

## Jen's Homebirth Experience

In December 2011 a little angel made a nest, unfortunately this angels camp was in the wrong spot and on the 23rd of December we found out that he was going to heaven. Even though our time with him was short, it was happy. We were given a new perspective, what was important to us.



The following spring, you, my darling girl, made a nest, in the right spot and we grew together.

I loved you when you were a pip and a lump and a big, big bump! You were conceived in a leap year and because of this the Midwife said you were due the 23rd of November and the sonographer the 22nd November. I just wanted you to be happy and healthy and if I'm honest not too late!

Well you didn't want to be late either and decided the 23rd was going to be your day.

In the last few weeks of pregnancy I was going to the loo about 5 times a night, in our house, a 1900's terrace, the bathroom is downstairs; at 1.30 am on the 23rd November 2012 I made the trip downstairs. Talking to my bump on the way back to bed, I put my foot on the bottom step and well, it was like a very small 'pop' and my fore-waters had gone leaving what looked to me like the map of the world splattered on the carpet.



Quite loudly "oh my god"

I smiled a very big smile and sorted myself out. I went upstairs and told a sleeping Luke. I have never seen a horizontal jump before, but that is what he did.

In half sleep he asked, "Are you alright? What are you going to do?"

I was defiantly alright and as planned I went back to bed intending to sleep.

As I lay quietly (Luke already back to sleep), talking to pip and my body in my head, little crampy aches turned into big crampy aches and then the first of many contractions. These little tightening's brought a smile to my face, they would bring you to my arms and for that I was thankful to them.

By 2.30am I could no longer stay in bed, my body was telling me to get up. So I paced, I walked the downstairs rooms, settling for periods in the kitchen, swaying and dancing to contractions. Little songs came to me and I danced and swayed and hummed. The contractions got stronger and closer. I loved this time alone with you at the beginning of our journey, it was a wonderful couple of hours, I felt truly connected to you and my body that cradled you. I should say we weren't entirely alone for



this time, Rammy the westie had got up too and was keeping a close but quizzical eye over proceeding's!

Somewhere between 3.30 and 4am I decided to have a shower; bliss, the warm water on my back melted away the pain, mid way through my shower Luke appeared;

"What are you doing?"

"Errr ... Showering"

He asked about contractions, timings, the pool, ringing people and tidying. Then he got very busy! He cleared and tidied and watched. I got out of the shower and continued pacing and swaying and humming.

As the contractions increased the humming turned to whistling and this went on for hours. I was driving myself crazy, goodness knows what everyone else thought but it came naturally, an unexpected response to these wonderful pains.

At 6am we decided to call people, the midwife, Nic (my support team) and my mum who had requested a call. When I knew Nic and the midwife were on their way I thought this is definitely it... I hope.

Just gone 7am I was still pacing, still whistling. My contractions were moderate about 3 minutes apart. Our designated second midwife arrived, a lovely lady who truly brightened our morning. Nic had arrived a few minutes before and had already tweaked the TENS machine and started rubbing the bottom of my back with the heel of her hand. It was wonderful to be able to share and take strength from someone who had been there. I was examined, 3cm dilated, not bad. Our first midwife, came on shift at 8.30 and would come straight away. When she arrived I felt so happy that the midwife I had built a relationship with would deliver my baby girl. I was examined again, 5-6cm, yes! I can get in the pool!



Oh my goodness, the pool. My whole body melted, any tension seeped away and my contractions seemed to ease, I began to sink into my own special bubble. I was aware of the conversations around me and interacted now and then but felt safe, secure and happy in my little water world. The atmosphere was relaxed and happy waiting for the special arrival.

I knew this was my task; my journey and I wanted it to be. I wanted to do it well, I wanted to give my baby the best start, I wanted to continue to progress. I knew I was capable, my body and mind strong enough. I had prepared; yoga, natal hypnotherapy, breathing exercises. I was made to do this. At 13.45 I was examined again, I didn't want to be out of the water, I didn't want to converse, I wanted to stay in my zone. 8cm, good going. My hindwaters were bulging and My Midwife felt I would progress better if they were released. I agreed eager to meet my baby. The procedure wasn't uncomfortable at all. Nic said,

'This is it now Jen, it is going to hurt'

Boy oh boy was she right, my contractions went through the roof, I had been coping well with the gradual progression but these were strong, hard, and difficult.

I couldn't get comfy; the pool although massively comforting and enveloping had lost some of its relieving properties. Each position I tried was fine for a contraction or two but then I needed to change. I splashed about in frustration; I knew I was losing my control, my poise, somewhere I had forgotten to breathe. I was inward in my own personal battle trying to regain my calm.

I requested Entonox (gas and air), it gave me a mechanism, a distraction, a focus, I could concentrate and compose myself. Luke and Nic were there I felt supported, I felt loved, encouraged by their words.

Quickly it was time, I wasn't sure if I felt 'pressure' but my body was ready, you were ready. I was breathing, that was my focus, I briefly thought about the noise I was making during contractions, somewhere between a moo and Chewbacca. I had wanted to feel you, touch your head, see you in a mirror; but I was too absorbed. 45 minutes after I began consciously pushing, though time is irrelevant, Our Midwife or perhaps it was Nic or even the second midwife who had arrived very recently said, "one more push and the head will be out"



Well, one more push and you were out, you were here.  
(16:14)

In a daze, a misty whirlwind, I reached down into the murky waters and pulled you up. There were gasps, you were big but perfect, you cried, I smiled, I looked at daddy, he was joyous, wet eyed; back to you my gorgeous, determined wonderful girl, covered in vernex and you had hair, amazing hair, I wasn't expecting hair.

There was chatting and laughing, I didn't, I couldn't take anything in other than you. Born into a room of happiness and love in your own home. What better way to start your life.

Rammy the dog, who had been keeping watch since the early hours, was in obvious shock, he tried to get in the pool and almost fell in.

I held you close; I couldn't have been close enough.

My pool water was red, very red, the midwives were concerned and so after 10 minutes your cord was cut and we got out. We lay under warm towels. You stared at me and me at you. I had a second-degree tear but nothing major. I remember the overwhelming feelings of love, astonishment, happiness and pride. You were mine and I was yours.

I waited for an hour for 3rd stage, this was more painful than I expected and it just wasn't shifting. In an attempt to get things moving I was helped to standing. I have never felt anything like how I felt next and I hope I never do again; I can only describe it as overwhelming growing feeling of hollowness, a vast expanding cavern of emptiness from the top down,

"She's grey, she is going to go"

No food for 24hrs, labour and blood loss makes for extreme light-headedness! I got back on the floor and opted for the injection of Syntometrine. 3 minutes later my placenta was delivered.

As my tear was repaired I laughed. You had just been weighed; 4.79kg 10lb 9oz, I couldn't believe it! So chunky, it just made me giggle! I knew you were going to be big; everyone kept saying what a 'neat bump', but I knew, just wasn't expecting 10lb 9!!

I was hungry, so hungry; I needed tea, biscuits and steak.

As I ate biscuits and drank tea on the sofa, and waited for the wonderful Nic to buy and cook steak I kept you close.

I wanted to preserve these precious new moments, keep them perfect, keep them as if they were in amber.

You made me a mum, thank you.