did our bit with the dresses and lippy!



It isn't a festival that is easy to put in a 'box'. But, it's a great location, down on Cranbourne Chase just over the Wiltshire border into Dorset. And it's run by people who really care. The

extended family of band, Pronghorn are part of its heart. Sure, there are five stages and a number of other performance spaces, most notably the laid-back, campfire performing space of

Strummerville. The musical mix in 2010 was eclectic, with a lot of punk including the Subhumans, the Damned, and for me the best punk act of all, Lymington's Peeping Toms (right). They've morphed back onto the scene from the earlier, Pogues-style and agrarian punk of the Cropdusters. The Peeping Toms have some great lyrics and



story-lines to their songs, unusual in many punk repertoires.

We all see and experience a small selection of what's on offer. I saw more music on Friday night and Saturday, and progressively less on the Sunday as myself and mates spent more time people-watching and imbibing apples. The Old Rosie worked pretty well to give us some



significant 'blank bits' in our memories. But the cider didn't slow up the process of making new friends and transmogrifying old acquaintances into 'best' friends – thanks and respect from me to Henry, Jayne, Laura and their friends, and my own old running club mates, Dave and Phil. I even finally met up with photographer, Sam (Samsimilia), her partner Simon and the other 'Surplus People' (pic below right).



The sound quality in the DD tent spoilt the Urban Voodoo Machine show for me. It was just overloading and not as crisp as in 2009. But to balance that, on the Friday night, unknown-to-me, the Mopes from Southampton were really impressive (below). Ben Munday, the singer/front man is very much a guy to watch out for in the future. As a comparison, I think they would hold



their own in the company of Mumford and Sons, which is a pretty fair compliment.

There were plenty of opportunities to jump up and down and do some dancing. Symarip, the Dreadzone Sound

System, Subgiant and Pronghorn did their level best to keep the energy levels high. But for me it was Eat Static who really turned up the tempo and sweat level,

producing a 110 per cent dance set. Eat Static (pic below) are always crowd pleasers.



I'd been looking forward to Love Grocer, being a long-time fan of Zion Train, but they had a run of problems with their computer backing tracks and it made continuity a mite iffy. My crowd had really enjoyed the Curst Sons on the DD stage, but their set on the little La Boite a Musique stage by the bus was spoiled on the Sunday afternoon by serious soundclash. Too many loud sounds from the stages on either side. A real

shame, since in 2009 this had been one of the highlights of the Endorse-it experience.

But what the heck, it **was** a great experience. The camping field was laid back and a friendly place to be. Some campers and families barely left there. The only shame this year was that the exits from the field to the bridle ways down to the RSPB



woodland and to the pleasant village of Sixpenny Handley had been blocked off and 'securitised'. Hardly necessary, and it prevented a number of campers making a trip into the village, and spending some money at the great local shop and meeting 'real locals' at the Roebuck pub.

But, I'll be booking my ticket for next year and hope to see lots of old friends and make new ones, once again. Henry and Jayne are threatening to make it their

stag/hen weekend in preparation for a September 2011 'hand-fasting' ceremony. They want us all (yes, and I do mean the guys as well) to get bridesmaid dresses ready in preparation. You've been warned!

