

IDA SWEARINGEN



Okay, here goes.

After leaving Sandyland, I took an M.A. in Latin American History at the University of Missouri. I was an ass't. professor at St. Mary's College of Maryland until 1966 when I went to New York University to begin work on a PhD. It was the sixties and I lived in the middle of hippieland so it didn't take long for me to turn on, tune in, drop out and join in. I must say, it was a grand time despite the fact that it left me with a serious drug habit and a c.v. that was interesting to say the least. I drove taxi in New York City, worked at Bell Labs, shoveled beets in Minnesota and even spent a summer haying.

At the age of 37 I went into rehab in Minneapolis. Shortly after, I met Ellen Hawley, my partner. We've been together ever since and are planning to have a civil union ceremony in the near future.

I returned to the University of Minnesota and took a degree in social work. For the next 21 years I worked as a family therapist in a variety of HMOs, private practices and community health clinics. I began writing in 1986 and published my first short story, "Cruz" in an anthology called *Women on Women*. I continued writing and published my first book, *Owl of the Desert* in 2003. I'm currently working on two projects, one has a title, *Sparrow Alone*, and the other doesn't.

Ellen and I have been visiting the UK since 1993. We fell in love with the village of Crackington Haven in North Cornwall and last year we moved here permanently. We have a little bungalow in the village and are spending all out time putting it in order. The latter is the reason for the civil ceremony. Death dues are quite high here if you're not united by some formal arrangement. So after nearly 31 years of living together, we are

going to take the step. It wouldn't be possible in the U.S. Here, its simply a matter of going to the public registrar's office.

I won't be able to make it to the reunion, but I hope it's a wonderful time for everyone and you can enjoy peace, reconciliation and memories of happy times.

