



SOMETHING UNFATHOMABLE

by Vasudev Devadasan

Vasudev Devadasan is a first year student from Bangalore, India. There he previously attended The Valley School. These are his reflections on Brockwood after being here for a couple of months.

Brockwood. It's funny how that word's meaning has changed over the past few months in my mind. At first it was a distant, far off, insignificant sister school on some far off remote island. Then as I was invited for my prospective week, it became an exotic dreamland where anything was possible. I spent the weeks before my arrival constantly thinking about it; what I would do, where would I sleep, what the other people would be like, how cold it would be. But all those images and conceptions were shattered upon my arrival. Because Brockwood was so much more than anything I had envisioned.

On my first evening, I walked into the dining room where everyone was feasting and chattering, blissfully happy, even if the food was only mushroom soup. But the image was not unlike the picture at the end of each issue of the series of French comic books called *Asterix*. Over the next few weeks I learned why, and became a part of it. For Brockwood is not just a school. It is not just a community. It is not just a Krishnamurti centre. What it is—well that depends entirely on you, and what you

want to take away from this wonderful place.

As a student here, I quickly realized that at Brockwood we don't study, we learn; an important distinction that is often blurred. Here everything happens at once, at one corner of the sitting room, there could be a discussion on football tactics, while in still another corner, an argument on the latest fashion in shoes. Outside there could be a water fight, or a game of football, or a student who just needed a bit of peace and quite, or had decided to explore the beautiful grounds. And there will be others in the library, or in their own rooms listening to their favourite tunes. This I think represents the wonderfully diverse and expansive mixture of cultures we have at Brockwood, all working to enhance this place, which in turn enhances the experience for all the rest of us.

In few other places is the line between those who run a school and those who pass through it as blurred as it is here. And this is part of what gives Brockwood its distinctive feel. No one is more important, from the staff to the mature students to the students. From the shortest blade of grass on the south lawn, to Bill and Adrian, to the trustees, we are all Brockwood. And as we all contribute a little bit, we create something unfathomable that is beyond us all. Brockwood.

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PAPERLESS NEWS

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FRONT PAGE

Left: Vasudev Devadasan is a first year student from Bangalore, India.

Below: We would like to thank the following students and staff for helping direct the photo shoot on the front cover: Paloma Chamorro, Charline Sowa, Carole Lussi, Aloe

del Campo, Elvin Hunbatov, Xiao Pujol-Soliano Regueiro, James Withers, Judith Prendergast, Cyrus Borderie-Erickson, Lia Khan, Malena Halmer, Klara Becker, Sadia Abdullah, and Jennifer Kowalewski.



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“What then is the total responsibility of these schools? Surely they must be centres for the learning of a way of life which is not based on pleasure, on self-centred activities, but on the understanding of correct action, the depth and beauty of relationship, and the sacredness of a religious life. When the world around us is so utterly destructive and without meaning, these schools, these centres, must become places of light and wisdom. It is the responsibility of those who are in charge of these places to bring this about.”

“As this is urgent, excuses have no meaning. Either the centres are like a rock round which the waters of destruction flow, or they go with the current of decay. These places exist for the enlightenment of man.”

J. Krishnamurti
The Whole Movement of Life is Learning

EACH YEAR, EACH TERM, EACH CLASS

Adrian Sydenham, *Co-Principal*

The delight and excitement with which new and returning students arrived at Brockwood on September 2nd reminded us of the curious mix of good fortune and responsibility which accompany the educator's role. Although subject to the obvious pulls and pushes of modern culture, here, at least, were parents and students who were eager to try a different approach to education, and it was up to us to meet that challenge. Budgetary constraints, new staff, new mature students, the new buildings and the sudden prospect of a new football field, not to mention half a school's worth of new students, combined to give a feeling that this year was necessarily going to be very different from last, but would also provide a raft of perhaps unexpected challenges.

Between Arrivals Day on September 2nd and the start of regular classes on September 12th, we arranged a number of activities designed to help new and returning students get to know each other and 'gel' together, these included: two whole-school walks of several hours each, the first of these in superb weather; an informal musical evening; fruit harvesting and food preparation; folk dancing; and various group games designed to help with name-learning and the dissolution of any residual shyness and homesickness. As well as beginning the process of choosing their programmes for the year, much new information had to be imparted in those first few days through a series of 'explore' groups and floor or school meetings. Each morning these latter included a more formal element of Inquiry, in which students and staff, first collectively and then in small groups, were posed a series of questions relating to the

intentions of the school. The overall theme was based on the awakening of intelligence, and the questions were designed to encourage a tentative exploration of what that might actually mean.

The first weeks of classes have now passed, relatively uneventfully, although somewhat fraught for the Timetable Group as students and teachers threshed and sifted their subject priorities and levels. A majority of students are, at first, eager to take on more than will actually fit into the hours in a day, and we continue to provide considerable variety across the board of hands-on, exam and non-exam subjects, both conventional and alternative, as well as sporting and musical options. Although one-on-one sessions with our non-residential teachers are proving too luxurious to maintain without a sharing of costs between school and parents, class sizes remain relatively small, between one and twelve.

Measured conventionally, this year's examination results showed a marked improvement over recent years. Within reason, and with occasional advice to individuals and their parents,

depending of course on their unique circumstances, we continue to allow students to be the chief arbitrators of their decision to enter for exams. Apart from those students who are more or less in age- and exam-level conformity with their peers in other schools, this freedom is particularly important, as some may be re-entering the examination system after a long break, may have only limited time at Brockwood available to them, and for some others just sitting an examination may itself present a useful emotional as much as an academic challenge.



On the first day of the new academic year staff and mature students line up to greet all the students as they file past.

PAVILIONS PROJECT



THE PAVILIONS PONDERED

Mike Davies, *Construction Manager*

The site has been cleared and the construction of the seven new boarding pavilions at Brockwood is about to begin. This is the biggest building project undertaken at

Brockwood for many years, so we have asked Construction Manager, Mike Davies, to provide us with regular updates, via the School Blog (blog.brockwood.org.uk) and The Brockwood Observer, on different aspects of the design and construction of these new homes for Brockwood staff and students.

In order to talk about sustainability, we should first examine what we mean by the word “sustainable”, in relation to construction. A sustainable development could be seen as one that meets a current need without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. In order to achieve this goal then, it would seem that we need to take care in selecting materials from renewable resources so that these same resources will still be around in the future. But is this enough? Don't we also have a responsibility ‘when not compromising the ability of future generations’ to ensure that development now, does not pollute the environment, either through the manufacture of building materials or by way of construction methods and operation of the building over time?

With the Pavilions Project, Brockwood Park School set

out from the very beginning with sustainability in mind, choosing to appoint Architects Roderick James Architects LLP with a track record in sustainable development. Roderick James was a founding member of the Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT) in Machynlleth, Wales and now runs a practice that designs buildings that are made with highly insulated ‘Green Oak’ frames. Timber is a renewable resource when it comes from managed sources.

Forests act as carbon sinks – especially when the trees are young – they take in more CO₂ from the atmosphere than they release. When you use timber from a managed forest for construction, you are not only storing carbon in the felled wood, you are, by cutting down the trees and planting regular replacements, providing an opportunity for the forest to regenerate and store more carbon.

In our case, the green oak comes from managed forests in Northern France. Sourcing the wood from this location involves less transport costs than using English Oak and the French foresters supply from trees within 100km of their production facilities. Carpenter Oak Ltd, who are making the oak frames in Devon, use around 600 cubic metres of oak each year. At any one time, there are approximately 700,000,000 cubic metres of standing oak growing in France...600 cubic metres represent a tiny fraction of the natural regrowth that would occur in these forests in just one day. Overall, the French oak

forests grow by about 2% annually, with a demand for about 1% of their total capacity. The Pavilions oak frames will use about 100 cubic metres of oak or approximately 350 trees. Carpenter Oak Ltd are offering Brockwood 10 times that number of oak seedlings. Perhaps we could think about how many we could realistically plant with the remainder being planted back in the sustainable French forests. For regular news and photos on the pavilion project, please go to <http://blog.brockwood.org.uk/>



The removal of the garages and hedges has opened a significant amount of space, which is about to be filled with the construction of much needed housing.

OUR ONLINE ONGOING NARRATIVE: THE BROCKWOOD BLOG

There is no need to wait for the twice-yearly Brockwood Observer any more! You can read more by connecting online. Indeed why not connect to the Brockwood blog regularly to get the latest news? You can access the Blog from the main school webpage at www.brockwood.org.uk or you can directly get to it at <http://blog.brockwood.org.uk/> There you will find a visually appealing, interactive, site that allows you not only to get the freshest news but to leave comments as well as see old and new pictures in our galleries. Here are some recent Blog posts as examples of what you will find there:



THOUGHTS

by Maryam Benoit, student

I can feel the spongy grass soaked in water under the skin of my bare feet. The leaves dropping towards the earth as water droplet's rush down and finally settle on blades of green grass. I can feel all of this, the sensation I get in my feet on the grass, and the way my skin freezes as my body is wet and the cold northern winds surround me, but I am really inside a warm English mansion, protected from the water falling from the sky while experience brings memories back, so vivid and crisp and clear that the feeling becomes alive.



DISCOVERING ONESELF

by Ahmed Lelamo, mature student from Canada

At Brockwood the environment is such that people and behaviour that make for a hostile atmosphere simply don't seem to exist. It leaves one with no apparent good reason to continue the defensive mechanisms that are so characteristic of life in the big city. Therefore one is left face-to-face with one's own reactions and behavior. This can be scary, but I find it to be one of the only ways for one to reach some kind of maturity in life: honest and direct perception of oneself. Indeed, among many of the other benefits of living at Brockwood, it is an 'ideal' environment for the process of discovering oneself.



OF SHEEP AND DIALOGUES, BOOKS AND CATALOGUES

by Usha Mukunda, visiting staff member from India

I dreamt I was in Brockwood again and I was—after 16 years. What changes might I find in the place and in me? Would I still have the energy and the ability to act, interact, relate, and do anything meaningful in the library? Random thoughts like these kept arising in my mind as I prepared to leave Bangalore for Brockwood. But there was also an eagerness to challenge myself, to leave my comfort zone and see how I could function in a different place.

View our online blog for complete articles on this page at:
<http://blog.brockwood.org.uk/>

FIRST TERM REFLECTION



Catharine, Age 18, Spain

spiders

You can learn a lot from spiders, really.
 First, there was Spider Woman who made
 Earth and the tribes
 And, more recently, following Plato,
 We've all been connected to the World Wide Web.

No kidding, though, spiders are incredible.
 They work all night to build a lace-world in your garden
 And, when you walk right through it,
 They never turn a hair.

Adamantly, and with no pleading for redress,
 They carry on as if nothing had happened,
 They build again from the first strand.

I admire them intensely, actually.
 If anybody lives in the moment, they do;
 And, of course, they've been here longer than we have—
 As long as scorpions and much longer than dinosaurs.

I have a hunch, they are very wise:
 They know how to wait, to bide their time.
 Bees, flies and butterflies are silly by comparison;
 They flutter to extinction in Spider's net
 While Spider waits, watches and waits.
 Spider is a hunter and he lives in your house.

One day, when we have destroyed everything
 And there's nothing left but ashes and waste,
 Spider will emerge and do his war-dance;
 He will triumph as only a warrior can.

Really, you learn a lot from spiders.

Stephen Smith: 29 September 2010

Runu Age 18, India

Below: Students participate in an Aesthesis exercise during Autumn Week, which is part of a four-day workshop series.





haikus

Inhaling fresh air
Mysterious smells moving around:
It is the night.

A floating leaf falls,
Twisting and twirling from the sky,
Dancing with the sun.

In the dark, distance.
A faint pale light glows softly
From the black windows.

Coco Age 14, England

Left: Betsy Dwek admires her
hand bound book constructed
during a book-binding workshop
held during Autumn Week.

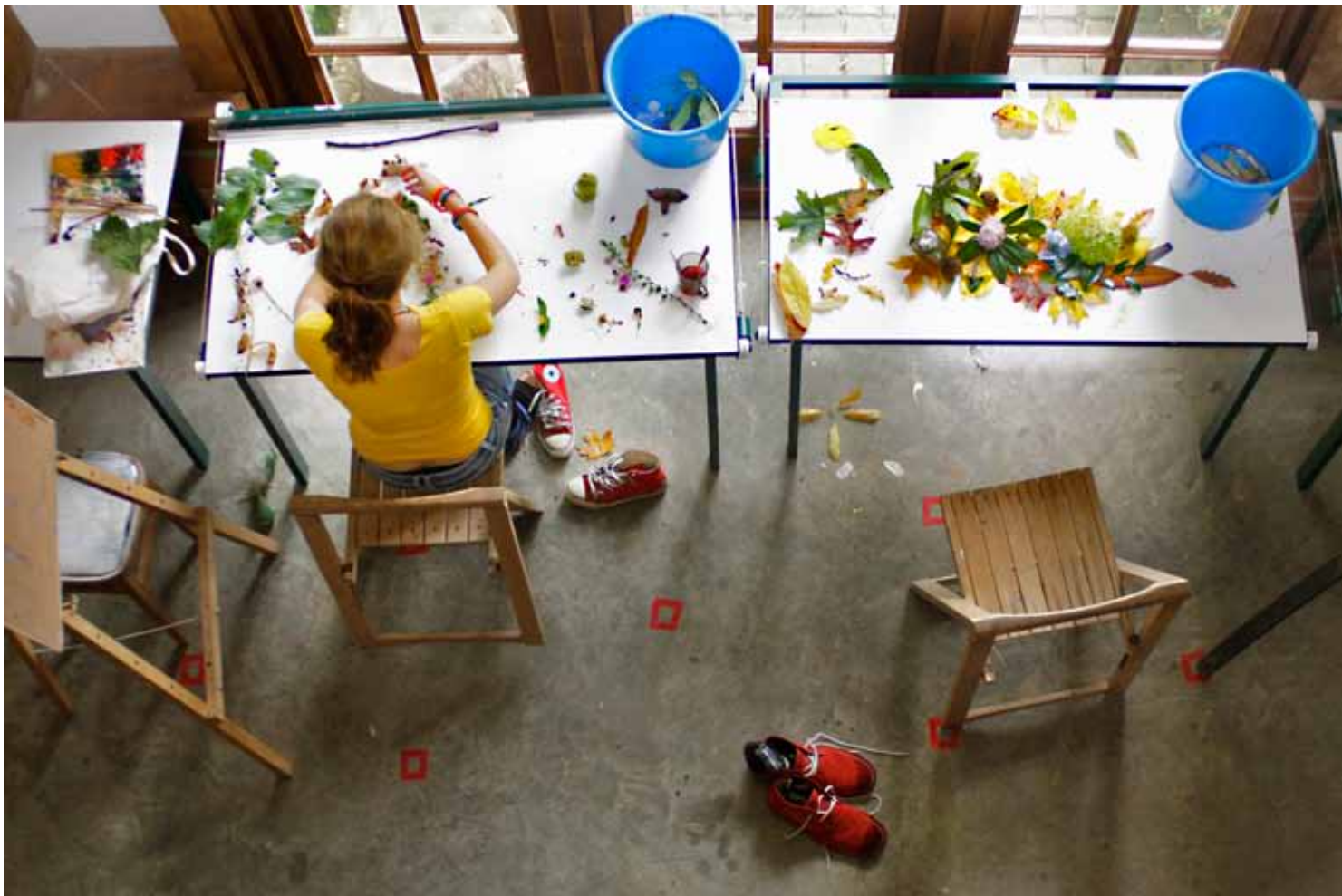
The day is wet
The sky is persistently grey
People are out there walking.

The sound is there,
The wind is blowing hard
People are inside.

My days are wet and cold,
But if only I could see the sun.
Magic, it's here!

Louis, Age 16, France

Below: Lauren Kirkpatrick arranges a still-life setting after having gathered dried leaves and twigs from the Grove.



PAST & PRESENT

JIM FOWLER:
A TRIBUTEStephen Smith, *Staff*

It was just like Jim to die at 10:20 a.m. on Hallowe'en—as if his death were the beginning of a new day—for, if anyone embodied Spirit, Jim did. I can see him saddling a celestial horse and riding on cloud-mountains as I think about him now; I can hear him calling back to us: “Come on, hurry up!” For, like most Sagittarians, Jim was impatient.

I first met him in December 1973 on a Vipassana Meditation retreat in Devon. Someone pointed him out to me as the “yoga teacher at Brockwood Park” and, on further inquiry, this proved to be the case. A visit to Brockwood followed in January—I remember his describing it as “bristling with problems”—and, to cut a long story short, I joined him as a staff member in September 1975. He was in charge of local publicity for the Krishnamurti Gathering and, since I owned a car, he pressed me into service. We hurtled through town and country, he in a dark suit, stopping only to put up notices in teashops, bookshops, libraries, etc. “Marvellous!” he would say when told there was no charge.

Being on the move was central to Jim’s life. He had travelled extensively as a young man, working as an engineer in a number of Arab countries. He was also among the first—perhaps his party was the first—to climb Mount Kilimanjaro in Kenya. He had kept a diary of the expedition, which he lent me: it made fascinating reading. By this time, however, his mind and life had turned from mundane matters to the quest for truth. He became a member of a Gurdjieff group whose discipline he followed for some time, then rejected, partly—as he told me—because group members had to stay exclusive and not mix and mingle with “ordinary folk”.

He got wind of the fact that Brockwood was starting but was told by the principal, Dorothy Simmons, that the place wasn’t ready yet. In characteristic fashion, he set forth for India where he spent four years at Rishi Valley School. It was there that he developed the interest in folk dancing which he brought with him when he joined Brockwood (early 70s) and which, along with horse riding and bee keeping, were his signature activities while he was here. Teaching—ESL and Technical Drawing—he regarded as a means to an end: he now had access to Krishnamurti. This he



Jim teaching technical drawing in the Study.

valued, though summer still found him riding the fields and downs of Hampshire, where he was affectionately known as “the galloping gourmet”, rather than attending the Saanen Gathering. He was what you might call a “spiritual all-rounder”.

Another thing about Jim: he never had any money. Perhaps for this reason, he is the only person ever to receive a pension directly from KFT. At successive trustees’ meetings his name would be mentioned, with an “O, yes, there’s the — pounds for Jim Fowler.” For all that, he sometimes complained of his luck though, on reflection, I think it fairer to say that he thought he had to work for everything he got: though he enjoyed life and was at ease, there were no hand-outs.

After he left Brockwood he moved west, joining the Sharpham Community in Devon. But, really, he had had enough of communities, preferring to rent a caravan in a field rather than spend his time with the “India returned”. Until the recent move to a care home it was here that he spent the summer months, setting off, come October, for low-cost retreats in sunnier climes. Four of the places he visited were: Egypt, Mallorca, Andalusia and California (including Baja California). He could have written a book on budget retreats-in-the-sun, as he could have written one on the tea-rooms of Hampshire.

He did, in fact, write a book, focusing on the Christian mystics to whom he had “gone back”, so he told me. The last time I saw him was at the Centre at Brockwood in the spring of 2008. He looked fine and healthy with his Father-Christmas beard; he had been working as a guest helper. When I told him that, as a long-serving staff member, he could stay at the Centre for a week free of charge, he said, “Really?!” with that innocent, boyish enthusiasm which kept him fresh and in love with life.

So, Jim, it’s a new day and we’re saddling up. And the Great Spirit welcomes you as we say good-bye.



TEACHING THE TEACHERS

Clive Gray, *Staff*

From the 26th of July to the 8th of August we had Gopal Krishnamurthy and Karen Hesli at Brockwood Park to facilitate a Teaching Academy with the themes Re-envisioning Education and The Art, Science and Craft of Teaching and Learning. Over thirty people came over one or both weeks to explore what education and teaching actually mean. Many of the participants came into contact with Krishnamurti's writings for the first time.

It is fair to say that the daily reading of K and the sessions (supported by Steven Smith and Colin Foster) had a strong impact on the way the participants approached education. We moved away from the traditional teacher/student scenario and found that there was a learning environment that could only be developed fully if all involved (the teacher and student) were prepared to listen with open minds and be prepared to examine their conditioning in that moment. Carvalho and I, who were participants from the school, took part in all sessions and discovered that the themes of the Academy were very close to our daily life and work at Brockwood. The very first activity was to formulate your 'burning question'. This burning question was then woven into a learning environment and eventually culminated in a 'lesson' that each participant then gave at the end of the week. In most cases this teaching/learning session went to the very heart of what a participant felt was extremely important in her/his life and could only take place after a lot of soul searching in an atmosphere of trust.

I am sure all participants had been through a powerful learning experience by the time they went home. Angelica Gruber, from Austria, who is a consultant for the Austrian government on education has now suggested to them that all teacher training in Austria use the same approach she experienced at the Teaching Academy.

If you are interested in this kind of approach to learning, you are welcome to apply to join the next Academy at Brockwood Park which will be taking place in July 2011. For further details contact us via: admin@brockwood.org.uk



Participants in week one of the Teaching Academy.

THE KITCHEN SPECIAL



kitchen
lens

suspended

hand

reflection

THE BOWL OF LIFE

The Kitchen Team

Being the source of vitality pulsating through the school, the **Kitchen** feeds life with warmth and affection. When the food is served and looking appealing with mouth watering smells filling the air, the tension and challenges that arise in the preparation can only be seen by the sensitive **lens**. Behind the beautifully cared for food lie the struggles and hard work of a full kitchen team; with its conflicts, time pressures, mood swings and every other issue that might arise from within each individual. The responsibility to face any given challenge is **suspended** in the air waiting for somebody to take it in their **hands**. When challenges are not met adequately the atmosphere can be one of frustration and confusion. However, if it is taken with the spirit of responsibility and love, the kitchen can be a place where creativity, playfulness and learning flourish through the **reflection** of oneself in relationship. Whatever it might be there is no escape from the **bowl** of life.



Above: Dionis Comas and Sarai Alons.

Sarai Alons is our new school cook. Together with the excellent team whom she likes to say she learns from as much as she leads, she provides the community with wholesome, nutritious and delicious food. The kitchen team does this with such ease that it belies the reality of the stress that comes with preparing day-to-day such high quality meals for a little over 100 people. Certainly it is not a stress-free environment, but they manage to create an atmosphere that creatively questions such pressure and in so doing the kitchen becomes a place that is even inviting. Indicative of this is the fact that recently a group of students christened it the "Kitchen of Love". Here is one of the many recipes we are lucky to enjoy on a daily basis:

RECIPE: ROSEMARY FOCACCIA

Mmmmm baking bread. I love it, just as much as I love eating fresh bread! And there are always so many happy faces when the bread comes out of the oven and the warm and homely smell travels through the kitchen, into the corridors and to the dining hall of Brockwood. Willy, one of the students, provides us with a weekly supply of wonderful homemade sourdough bread. We also make our own raisin and cinnamon tea bread. Next to that I like making fresh bread to complement the soups we often have for dinner. This lovely bread is fairly simple to make and it won't take any effort to eat it... you'll see. The great thing is that you can very easily make this bread in bigger quantities, ideal for a place like Brockwood.

For two loaves you need:

- 300 gr brown bread flour
- 350 gr white bread flour
- 450 ml lukewarm water *
- 6 tablespoons of olive oil
- 2 teaspoons of salt
- 1 1/2 tablespoons of active dry yeast
- coarse sea salt for on top
- 3 tablespoons of finely chopped fresh rosemary

* Try to feel for yourself if the dough needs more or less water, if it is sticky, you have used too much water, so add a bit more flour. If the dough is hard and difficult to knead, you want to add a bit more water. Ideally the dough should be supple and soft to the touch.



Begin with mixing the brown and white flour together with the chopped rosemary in a bowl. Then, add the yeast, the salt, about 1/3 of the water and the olive oil. Try to mix the flour and the water slowly together with your hands and form it into a coherent dough by adding more water bit by bit at a time. Once all the ingredients have come together, you can turn the dough onto a floured work surface and knead it for several minutes until it is smooth and elastic. Now put the dough back in the bowl and let it rise in a warm place for about 1 hour, or until it has doubled in size. Punch the dough down and let it rise for another 40 minutes (if you want to have the bread ready sooner, you can omit this second rising).

Now you can divide the dough into two balls and flatten each ball into a long rectangular shape. Place the loaves on an oiled baking tray and brush the top with olive oil. Sprinkle the coarse sea salt on top and gently push it into the dough with the palms of your hands. Let the loaves rise again for 20 minutes to half an hour and preheat the oven to 200 Celsius in the meantime. Bake the focaccia for 25 to 30 minutes until it is lightly browned on top and bottom. The bread is best eaten fresh from the oven, but it keeps well for a day or so. Enjoy!

ALUMNI NEWS

LONDON CALLING: alumni reconnecting

Struggling with train delays and tube cancellations, negotiating bumper-to-bumper traffic and avoiding the press of Saturday shoppers, were just some of the challenges facing around fifty people who converged on a small room in the London School of Oriental and African Studies, on November 13th. They came from all over the UK and beyond and had only one thing in common: Brockwood. Spanning the forty years plus of the School's life the alumni who gathered met old friends, made new ones, shared stories and listened to an update on School life given by Co-Principal, Bill Taylor and the new School Development and Alumni Officer, Lionel Claris (himself a former student). The gathering ended with a minute of silence in memory of former Brockwood teacher, Jim Fowler, who died recently. Then, after photographs and three convivial hours, everyone had to be chased from the room, thirty to head for a restaurant which was awaiting them and the rest to disappear into the winter's night, all a bit warmer on the inside for the time spent together.

We would like to thank alumna Dr. Shabnum Tejani for her kind assistance with the London event including arranging the use of facilities at SOAS.

alumni events 2011

New York City – early April
date, time, venue to be announced
Co-ordinator: Lauren Russell Geskos
Email: geskos@gmail.com

Berlin – Saturday, 14th May
time, venue to be announced
Co-ordinator: Dagmar Albrecht
Email: dagmar.albrecht@googlemail.com
Mobile: 0049-(0)-1791162192

Contact alumni@brockwood.org.uk if you would like to help organise an alumni event in your city.

For more photos of those who attended the London event visit <http://blog.brockwood.org.uk/>

PARTICIPANTS

Adam Black	Maryam Benoit
Adam Ormes Court	Maya Henebry
Alan Rowlands	Melody Haller
Alastair Walker	Mike Maher
Anna Gueldenhaupt	Oriel Winslow
Anna Sofat	Pablo Severin
Anne Greene	Peter Rodwell
Anuruddha Jaithirtha	Prach Boondiskulchok
Bill Taylor	Robbie Fletcher
Catharine Haitzmann	Sadia Abdullah
Denis Estevez	Sakkar Tejani
Dorian Lovett	Seke Chimutengwende
Elizabeth Martin	Shabnum Tejani
Eva Segou	Shakuntala Narayan
Fazila Benoit	Shekhar Pula
Frances Orde	Slava Sviridovs
Jenna Sherry	Stephen Smith
Jonas Lindner	Suzana Radovic
Ketan Shah	Tatyana Von Boettinger
Leila Taylor	Thomas Fournil
Lindy Allison	Valentin Gerlier
Lionel Claris	Wendy Smith
Loic Lopez	Yair Fromer
Louis Debras	Yannick Benoit
Lucy Smith	



SETTING THE COURSE

Wolfgang Dumas, *alumnus*, (1970-1972)

I left Brockwood Park in 1972 at the age of 16 having been there for two years. Looking back now at the age of 54 and asking myself what influenced me the most, I can honestly say that the biggest impact on me was made by my fellow students - mostly good, only occasionally not so good, but at least these were experiences in a safe environment. Although I wasn't aware of it at the time, I now realize the importance of some of our staff members, and I was of course influenced by the whole atmosphere—or, why not say the spirit of Brockwood Park.



That spirit was based on Krishnamurti's talks and presence and on the effort of all of us trying to put it into practice. I remember a number of controversial Sunday morning school meetings (and student meetings with a cry of "everything must change") about such issues as long hair - remember the sixties!, drugs, sex, general behavior i.e. bedtime, the level of noise after 10.30 p.m. and what is actually meant by being serious about living together in Brockwood Park. Only later did I realize how this spirit of enquiring, discussing and finding things out shaped me and how luxurious in comparison to the "outside world" such an environment is.

I have always felt that Brockwood has set the course of my interests in Psychology and the humanities. Also my approach to life remained one of questioning and finding out rather than accepting given authority. My attitude persisted to be cooperative rather than self-centered, ready to work in a team rather than on my own and I value deep and meaningful relationships. Brockwood also facilitated an already existing passion for music, literature and nature. These interests have never left me since, although at times professional and family life takes up all my energy. With my teenage daughters, I still find myself discussing the same questions as in the early seventies. I must admit that some of them have not been answered (especially the big ones, like death, meaning of life?) but I hope I have come to accept that.

Leaving Brockwood was sad. I went back to live with my family in Berlin going to State School – initially a rather shocking and bewildering experience. The atmosphere there, although not all bad, was very different from Brockwood with its morning and school meetings and the discussions with K.. I then studied, receiving an M. A. in Clinical Psychology. I am also a trained Psychotherapist (Client Centered & Cognitive Behavioral) licensed to Practice in Germany, Switzerland and the UK. I have special training in Pain Psychology and Biofeedback Therapy and I give lectures, supervise colleagues and train students. Most of all I accompany patients through the process of clarifying their problems and changing beliefs, thinking patterns and behaviour, often confronted with problems that we already discussed back then, and trying to initiate that spirit mentioned above.

My wife and I moved to Manchester in 1995 to work at the Manchester & Salford Pain Centre. Our daughters Sara and Anna were born there. In 2004 we moved to Lucerne and I am now Head of Pain Psychology in the biggest Pain Centre of Switzerland. We enjoy hikes in the Alps, skiing and being close to Italy, France and Germany where we often visit friends and family.

I hope Brockwood will always find the energy to keep going and be aware of the special and valuable opportunities it has. Something one doesn't always realize in everyday school life.

RETURNING & RECONNECTING

LIFELONG LEARNING:
A BROCKWOOD EDUCATION

*L*ionel Claris, a Brockwood Student from 1996-2000, has returned as a teacher of French, English and Study Skills and to assist as school development and alumni officer. Here he reflects on his journey and what it means to be back.

I grew up in France until the age of 16 when I came to Brockwood as a student. I did so not only because I was dissatisfied with the rigidity and lack of meaning of the French educational system, but also because of my growing passion for K's teachings and especially his insights on education. I was curious about how people inspired by such wisdom would come together and what they would be able to accomplish.

After four empowering years I chose to move to the US and get my BA at Hampshire College because of the opportunity there to design my own major, work closely with faculty members and thus continue to be in charge of my education. There I combined the study of philosophy, political science, and education. I then went on to get a master's degree in education and teaching from Smith College where I wrote a master's thesis on the relationality of learning. In many ways I carried the deep space for lifelong inner reflection and learning I first found at Brockwood wherever life took me.

After graduating, I became an education consultant, taking my first job as Associate Education Researcher at Smith College for the Liberative Pedagogies Project at the Picker Engineering Program. At the same time, I gained over 5 years of teaching experience in humanities subjects from elementary school to university level, most notably in inner city Springfield, MA where I was also an Assessment Director. There I tried to apply my understanding of K's teachings in a context that was the antithesis of Brockwood: urban, crowded, drugs and gang-related violence. Well, a perfect place really to test one's commitment to K's revolutionary ideas about education.

I am a passionate advocate for alternative ways of thinking about learning. Today my reflections on education gravitate around the insight that typically the learning process offered to students is limited to a more or less imposed accumulation of knowledge. This knowledge, if it is not challenged, passes as Truth – something to be accepted and followed, rather than something constructed that must be deconstructed and meaningfully re-appropriated.

I always knew I would return and help make a difference at Brockwood but it had to be at the right time. I am very happy to be back as a teacher, eager to continue to explore K's intent for the school with students and staff, as well as in my work as development & alumni officer. I had imagined being back after ten years would at first naturally feel like a bit of a culture shock. However, I was seamlessly made to feel at home straight away. I was happy to see that being so welcomed from the moment one arrives is still one of Brockwood's many exceptional hallmarks.

BROCKWOOD PARK SCHOOL

Founded by J. Krishnamurti

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THE ONLINE ALUMNI DIRECTORY

HELP US HELP YOU TO NETWORK AND RECONNECT WITH OLD FRIENDS!

As former students or staff you can reconnect with old friends as well as network with new ones by registering in the Alumni Directory. You may do so by going to:

http://www.brockwood.org.uk/directory_registration.php

The Brockwood Alumni Directory is password protected, and the shared information is only available to other Alumni. The registration process has only a few mandatory fields; now including 'your occupation', which is important to enable work related networking.

If you had already entered your information, make sure you keep it updated.

The Directory is a great resource; thank you for helping us help you.

BURSARIES & LEGACIES

Brockwood Park School has thrived for over 40 years as a unique centre of learning offering an integrated education in a caring environment. In order for this to continue we rely on your donations for bursaries, and legacies and *your contribution makes a real difference.*

Bursaries: Brockwood keeps fees relatively low to ensure as many students as possible can benefit from being here. In fact, our fees are around £4,000 less than the average fees for independent secondary boarding schools in Britain. However, the fees are still more than many deserving students can afford. Every donation to The Bursary Fund, big or small, is used directly for the benefit of good students who could not otherwise afford to be here.

Every year we give about £95,000 in bursaries. Usually more than one-third of our students benefit from this. The value of your donation for The Bursary Fund can be doubled by marking it 'For the AG Matching Fund', which will match total donations thus marked in any one year up to a total of £10,000.

We carefully assess each student's needs before awarding bursaries. If you wish to sponsor a particular

student, or students, we can arrange this if you let us know his or her name. In certain cases we can also let you know some of the background of students who need financial assistance. If you wish to support one of them, simply e-mail us at admin@brockwood.org.uk and write 'Sponsorship' in the subject line.

Legacies: You may wish to name Brockwood Park School as a beneficiary in your Will. Legacies have made a great difference in helping Brockwood fulfil its intentions, and we hope this form of generosity will continue. Indeed, we would have been unable to embark on our exciting new Pavilion Project had it not been for several generous legacies

If you would like to support the work of Brockwood through a donation, however small, or with a legacy, please get in touch. You can also securely donate directly to the Bursary Fund through Paypal here: http://www.brockwood.org.uk/supporting_brockwood.html Finally, If you are a UK taxpayer please complete a Gift Aid form as we can then claim 28p for every £1 you give at no extra cost to you. American taxpayers can obtain tax credit by donating through The American Fund for Charities. For details: admin@brockwood.org.uk. Your generosity is not taken for granted. We are very grateful.

BROCKWOOD IN BRIEF



DESIKACHAR

At the start of the school year we had the privilege of having an honoured guest at the school. Sri TKV Desikachar visited us to give students

and staff a talk about his experience of teaching Yoga and about his time with Krishnamurti. We also witnessed the power of his chanting and there was a question and answer session. Desikachar is the leading authority in the world of Yoga, and lives and teaches in Chennai at the Krishnamacharya Yoga Mandiram. He continues to propagate the teachings of his father, the legendary Krishnamacharya who brought Yoga to the West.



SOFA SO GOOD

Returning to your old school for three weeks during the summer and spending most of your time measuring, cutting and sewing is not everyone's idea of a holiday. However former student, Linda Sigal, did just this, travelling from Portugal and volunteering her expertise and time as an interior decorator and upholsterer to help us completely recover one sofa and repair four others. She assured us she had a good time in the process and we can confirm that Brockwood life is all the more comfortable for her contribution.



'SECOND-HALF UPHILL' DAYS ARE GONE!

As many of you will know, the football field at Brockwood was basically a bit of the Parkland that had been fenced off. The same coarse grasses that lay beyond the fence could be found within. The moles knew no boundaries and over the years their activity had caused a lunar landscape of bumps that was dangerous to play on. The field sloped down sharply at the south-eastern end towards a large copper beech tree. The playing area was irregularly shaped and when we measured it we found that the goal posts were not opposite each other.

All this has been rectified thanks to the initiative of Derek Hook who very generously provided a large donation to redo the pitch, and by Tahir Gozel who also generously matched his donation. Work started at the beginning of September. The field was levelled, raised at the southern end where it sloped away and had drainage put in. At the end of October the pitch was seeded, rather late in the day it must be said, but despite two heavy frosts it seems to be greening up nicely, and it looks likely that by spring of next year the pitch will be ready to play on.

In addition to this work we also decided to extend the length of the pitch at the northern end and to put rabbit fencing around the whole area. This work has cost an extra £3000.00 and we are still looking for funding to cover this amount. So, if anyone would like to achieve immortality by becoming a sponsor of our brand new football pitch, please don't hesitate to send a donation. Large or small, it will be gratefully received, and you may even be invited to come along and kick a ball around!

