

Little ELE

Many, many moons ago there was an ancient Burmese (Thai) warrior.

He was the first to discover the attributes and strengths of a little beast of the jungle and he named her **ele** -meaning growing.

Once she was fully grown he named her elephant and she was the greatest, most feared, and relentless of warriors of the animal kingdom.

When I was a young child my elders most often referred to me as the little elephant. As a young girl, this was not a name that I embraced...until I discovered muay thai boran. Obviously I could not see what they in their wisdom could!

My brother often invited me to attend a muay thai session with him and when my shyness ran out of excuses, well his gentle persistence paid off.

When I got there, I was no longer Rhonda. I was **ELE**. Once a lost gentle beast who now discovered she had the ability to take on thousands of opponents, be used against army's and still be the only one left standing tall. Yes I have always been slow to anger but now when necessary, I will be furious, relentless and I will aim to make myself unstoppable. I have been challenged with countless life changing obstacles on my journey thus far, but knowing now that I am *ele*, has made me more head strong than ever.

Learning that it was a gift to be head strong, stubborn and STOMP my way through life is an gift given to me from muay thai.

In my training I was trained to use my head (trunk) in close contact fighting against both man and life.

To trample opponents with feet, and use legs whilst using the elbows (tusks). I was also trained to also hold an enemy at bay with my feet, then thrust blows on them with my head (trunk) and then impale them effortlessly with my elbows (tusks).

Training with All Stars had given me further appreciation that I have been blessed with a healthy body and full functioning limbs. Often this has been my driving force knowing that there are those that cannot physically participate in such a beautiful rich ancient art.

To Kyoshi Rod and all the instructors I initially trained under when I first started, my sincere gratitude.

Dai Sempai Teresa who has always been there to assist and offer me that vocal GRRR when my supplies are low, you are my female inspiration.

Sensei Steeve, my mentor, inspiration, the one who took me wandering from the jungles and made me see beyond my own personal limitations set for my self...The one who breathes oxygen onto my flame of passion I have for muay thai, thankyou seems like such an empty word in comparison to the gratitude and respect that I have for you.

Big brother, the shadow that lurks behind yours, the shadow occasionally off beat or facing the wrong way, well yes that's me and I look forward to many more years training under your guidance.

My family thank you to all of you. Especially my children who tell me that I 'rock' when I stumble or trip. And to my husband, you have put your own sporting career on hold so I can follow my passion, and I thank you so much.

Now I stand upon this hill and see the long spiralling journey behind me and I feel the warm sun upon my face. I smile with a sense of satisfaction and gratefulness for all that I have, and all that I've become. I ponder at the sight of the steep narrow path ahead of me, with all its valleys and swamps. I breathe. I breathe again. I now raise my trunk to the air and let out a huge bellow and trumpet. I stomp my right foot hard once, twice, and again.

Now I move forward, trunk raised for my next journey.

Yours in Thai,

The rumbling, trumpeting 'Ele'
Rhonda Nooroa 2010

Ssshh...Do you hear that sound? Run!!!! No it's not a stampede; it's just me, ELE!!!!!!

