

Witches ride broomsticks, according to legend. But Rosaleen, the Witch of King's Cross, travelled by jumping a freight train. In this issue of POST Miss Norton concludes her life story.

An Explanation

★ WITCHES are not subject to the normal restrictions of time and space. Unfortunately we are, and so is POST. Miss Norton's copy was late in reaching us — that's why there was a week's break in the continuity.

Witches can apparently travel back and forth in time. We can't. If we could, we'd visit all our past pay-days.

We hope you enjoy this last instalment.

# Hitch-hiking Witch

*encouraged to work continuously at my own art-form I became an exemplary student.*

Then I got a job as junior artist on the late "Smith's Weekly" (which had previously published some weird stories I had written when I was 15).

Just before joining "Smiths" I achieved the distinction of becoming Australia's first female pavement artist. I needed some ready cash, the idea appealed to me — and seventeen and a penny (for those days quite a small fortune) was the first morning's takings.

The Smith's Weekly job fell through. Mainly because the vapid-looking glamor girls I was supposed to draw would insist on assuming a nightmarish cast of feature. I wasn't sorry to leave because to my own eye the vampires, harpies and she-devils of my private drawings were starting by some perversity to look faintly like glamor girls (should I say glamor ghouls?).

One other highlight or lowlight from my teen-age:—

● Running away from home. The only thing I had overlooked was money. At the railway station I realised I hadn't a farthing. I couldn't walk in town with two heavy suitcases. I managed to borrow 2/- from the local librarian. That took me in triumph — and a train — to the city.

Next thing was money for a room: Leaving my suitcases at the station, I called at various studios for work as an artist's model. I was accounted a good model, not because of my curves, which were and are inclined to be conspicuous by their absence, but being myself an artist I knew which poses were best to draw.

There was plenty of work, but all some days ahead.

Meeting my current boyfriend, I was greeted by the news that he'd lost his job, too: However there was enough to take a room (8/- in those days!) at a fabulous old building in Gloucester st. — the erstwhile Ship and Mermaid Inn, Sydney's first pub which later became the haunt of artists, writers, musicians and drunks.

And so began a life that brought the "kaleidoscope patterns" sensed earlier into every

★ ROSALEEN Norton's painting of Neptune is remarkable for its esoteric and magical symbolism. Neptune's trident, some researchers claim, has been degraded in myth to the "Devil's Pitchfork."



★ THIS illustration is from C. Van Roemburg's striking painting, "Satan self-bestialised." Witches and Devil-worshippers have sometimes claimed that they have seen Satan—but never in this horrifying form.

**A**T East Sydney Technical College, the pattern of my life repeated itself—even to two teachers suggesting that I be expelled as a demoralising influence.

*They based their objections on the subject matter of my drawings.*

But the late Rayner Hoff, who was then head of the Art School, believed that a vivid and uninhibited imagination was needed for artistic development.

*He freed me from routine and let me spend my time at figure drawing and composition. And since for the first time I was*





Of The Air.

URIEL



★ WITCH at work. Rosaleen Norton with some of the instruments used in magical ceremonies. Mirrors have magical significance.

of the wet season. I learnt to board moving goods trains; a necessity since the trip from Brisbane to Cairns was then a practical impossibility by road in the summer. We travelled by the freight trains, which in Queensland are much easier to jump, as they are smaller than the N.S.W. ones.

*I have spoken of patterns in life as recurrent motifs. The following episodes show the operation of another type of pattern, and I invite everyone in the habit of attributing everything to co-incidence.*

When Gavin Greenlees and I hitch-hiked to Melbourne, it was with the purpose of finding some gallery to exhibit my work.

Now — we were both flat broke, with no apparent prospect in view of acquiring any cash.

It was not until actually approaching Melbourne a couple of days later that suddenly it dawned on us that we had respectively lost touch with everybody we had known there; and at least one contact was necessary, someone who could help us find temporary headquarters, etc.

I remembered a student from Melbourne University who had once visited me. He had told me to return the visit if I ever went to Melbourne — but what was his name? I could only remember that he was called "John" (which is not his real name incidentally), and said to Gav that looking for a student called John was like starting out to look for the proverbial needle in a haystack. Then, to my amazement, Gavin said, "Is his name John Bolton' by any chance?"

That was the surname, I remembered as soon as I heard it; but how did Gavin know? Suspecting an unexpected form of E.S.P., I asked him. "I've heard Pierre mention John Bolton," he replied. (Pierre was a student whom Gavin had last contacted two years before meeting me.) This was "coincidence" No. 1. I thought that Pierre might still be at the

University, we headed towards it, and in due course found him.

These things ensued: Yes, it was the same "John Bolton," who transpired to be a genius at organising. He found us accommodation, and became general manager of the entire project. He acquired the Rowden-White Library at the University for an exhibition gallery, advanced money for most of the expenses, acted (very efficiently) as publicity agent, and, in short, worked like a colony of Beavers, until it only remained for me to collect my pictures from Sydney.

So off we set again on the track, Sydneywards. At that time (late autumn, 1949),

there were floods all along the lower N.S.W. coast, and we soon found to our dismay that the Camden Vale bridge had been under water for nearly a week, and traffic was held up for miles on either side. And we had to be back in Melbourne well before the opening day. Yet on arriving in the Camden area, the flood kindly subsided for about 24 hours, enough to let traffic, including us, over the bridge, after which it re-flooded for a fortnight; but this didn't matter to us, as we were going back to Melbourne by train.

The rest of the story is well known — prosecution, court case, acquittal with costs, and an exhibition that was profitable in more ways than one. What is perhaps less generally known is that the case was the first successful one of its kind in Victoria (owing to brilliant legal representation).

A neatly dovetailed series of events occurred all the way through production of an art and poetry book some years ago — even to the paper on which it was printed, a consignment of which became available by another "co-incidence," exactly when required.

*So much has been written about my experiments in self-hypnosis and similar practices, that I shall not enlarge on them here.*

*I have been connected so persistently with the term "obscurity," that I feel the subject could do with a rest.*

There is so much that should be included as essential to this story: Contacts with all sorts of occultists over the years spells and their sometimes unexpected effects; magical and other phenomena, and experiments in art, psychology, and little-known psychosomatic forces; elemental and similar spirits (including those classified as "Powers of the Air"); Comic Opera aspects of life and a hundred other matters; but the space at my disposal is limited.

## Dance of Life

WITH this last instalment of her life-story, Rosaleen Norton sent us a poem she had written. She said, "It expresses my Credo in a wider sense." Below are some extracts:

*In the spiral horns of the Ram;  
In the deep scent of midnight;  
In the dance of atoms weaving the  
planes of matter,  
Is Life.*

*Life spins in the dream of a planet;  
Life leaps in the lithic precision of the  
cat;  
Life flames in the thousandth Name;  
Life laughs in this thing that is I.*

*So  
I live in green blood of the Forest;  
I live in the white fire of Power;  
I live in the scarlet blossom of Magic;  
I live.*