



FROM BELFAST TO BROCKWOOD AND BACK

Carla Stronge (née Mercer), *Alumna 1996-99*

As a sixteen year old rebellious girl from Belfast, Northern Ireland, I left home to go to Brockwood because I was smitten with the idea of such an unconventional place. I sought an escape from the mundane; I craved independence and freedom—and Brockwood certainly let me have it, but in a totally different way from what I would ever have imagined.

What a culture shock I had. Coming from somewhere where I had experienced very little multiculturalism to somewhere that had so many nationalities from so many different walks of life was like all my Christmases came at once. And that was what Brockwood was like for me. Everyday I lived there, every person I met there, was a surprise that made me question everything I thought I knew or believed.

It was a time of exploration and discovery as is anyone's teenage years, but it was the safest and most special place for these things. It was my refuge at such a naturally tumultuous stage of life when both questioning and confusion as to what to do with one's self, one's life, added to each other in that particular rite of passage. I developed the most amazing friendships, and met staff members who

truly shaped my life. I felt special there and listened to. The most important skills I learnt were to do with emotional intelligence, communication and inner confidence.

It was a creative space where I could express myself in a way I couldn't in my previous life and school. I could constantly challenge myself; I could vocalise my thoughts and ideas; I could be a leader; I could make short films; I could chair a creative writing group. I could do anything I wanted. And I left that way, feeling anything was possible if I applied myself and if I truly wanted it.

In my final year I secured a place on the best practical filmmaking degree course in London, much of which I warrant to coming from this unique alternative school that everyone wanted to hear about. Having lived with so many different types of people at Brockwood, I found it easy to meet and work with new people. I had the ability to meet anyone and find some level on which to connect with them.

After six years in London, because of a family illness, it was time to go home for a while, just as my career in London was beginning to take off. Everyone thought I was mad, but it was very much a case of right place at the right time, and within two years of moving home for a

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From Belfast to Brockwood and Back

break, I had set up my own business and bought my own home—two things I thought were years away in terms of any life plan!

The business I set up is an extras agency for film and television productions (www.extrasni.com) that are made in Northern



Carla Stronge (née Mercer)

Ireland, which is a current hotbed for filming. Last year we provided employment for over 2,000 people and generated over half a million in income for our extras. We've been going for five years now, working with the BBC, Channel 4, Universal and HBO amongst others. Then, two years ago, I was given the opportunity by HBO to move into casting local actors, which I love. As Casting Director, I have just completed my first five-part BBC drama, which will be aired later this year.

Last year I married my childhood sweetheart, and now we're lucky to have an amazing little three-year-old girl called Evie, with another one on the way. Running your own business and having a family presents its own challenges, as a woman and a mother, on a path I have been trying to forge since the birth of my first child. Finally, I believe I am beginning to get somewhere and build on some of the foundations Brockwood laid for me. They not only grounded me so that I don't get swallowed whole by the often crazy and ridiculous industry I work in—where many sacrifice everything for their careers—but they also helped me balance the energy I pour into my work with the energy I pour into nourishing and cherishing my relationships with those around me and with myself.

FRONT PAGE PHOTOGRAPH:

"Students on the South Lawn"

Photographer: Petter Goldstine.



Julie Bianchi Gray

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AN INSPECTOR CALLS

Adrian Sydenham & Bill Taylor, Co-Principals

During early March this year Brockwood was visited by a team of three government inspectors. As an international school deliberately cultivating wide diversity and with rather unusual founding intentions, Brockwood does not fit easily into the conventional British mould of independent schools. Nevertheless, we are subject to the regular inspection routine common to all state and independent schools in this country, by which government authorization to operate is conferred. Although accepted by natives as the inevitable cultural norm in this small part of Europe, it may appear more daunting and even intrusive by comparison with what happens in other countries.

Generally, with some hints as to possible areas of improvement, the inspectors were pleased with what they observed in the school, both in terms of classroom teaching and student behaviour, as they wrote in the report: *"The school provides its pupils with a good quality of education and enables them to leave the school as accomplished individuals. The quality of the curriculum and teaching are good overall throughout the school and pupils of all ages make good progress. The provision made for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Relationships between adults and pupils are excellent, both in school and in the boarding provision and pupils' behaviour is outstanding."*

The inspectors were sensitive to the unusual nature of Brockwood, and were particularly impressed by the genuine



Petter Goldstine

concern and care students exhibited for conservation and the world's ecology. They also noted the high level of awareness students exhibited for moral, social and political issues and the many opportunities they had to discuss these within the school. On several occasions the lead inspector commented to us on the outstanding behaviour and character of the pupils and they were struck by the way staff and students "...worked together in completing jobs around the school and both greatly appreciate the humour and commitment with which these tasks are completed. The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. They are extremely polite and courteous to staff, visitors and one another and demonstrate very positive attitudes to learning."

The chief concerns of the inspectors were two-fold. Firstly they wanted to see an improvement to the obligatory paperwork involved whenever employees and proprietors are working in close proximity to children: though our Mature Students, who attend Brockwood from around the world, all come with references and a police check from their own country, we are now required to carry one out for them in the UK as well. Secondly, they wished to see an improvement in our Infirmary facilities. Happily this observation coincides with the construction of our new Pavilions providing us with more space at Brockwood to make the necessary changes.



Petter Goldstine



The full Ofsted report can be seen through our homepage: www.brockwood.org.uk

BROCKWOOD IN INDIA

OUR INDIAN ADVENTURE

Philip Euteneuer, *Student*

The view towards Bhutan

Three months have already passed since nine of us left Brockwood for India. Finally, the sun has caught up with us at Brockwood and makes memories of the departure day and the following weeks fresh. It seems like only yesterday that we arrived in Holumba Haven, our home in northern India for three weeks, where we met Ashna and Brian, who were to be our tutors, guides, fellow students and friends, and their young son Malu. I was asked to give a small insight into our Indian adventure, and though I will do my best, there are no words that can be written, nor brush strokes laid on canvas, nor pictures taken by cameras, that can describe what we all felt or experienced during the 2012 Kalimpong Academy (Kalimpong being the city we were staying close to).

After the flight from Heathrow to Delhi, the shorter flight from Delhi to Baghdogra and the car ride from Baghdogra to Kalimpong, we eventually found our place of rest in Holumba Haven. Indeed, it was a haven where we were taken care of and treated with respect and friendship. The food was excellent and inspiring, and Magnolia Cottage where we stayed soon became our home. The whole place was already wonderful but we were told it would get even nicer after the rainy season, with everything in bloom, the Mountain View liberated from the clouds of dust we encountered and the birds singing the melodies of life in the trees, instead of calling for company with repetitive refrains.

As the name Kalimpong Academy suggests, we were studying, but beyond the narrow scope of ordinary schools and even beyond the possibilities of Brockwood. We were entering a next level of education; we were creating our

own classes around subjects that interested us, such as Mystical Numbers. We were going where we wanted to without a syllabus, sometimes even without a plan for the next day, but still we were constantly learning. We learned the connections between building, dwelling and thinking; we learned the difference between being and seeming; we learned about the possibilities of our number system based on ten and also encountered its limits and problems. We experienced the magic and variety of Shakespeare and King Lear. And we learned about Buddhism, not only by visiting monasteries, but also by talking to monks, laypeople, and even by witnessing rituals and Tibetan debate.

On a daily basis we saw more of the Indian and Himalayan culture and society. We saw more of the landscape surrounding us and went further on walks to places truly remarkable and indigenous only to this part of the world. Special thanks for these outings goes to Norden, the Landlord of Holumba, a wise and knowledgeable man who showed us the land of his birth and his love. He made our visit to Kalimpong and the Himalayas something I am sure not one of us will ever forget; he showed us places and people that made a lasting impression on us. Another thanks goes out to Brian, Ashna, Malu, and Shanti (who joined us half way through our Academy). They also made this trip something unforgettable and taught me things beyond mere knowledge. Thanks also to all my fellow students, Willie, Nick, Julie, Lara, Milena, Charline, Alina and Clive (in the end we are all students of life). Together we learned, together we lived, together we laughed, and together we will keep the memories alive and spread the spirit of Academy to make the world a better place.



Philip, Nick, Lara, Milena, Willie, Charline, Ashna, Brian, Malu, Alina.

WITH UNASHAMED CURIOSITY

Kara Taylor, *Student*

Her brown eyes meet mine and hold my gaze for a full two minutes. The girl who stands on the building site where she works, on the other side of the barbed-wire topped wall, is around my age, maybe a little younger. She is brushing her teeth, yet she freezes when she sees me, the toothbrush still in her mouth. I, on the other hand, pause from stirring the mug of tea I am holding. It is a moment of human curiosity, during which we both abandon our respective tasks to gaze with unashamed curiosity at the opposite party. After some time she nods to me, a kind of expression of recognition. I smile in return. Then I have to turn away, I feel suddenly riddled with guilt. I feel guilty of possessing material privileges which others can only dream of, guilty of having taken so many things in my life for granted. In that moment I see clearly the inequality that is so widespread in the world yet was never apparent to me on a personal level. It seems that lives are dealt out and in the end it is really the luck of the draw which side of the concrete wall you end up standing on. This experience took place in Bangalore during a weekend away from Centre for Learning (CFL) while staying in the house of a friend.

Brockwood is a beautiful place, fun, interesting and at times challenging. However, when looking at the prospect of my fifth year here, I felt it was important to do something different with my time, so decided to explore the possibility of spending a term in CFL near Bangalore, India. Many emails, a few phone calls and a nine-hour flight later and I arrived, and though I had visited India before and it wasn't altogether unfamiliar, still the rich colours, sights, sounds

and smells took me by surprise. CFL is a very welcoming place, and I felt at home almost instantly. It became apparent that there were many parallels with Brockwood, such as the sense of community and the friendly way in which teachers and students interact. Yet equally important were the points where the schools differed from one another. Something I particularly appreciated at CFL was the presence of younger students (from age 7 up) which greatly changes the dynamic of the community, and it was heart-warming to observe the care with which the older students treated the young ones.

During the term I participated in a range of activities: under the direction of Gerard Bayle (former Brockwood drama teacher), my classmates and I rehearsed and performed a production of *Antigone*. I spent time doing pottery, and art. As part of the CFL general studies programme, three classmates and I spent time regularly in the local government school, working with a group of children, practising conversational English skills and drama with them. This was one of the highlights of my



Kara (centre) with a fellow CFL student and children at the local government school

visit. The CFL campus was a world away from all that was familiar to me. The surrounding dry scrub that was prone to catch fire, and Sounundraga, the third largest monolithic rock in the world, provided a refreshingly different backdrop. Numerous breathtakingly beautiful sunrises and sunsets, shared with new friends, encouraged me to think and reflect on the place I was in and the world that surrounded me; and I found myself having precious time and space to think about and explore things that interested and intrigued me.

INDIA IN BROCKWOOD



SHIBUMI TEACHERS' VISIT

Shibumi Group Teachers

For children growing up in India, there is a culture / tradition of visiting cousins over the summer vacations. And that exact feeling was recreated for all of us while at the Brockwood Park school. The idea for the visit was born when Viju was at Brockwood a couple of years back. So, after many a meeting and a nervous visa application interview, we were on the plane, excited about going to this truly international K school.

Over the next two weeks, we slowly became a part of the school's activities, while constantly struck by the natural beauty of the place. The sun shone brightly over the sheep dotted meadows and the copper beeches. The Grove drew us time and again.

The visit culminated in the India theme week, with introduction to authors from, and writing about, India. Karuna read from Jim Corbett's writing about tigers. (He is still a favourite in the subcontinent.) Then there were presentations, films, a theatre session on the Mahabharat, Indian food, an Indian bazaar. Angela was in charge of the 'tie and dye'; pieces of cloth ranging in size from a tiny handkerchief to a bed sheet were presented for colouring. Finally, there were chanting, yoga and traditional Indian sports.

Here are some snippets from the theme week. When we cooked Indian meals at Inwoods, there was a tap on our shoulder and a young one asked (after polishing off many puris and waiting patiently for another) 'Which country are you from?' 'India', we said. Immediately turning, he said 'Mamma, I need to go to India, to eat puris everyday'!

There were two noticeable outcomes from the early



Brockwood Park School Staff and Shibumi Staff



Shibumi group, from left to right: Sharad Jain, Tanushree Borundia, Angela Jain, Karuna Jaithirtha, Roopa Devadasan, Vijaya Jaithirtha.

morning yoga sessions. Mark leaning over in an exaggerated stretch and Gosia on her knees every time they bumped into 'Guru' Roopa!

At the end of the Indian games, Tanu suggested making a human pyramid as an activity together. Sharad, by now alert to the Health and Safety regulations, asked if it was safe to do this. Pat came the reply from one of the students, 'Let's do it quickly before Kapila comes along'!

Viju introduced the popular Hindi film *Lagaan* to the group of students in the sitting room highlighting the historical background: British rule and the local farmers having to pay taxes. The questions came, 'Does the movie have song and dance?' 'Y-e-s'. 'Is it a love story?' 'Y-e-s-s'. 'Does it have a happy ending?' 'Y-e-s-s-s'.

Watching the film, during the final match between the Indian villagers and the British soldiers, many of the students had no clue what cricket was about and how it was played! They were, however, very engrossed in the story. One student, evidently English but not a cricket lover said to another, 'I don't get this game! How does it work?' 'I'm not sure either, but I've figured something out!' 'What?' 'When the English look sad, we are winning!'

For us, the visit gave us a lot of insights into the running of a school, the organisation of a community, the care of such a place and, above all, into human relationships.

On a parting note: Brockwood was very generous in letting us see everything. When students did not attend sessions despite being told it was a 'required activity', there was a roll call. It was sad to see students leave tea cups, banana peels, and biscuits in the sitting room. We all need to be reminded that being in such schools, especially Brockwood, is a privilege.

Website: www.shibumi.org.in

MATURING UP NORTH

Thomas Lehmann, *Mature Student*



The route to Scafell Pike



Looking towards Tarn Hows

At the end of the Easter vacation, nine of Brockwood's mature students made a journey to the very north of England in order to go on a retreat in the Lake District. Gary Primrose and Derek Hook, trustees and longtime Brockwood associates had offered to host us in their beautiful guesthouse "Yewfield". The continuous efforts of Brockwood staff member and Mature Student Coordinator, Fazila, eventually made our trip possible.

Mature students usually come to Brockwood out of a sincere interest in the teachings (of Krishnamurti) and in order to delve deeper into them and life as a whole in the context of the school. Even though the root meaning of the word school is 'leisure', life at Brockwood can sometimes be full and busy, which makes it important to find out for oneself if one can have a feeling of leisure even during a full day of work and other activities. Apart from that, the mature students work in different areas, in the Foundation, Centre, the kitchens, gardens or grounds, and others teach at the school. Only twice a week do we come together as a group to have dialogues related to the teachings or to life at Brockwood. Taking all this into account, we gratefully accepted the school's offer to go on a retreat together, especially with the prospect of being able to visit one of England's most picturesque areas.

Starting our trip on a beautiful Monday morning—the rising sun gave Brockwood a very special and lovely atmosphere—we almost felt it was a pity to leave, but by the evening we found ourselves on a lush green hill in the middle of the Lake District, observing the quietude of the hills and lakes, the sheep and the flying ducks. Along with Gary's warm welcome this was a wonderful start to our retreat. During our first walk we explored Yewfield's surroundings. This was followed by a delicious dinner prepared for us by Gary, and a decision to go on a longer hike on the next day. Equipped with maps and good advice, we soon found ourselves on a ridge of a mountain

where we experienced the amazing pace with which weather in the Lake District can change. In one moment there was torrential rain, hail and wind which almost blew us off the mountain and within two minutes, soothing sunshine and a blue sky.

During the dinners that we generally prepared for ourselves—except for Gary's delicious Risotto on day one—we sat together and shared stories and thoughts. Some of us especially enjoyed Gary's accounts from his early days at Brockwood, about his meetings with and observations of Krishnamurti and David Bohm (a founding trustee of Brockwood and one of the greatest physicists of the 20th century, who used to visit Brockwood almost every week in the 70s and 80s). Krishnamurti and Bohm shared a deep passion to explore the causes of the seemingly endless conflict and misery in the world and in human relationship, and they both, in their own ways, pointed to the possibility of living in a wholly different way, rooted in an intense and timeless observation of one's daily life.

On the day before our departure from Yewfield, we decided to go on our most challenging hike, climbing England's highest peak, Scafell Pike. Parts of the hike were strenuous, and in the end only three of us went all the way to the peak, experiencing amazing changes in weather and vistas and resisting a lot of wind and snow on the top of the mountain.

The retreat proved to be a great opportunity for us to get to know each other better, outside the context of Brockwood, and also to face everyday problems that can come up in group situations, such as the issue of freedom and responsibility. This topic was then also brought to our next dialogue when we reflected that the retreat was an enriching add-on to the mature student programme and not at all separate from our life and exploration at Brockwood.

THE BEDROOM SERIES



It is interesting to see the elements and atmosphere of someone's room. It tells you things about the person and the place where they live. At Brockwood, we all live in rooms that are ours for only a certain time, maybe sharing with someone we initially don't know, and by the end of the school year we move or leave the community and these bedrooms become part of someone else. It's nice to see how each person customizes these rooms, temporarily theirs, to make them more personal. It's also cool to show Brockwood through bedrooms. Because the images of the school that are always shown are only the public spaces. Because I wanted to include the whole community, I've been taking pictures of students, mature students and staff members.

Left page, from left to right, top to bottom: Ines, Gosia, Marina, Mark, Willie
Right page, from left to right, top to bottom: Coco, Tyler, Cyrus.

Photographs and text by Marina Colell, student from Spain



THIS IS YOUR HOME

THIS IS YOUR HOME

Jiddu Krishnamurti in dialogue with students at Brockwood Park, 31 January 1970

Krishnamurti: How do we live differently here, act differently, be happy differently? Otherwise, do you know what is going to happen? You will be thrown into the jungle of the world, thrown to a lot of wolves, and you will be destroyed. Here you are completely safe, which you can trust, here you are protected. This is your home, isn't it? For eight months of the year this is your home. But you don't feel secure here, do you?

S: I do.

K: Do you? That's good. But do you all? See what it means to be completely at home where you are completely secure. The brain demands security; otherwise it can't function efficiently, clearly. When the brain cells feel insecure we become neurotic, go off balance. This is a place where you are at home, where you are completely safe.



Jiddu Krishnamurti with students at Brockwood Park, 1972

S: What do you do if this isn't so?

K: I'm coming to that. One needs safety, protection, trust, confidence and a feeling that you can do anything—without destroying. You don't feel at home in that sense, do you? Who is going to make it for you? Who is going to provide you with this environment of complete protection? Do you understand what it means to be completely protected? You know, a baby needs complete protection, otherwise it cries. It must have its food regularly; it must be washed, taken care of; otherwise it is harmed. Now we are growing up, and who is going to provide this home for us? [A director] or somebody like me? The day after tomorrow I am going, so who is going to provide it for us?

S: All of us.

K: You are going to create it yourselves. You understand? You are going to build it. And if you don't build it, it is your fault. You can't say to the staff, "I want complete security, and you are not providing it for me". This is your home, and you are building it, you are creating it. If you don't feel at home here, it is your fault. Find out about it, change it, bring it about. Bring about this feeling that you are completely at home.

PAVILIONS TAKING SHAPE

Mike Davies, *Construction Manager*



It's June 2012, but not feeling much like summer. April was one of the wettest Aprils on record, and early May wasn't much better. On the Pavilions project, it was a Tale of Two Cities: *"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times."* (Charles Dickens).

Finally, roofs were being tiled, the pyramid glazing was being installed, we were looking to begin fitting out the interior—and then it started raining. The pyramid glazing leaked. We couldn't fix the leak until the rain stopped. Progress stalled. But had it not rained when it did, we might not have discovered until much later the inherent fault in the pyramid glazing construction detail. It may only have come to light some years after completion, at which time, it would have been far harder to rectify. Strange, how often something good comes out of something bad. And strange, too, that I had not spotted the weakness in the detail, even though I have been involved with constructing buildings since I was 15 years old.

But as Krishnamurti said, *"There is no end to education. It is not that you read a book, pass an examination, and finish with education. The whole of life, from the moment you are born to the moment you die, is a process of learning."*

And so, I needed to understand how I had allowed this construction error to occur. I realize, now, that I relied too much on the abilities of others, assumed that the Architect would produce a robust detail, assumed that the builder would make a good job of it. But we need to be extraordinarily "aware" in our lives, to really look at everything and question everything.

Fixing the leak was not an easy task. It wasn't easy to tell an experienced Architect that his detail could be faulty. It wasn't easy to tell the glazier that the glass panels had to be cut out and removed or to tell the man who fitted the lead cover flashings that they too must be removed.

But the solution came out of dialogue with all these individuals, without recrimination, with only the intent of getting to the heart of the problem, bringing all our experiences to bear and deciding on a right way forward.

As Albert Einstein recognized: *"The only source of knowledge is experience."*

ON PLASMA AND APPLE

PASSION, PLASMA AND THE SACRED PLANET

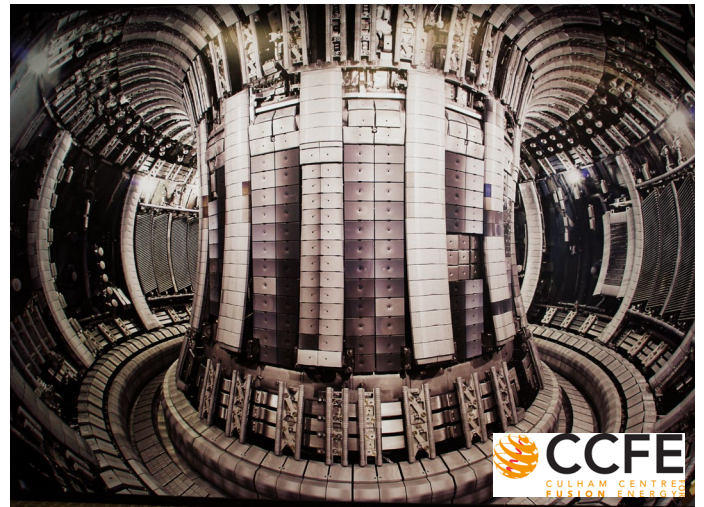
Oliver Belus, *Student*

In March, demographers at the United States Census Bureau announced that the world population had exceeded 7 billion people; furthermore they estimated that this number is bound to increase in the next century. However, this also raised many fundamental questions in the scientific community, for a rapidly growing population requires energy. It is energy that drives and regulates the monetary system; it is energy that helps plant, water and grow the crops we eat; it is energy that brings us news from around the world in a matter of seconds. The demand for energy is increasing at a frightening rate, and this has led to research in alternative ways of providing energy for the masses. It is important for us to be aware of the fact that our dependence on fossil fuels is becoming more and more problematic as we rapidly deplete our planet of them and as they greatly contribute to global warming.

With our visit to the Culham Centre for Fusion Energy (CCFE) near Oxford, in April, the physics department of Brockwood ventured into the evolving realm of nuclear fusion physics. We were warmly greeted by our tour guide, who gave us an appreciation of the magnitude of the complex, and how many scientists and engineers from around the world worked there. We were introduced to the fundamental principles of fusion energy, and why there is a growing interest in that field. In brief, fusion is the process that happens in our sun. It is what produces the heat and energy that are crucial for the existence of life on Earth, and it is this process that the scientists at the CCFE want to recreate in their laboratories in reactors



Artem, Edward, Pablo, Julia, Max, Alexandre, Oliver, Soaham and Ben



called tokamaks, in which the fusion reactions happen.

In order for fusion to provide sufficient power to supply the demands of consumers, scientists at the CCFE must overcome one of their greatest hurdles: the reactors must generate more power than they use. This is difficult due to current technological limitations, as fusion reactors must be much larger than those we have today. However, if they could solve this, fusion could be one of the main sources of power in the future. It would also lower toxic waste such as that from nuclear fission plants. It would lower our reliance on fossil fuels, and would also significantly lower our carbon emissions. Fusion power may be an unparalleled solution to preventing an energy crisis in the future.

We were given a tour of a fusion reactor called the Mega Ampere Spherical Tokamak (MAST). An enthusiastic engineer who has worked on it for many years, showed us around and explained how it all worked. In order to achieve high enough fusion reaction rates to make fusion useful as an energy source, the fuel (two types of hydrogen—deuterium and tritium) has to be heated to temperatures over 100 million degrees Celsius, hotter than the interior of the sun! At these astronomically high temperatures the fuel becomes plasma, which is contained in the middle of the reactor vessel by using state of the art magnetic generators to hold it in the correct place. It was fascinating to see how much work and expertise had been put into such an intricate piece of engineering.

It is difficult to determine whether fusion technology will be our main source of power in the future. However, what we saw was the collaboration of scientists from around the world, sharing one passion. Their cooperation drives the profound research at the CCFE. It is one step closer to helping us protect our sacred planet by laying the foundations for future generations to have a cleaner, more inspiring and sustainable future.

ON APPLES, STUDENTS AND GOALS: Teaching and Learning Physics at Brockwood

Alexandre Solé, Staff

It is said, and has been recorded by several authors, that seeing an apple fall to the ground from an apple tree triggered Sir Isaac Newton to formulate one of the most famous and influential scientific theories of all times, the *Universal Law of Gravitation*. This theory changed the way in which we perceive our world and the Universe—as did Einstein's theories of *Special* and *General Relativity* three centuries later—and it has taken us to the moon and beyond. Be this account a true fact, or a legend (or maybe a little bit of each), there is, I think, a very important catch to it, that might not be apparent at first sight.

We would probably all agree (or somehow appreciate) that most prominent physicists are driven or have been driven in the past by curiosity about nature and by a genuine passion for their field. From the smallest and weirdest subatomic particles we can think of, to the counterintuitive mysteries of quantum physics, to the far reaches of our expanding Big Bang universe, to black holes and neutron stars—you name it—Physics is indeed a truly fascinating field of study. It delves into the most profound aspects of nature and of the material world that surrounds us.

But don't be fooled. Curiosity and passion (Einstein would add to that also imagination) are essential to embark on such an undertaking. But because it is so far-reaching and so wide-ranging, Physics can at times be a complex and very demanding field, that requires hard work even for the brightest minds, and a lot of creativity. My experience, as a university student, is that as you make progress into more advanced topics, the contents studied become increasingly harder, more intellectually demanding, but at the same time increasingly interesting and stimulating, worth the sometimes long and late hours of study.

At Brockwood, we are trying to give our students the

necessary good grounding to allow them, comfortably and confidently, to move on to university-level Physics or to degrees where Physics might be a requirement. On the part of the teacher, this demands knowing and understanding the subject and the syllabus thoroughly, being aware of the different needs of the different students, challenging them to the right degree, and above all, trying to convey to them some of the beauty of Physics, and thus of the world we live in. On the part of the student it demands constant effort and serious and methodical work.

The catch is that, when we think of Newton under the apple tree, and of the falling apple that eventually led to his *Theory of Gravitation*, we should bear in mind that, behind his sudden insight, there was a great amount of previous hard work: years of painstaking research, study and theoretical considerations. Without that hard work there would probably not have been such an insight

in the first place, and today we might still not have built satellites or visited other planets or seen our beautiful Earth from afar.

So I think my message to the students is that to move forward academically while at Brockwood and after Brockwood, and maybe someday make one or more significant contributions in their fields, they have to be prepared and willing to put in the necessary effort and perseverance. It is my impression that few things can be more rewarding in the life of students than reaping the benefits of attaining the goals, big or small, they have set for themselves. But again, don't be fooled; this has nothing to do with ambition. It has to do only with how well we want to do the things we want to do; in particular, the things that we are passionate about.



Petter Goldstine

ALUMNI NEWS

BROCKWOOD in PARIS...



Alex de Noisy, Annika Englund, Antonio Autor, Cécile Potocki, Claudette Dedieu, Diane Maroger, Elisabeth Marcot, Esmeralda Tanferri, Françoise Meunier, Gaspard Manesse, Guy Beaucarne, Hilka Si, Ilan Wauters, Jeanne Sophie VLeop', Lakshmi Chayapathi, Lionel Claris, Lilith De San Mateo, Lucie Galvanie, Lia Khan Bordage, Marc Brami, Marcelo Fiorini, Maia Rey, Marie-France Hureau, Ming Yang, Pauline Gaubert, Peter Rodwell, Sebastian Arnold, Slava Sviridovs, Stéphanie Marcot, Velu Murugan, Vinay Swamy

...and BARCELONA



Annika Englund, Bill Taylor, Dionis Comaz, Gabriel Fiuza Sentis, Hunab Moreno, Ivan Hernandez Alonso, Joram Schirmaier, Karen Abrahams, Kevin Wade Sanchez, Tanzilya Salinanovna

We would like to hear from Alumni interested in organising gatherings in their city—please email alumni@brockwood.org.uk

An afternoon and evening spent together by alumni in Paris and Barcelona proved to be both fascinating and fun. Those present, networked, shared and explored common interests and links with Brockwood. Before parting, attendees put their thoughts down on the back of a postcard to return to Brockwood:

"Thank you for arranging for a meeting like this. It was wonderful to see 'old' and new faces, to hear about people's experiences. Brockwood is such an important part of my life, it is difficult to put it into a few words—the openness, warmth and critical questioning seem to me to be the most important qualities that I've 'taken' from BP."

Lakshmi Chayapathi, Paris, 18/02/12

"Brockwood beware. Your time together will come to an end. Hope you don't complain about the rain and enjoy all those indoor days together as a family and get to know everyone even if it's just on the 'surface'. Keep in contact and keep on with the questioning, silence and good night hugs!"

Ivan Hernandez Alonso, Barcelona, 05/05/12

PRESENT TENSE

A series of talks at Brockwood by former students and invited guests now on **YouTube**

During the Spring and Summer Terms at Brockwood, we continued our Present Tense series with the following guest-speakers. All of these talks can be seen on our Youtube channel, www.youtube.com/brockwoodparkschool.

Frode Steen is a professor of Communication Studies at UCLA in California and an associate of the Mind & Society Initiative at Azim Premji University in Bangalore. He was a student at Brockwood in the late 70s and spoke about how his background at Brockwood provided the impulse for his work in graduate school and what this involved.

Stef Kling worked as Financial Trader when he became interested in better understanding how the financial markets work. The more he researched, the more he became shocked by the inherent instability of the system. He predicted the stock market crash of 2008 before it happened. He talked about this and what is required to create a sustainable economic system.

Rob Hopkins is co-founder of Transition Town Totnes and the Transition Network. He has a background in education, teaching permaculture and natural building. He is the author of *The Transition Companion* and the *Transition Handbook*. He spoke about peak oil and recent developments in the transition movement.

Willem Zwart taught history, religion, and ethics at Brockwood and at Oak Grove School, where he was also Director of the Secondary School. Currently he is studying Law at Leiden University in the Netherlands. His presentation examined the history, sources, and application of human rights and considered significant cases, asking the audience to act as the judges.

PARENTS' WEEKEND

TOUCHING A SPECIAL ATMOSPHERE

I would like to thank everyone at the school for this wonderful Parents' Weekend. We had the chance to share with staff, teachers and students the life of the school for two days. It was an opportunity for me to touch this special atmosphere



Laurent Lafaye with Victor

which one can feel there and to ask some questions about the school. And what a chance to have had two sunny days with such warm temperatures for early spring!

During Inquiry Time we listened to an extract of a dialogue between Krishnamurti and students where he talked about disorder, authority and responsibility... Should not each one of us in Brockwood Park School feel this tremendous responsibility we have to live in a community where education is the central intention?

by Laurent Lafaye

NOTHING TO BE MISSED

I came back from that weekend and lay awake. Undigested moments flash back into my mind. What is it that made these days spent at Brockwood such a tremendously deep experience for me? Is it the rich and abundant love with which the pavilions are created? The love with which the kind gentleman who proudly shows us around explains how these gorgeous buildings are designed to facilitate letting the students "hang out", sit and chat, and be safe and happy?

Is it the financial gap between the budget and the realized costs that magically disappears by the intervention of generous patrons? Or is it the wedding-banquet-like-barbeque that casually is served on the most sunny South Lawn ever, in between classes, with never-ending food, enough to feed the planet—at least that is how it feels? You can eat and enjoy, get a second helping, a third if you wish. And every bite tastes full of love and flavour. Or is it facing all my judgements which came up, crashed into each other and flew away like butterflies? Or perhaps it is the fact that I am constantly finding myself in hour-long meetings with not a single point on the agenda and endless time to make mistakes, form your thoughts, gather the courage to speak and be together in silence; and all of them lovingly and massively attended.

'We don't need to rush here, Mum. There is nothing to be missed and nothing to be caught' says my daughter. It might also be the effortless cooperation between all people there to tidy and clean together which makes the day flow exactly in time, while you feel that you'd forgotten all about that dimension of life.

Maybe it is my lovely daughter, who struggles with being human, and makes me do the same; it feels so scary and unknown, but going through the struggles makes us afterwards feel vibrantly alive and full of love.

Anyway, I am settling back into my busy London life and find myself creating little Brockwood-moments. I can feel the energy ebbing away. The memory will last though.

Thank you to everybody for creating and sharing such a special place!

by Jobs Weverling



Cyrus Bordene-Enikson

Jobs Weverling with Coco

BROCKWOOD IN BRIEF



Director of Panyaprateep, Witit Rachatanun, with his son, Nummon, view work in the Art Barn with Stefania and Carlota

ONE OF ITS KIND

April saw a visit to Brockwood of five educators from two Buddhist Schools, Panyaprateep and Thawsi, in Thailand. Witit Rachatanun wrote to thank us: *"The experience of Brockwood Park is definitely one of its kind. We were deeply touched by the dedication of all the staff, the keen interest and active participation of the students in all aspects of life at the School. We have learnt very much from your example of total training of the body and the mind and concern for the community."*

FILM CAPTURES SPIRIT AND INTENT

Early this year a short introductory film about Brockwood was released on our website and can be seen at:

www.brockwood.org.uk

This was shot by former Brockwood student Marcelo Fiorini who returned to teach here in 2010. With the help of Brockwood students and current teacher, Clive Gray, Marcelo shot the film during the spring and summer terms. We feel it captures the spirit of the school and conveys something of its unique atmosphere and intent.



Samdhong Rinpoche

TIBETAN RINPOCHE VISITS

Krishnamurti regarded truth as a pathless land, but how does a Tibetan Rinpoche reconcile this with the path and methodology laid down by his own Buddhist tradition? This question was just one of several answered by Samdhong Rinpoche, the former Prime Minister of Tibet in Exile, during a recent presentation he gave to Brockwood students and staff.

View this on the Brockwood Youtube Channel:

www.youtube.com/brockwoodparkschool

WHOLE EARTH?

Environmental photographer and former trustee of Brockwood, Mark Edwards, has just released a new photographic exhibition and book called "Whole Earth?" Aligning Human Systems and Natural Systems. Brockwood students and staff attended a launch of his outdoor exhibition in London at Trafalgar Square, along with an evening panel at which politicians, professors and pundits presented evidence on the environmental situation, in preparation for Rio+20.



Mark Edwards meets Brockwood student Charline, and mature students Amel and Alina

MASTERS OF MUSIC GONE

Two outstanding former Brockwood teachers recently died within a short period of each other. Peter Norris and Alan Rowlands, who both suffered severe illnesses, died over Christmas and New Year. During their many years of teaching music at Brockwood, both men inspired a great love and capacity for music in the numerous students they worked with, and both brought other gifted musicians to visit and play here, greatly enriching the life of the school. For obituaries and tributes see: blog.brockwood.org.uk



Alan Rowlands (1929-2012)



Peter Norris (1937-2011)