

What have an African witchdoctor, two soap actresses and a Yorkshire businesswoman got in common? Read on to find out more

Amazing cures

Healer to the stars

By Carole Richardson

Deep down in the Zimbabwe bush, they've never heard of *Emmerdale* or *Hollyoaks*. Soap is something they wash their clothes with in buckets outside their mud huts. Back on the sets of some of our favourite programmes though, the local witchdoctor from remote Matopos Hills is gaining something of a celebrity reputation.

Roseanna (57), wouldn't have a clue who the actresses Deena Payne or Samantha Giles were. But thanks to Yorkshire businesswoman Les Robinson (57), who launched the Little Herbal company following a 'miraculous' chance meeting, they're all familiar with her natural remedies after Roseanna cured Les's crippling knee injury when conventional treatments failed.

A serious former pharmaceutical industry manager, Les first met Roseanna nine years ago during a trip to Zimbabwe with husband Glyn. Struggling to walk following a skiing injury that hadn't responded to surgery, painkillers or physiotherapy, their guide took her to Roseanna.

"I was sceptical but was so fed up of the constant pain I'd been in

'She needed to contact the spirits to ask what to use but they had a day off on Wednesdays'



A herbal cure called filsa helped stop *Hollyoaks* actress Samantha Giles' stage fright

for months, I decided anything was worth a try," recalls Les.

"It was a little bit daunting to meet this very tall proud warrior woman wearing furs, porcupine quills and snakes' teeth necklaces. But we did as she said and took our shoes off at the door of her mud hut before being invited to step on the floor polished with cow dung!"

Through their interpreter, Roseanna announced that she could cure Les but not that day. "Apparently she needed to contact the spirits to ask what she should use but they took their day off on Wednesday!"

Stifling their scepticism, the bemused pair returned the following day to discover that the spirits had indeed advised



Roseanna. Les was sent back to Camp with a strange tuber to boil in a tin can. The foul smelling liquid produced had to be applied twice daily, first to the good knee, then the bad.

After three days, the tuber had to be returned to Roseanna to bury where she'd dug it up. As the tuber rotted, her pain would leave.

A day after the first application, Les set off on a 14k walk in the Bush with Glyn. "It was a miracle. From that day, I have never had a problem with my knee," says Les, who began reading about other native plants.

Discovering a cream made from the sausage tree, said to cure skin conditions, she took it home.

After friends and relatives reported it had cured their eczema and long-standing psoriasis, the