



ON SITTING QUIETLY

Sarah Lewis, Mature Student

'I would go to a morning meeting because I wanted to sit quietly for a few minutes, or half an hour, not only to look and listen to what other people were saying or what was being read, but also to look at myself. I want to see what kind of animal I am, what kind of person I am, why I do this and why I do that, why I think this, why I want that—I want to know myself'.

J. Krishnamurti from *The Beginnings of Learning*

Enthused by today's role as an investigative journalist, I swept into Morning Meeting intent on finding out what it means to sit quietly. I counted the people in the room, noted their names and whether their eyes were open or closed. Afterwards, I thought about this article, and interrogated the others about their quiet sittings. Some were verbose, others less vocal. Some were not willing to comment at all, and I was dismayed by their silence.

However, on reflecting on Krishnamurti's words, I began to realize that I was missing the point entirely. In a very serious way, perhaps the most serious way, the importance of what we have the potential to experience together cannot be communicated. I suppose that is the nature of silence. Words can only explain that which my interviewees were willing and able to share. If I stop my inquiry with these second-hand reports, I am left only with a superficial echo of other people's ideas. Reading Krishnamurti brought

me back to an understanding of what the Brockwood community has seen since its founding—the true meaning of sitting quietly can only be discovered by oneself.

At Brockwood Park School, the ten-minute Morning Meeting starting the day is optional, but the school-wide Morning Assembly always ends with five minutes or more of silence. This takes place in the context of an increasingly quantitative culture in which the worthiness of something is measured by its outcome. With the upsurge of interest in the media in mindfulness-based practices in schools, sitting quietly is being praised for its ability to improve test scores, relaxation and alertness in the classroom. These results may be seen as positive, but that model indicates that even sitting has fallen prey to the pressure to be beneficial in relation to the greater aims of society. What is unique about Brockwood is that sitting quietly has always been done without creed or technique. Some relish the time, others

CONTENTS

04 WITH LOVE AND WONDER

The journey, as a solitary traveller, to two of our sister schools in India had a profound impact on Brockwood teacher, Fazila Benoit.

06 WHATEVER HAPPENED TO...?

Having recently brought his own son to Brockwood as a student, Pablo Severin is reminded of the day in 1973 when he was dropped off here, feeling terribly alone.

08 POEMS IN THE GROVE

With the arrival of spring the Grove is bursting with colour and life and there is no better place to sit beneath a tree and read poetry.

10 BROCKWOOD OBSERVED

Question: what do the replica cockpit of a Spitfire, two horizontal top-bar bee hives and some freshly baked bread, pizza and brioche have in common? Answer: they were all made by students, mature students and staff.

12 GOING PLACES

A regular guest to the Krishnamurti Centre writes about her visits; students and staff head off to Devon in search of new economics; and we invite you to join us for a big event.

14 PARENTS WEEKEND

Brockwood brings about big changes in the life of students and who better to notice and comment on these than their parents.

16 ALUMNI REUNION TIME

FRONT PAGE PHOTOGRAPH:

School Assembly

Photographer: Owen Beynon Drew

continued from page 1

find it tedious, but the beauty is that no one is doing it wrong. Bindu, a student who attended Morning Meeting with me shared this: 'Sitting quietly at Brockwood isn't done to try to become something, it is done for its own sake'.

In the midst of an increasingly chaotic and commoditised world, Brockwood has remained true to this original spirit of personal discovery. Sitting quietly may make us calmer, it may leave us more aware, but the true beauty of the activity lies in what each of us has the potential to discover in the stillness.

STUDENT SPONSORS NEEDED

Vicki Lewin, *Admissions Staff*

Each year we receive many requests for bursary assistance from our students, some for as little as a couple of thousand pounds, some for the full school fees. We try to help by giving a small amount of financial aid to as many students as we are able to, but our funds are not limitless and it is not always possible to help everyone, which means some students inevitably, reluctantly have to leave.

But you may be able to help! We are actively looking for student sponsors to help financially support students through their time at Brockwood. We have a list of students and their families who would really benefit from some extra help, and by sponsoring even a small percentage of the school fees, you could enable them to continue their studies at Brockwood, and, who knows, they may even return the favour to another student in the future.

If you would like further details, or wish to be a sponsor, please contact Vicki Lewin in the Student Admissions Office: enquiry@brockwood.org.uk. We will be delighted to hear from you!

THE BROCKWOOD OBSERVER

Brockwood Park School
Bramdean, Hants. SO24 0LQ, UK
Telephone: +44 (0) 1962 771 744
Fax: +44 (0) 1962 771 875

Email: observer@brockwood.org.uk
Website: www.brockwood.org.uk
Blog: blog.brockwood.org.uk
YouTube: youtube.com/brockwoodparkschool

Website: www.jkrishnamurti.org
Observer Team: Bill Taylor, Ray McCoy, Bailey Jacobs, Farid Boussaha.

© 2014 Krishnamurti Foundation Trust Limited

CONTACT US

Photograph by Ana Gomes

School Hike



DEVELOPING LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS AND UNCOVERING A CURRICULUM

Gopal Krishnamurthy, *Co-principal*

Brockwood is deeply concerned with a sense of excellence that comes from a depth and breadth of understanding and wonder about ourselves and the world around us. This sense of excellence needs to permeate all aspects of our daily life: academic studies, non-academic activities, and conduct. So living at Brockwood is not a soft option. It may often involve a demand for the student (and teacher) not to accept something unless this is seen by and for herself, and a demand for the teacher not to supply a ready-made answer. The intention is to create an environment that demands and supports sustained attention, inquiry, diligence and wonder.

At Brockwood the process of learning is seen as an end in itself, in and out of the classroom. The academic curriculum and subject matter itself are not separate from our understanding about learning and about the actualities of our daily lives. Through the study of mathematics we learn about order; through the sciences we engage with and learn from the world around us, and discover the place for precise observation and thinking. We learn about ourselves and our values through the study of history. However hard we may try to do this, a curriculum cannot be reduced to fitting students' learning into a prefabricated script or prescribed path. A vibrant curriculum is one that provides a rich terrain for learning. By uncovering rather than covering the syllabus, it is possible to learn with breadth and depth, and to perceive the necessity for, but also the limitations of, acquiring only knowledge and skills. The curriculum at Brockwood provides occasions for this attention and inquiry.

Since last year the teaching staff and students have been exploring some fundamental and perennial questions about learning environments. In what way does an environment inhibit or nurture learning and freedom? Does the environment by default "tell" the student to come in, sit down, and wait for the teacher, or could the environment itself invite initiative and participation? What is the position of the teacher and the student in these scenarios? With three newly renovated classrooms equipped with smart screens, round tables, shelves, books, charts, writing materials and other resources, we are developing learning environments that encourage and support both shared and independent learning. Needless



Newly renovated classroom in use for history class

Bill Taylor

to say, the outdoor environment in and around Brockwood, with vegetable garden, grove, pastures, woodlands, meadows and rolling hills, is itself an invaluable learning environment.

At a time when there is an increasing clamour for competing, and ever-shifting educational practices, methods, and techniques—each claiming greater success or better results and outcomes than the other—it takes sustained attention and inquiry not to allow our ideas to be crystallized into systems of action whether old or new. The educational intent at Brockwood is to sustain such an attention and inquiry into the actualities of our everyday conduct in the School and the world at large.



A lecture style presentation with the use of a smart screen

Bill Taylor

WITH LOVE AND WONDER

THE CHALLENGES OF EVERYDAY

Fazila Benoit, *Staff*

Fazila Benoit

I landed at Heathrow on 20th March, International Day of Happiness, and I was feeling very happy. I was holding within me warm memories of coppery dusks, of delicate jasmine scented evening walks, of ancient Vedic chants floating through the midday heat, of buffaloes soaking up the coolness of the Ganges. I was coming back from a moment of quietude, of watching my surroundings, of partaking in the joy and energy of the children I met, of witnessing the land where Krishnamurti once lived and wrote about. I had come back from a trip to India, visiting Krishnamurti schools in Bangalore and in Varanasi.

Over the months of February and March, I spent several weeks visiting Centre for Learning in Bangalore and the Rajghat Besant School in Varanasi. Centre for Learning (CFL)

is a small residential school with many qualities not unlike those of Brockwood. There are about 70 students, a small group of dedicated teachers, all engaged in taking care of the daily needs of the place and having regular dialogues and inquiry into the nature of the self. There is a strong focus on the outdoors, on nature and intimately knowing the local environment, and on silence. What I saw during my time there was robustness amongst teachers and a commitment to working through things together; a precious unselfconsciousness in most students; a warmth and real curiosity amongst the youngest children to ask questions and discover for themselves. I also saw that young people everywhere, despite cultural differences, share the same challenges of life; this was supported skilfully by teachers who worked to draw out the students with questions and probing. The natural surroundings at CFL were stunning, with the barrenness of winter trees, dusty red sunsets and massive granite boulders dotting the hills surrounding the school.

My time at Rajghat School, one of the Krishnamurti Foundation schools in India and the second oldest to be founded, was an equally fulfilling experience. I did arrive at the end of the school year, amidst the hustle and bustle of exams, report writing, and the Spring Holi festival, but I was greeted with warmth and time was made for me to attend teachers' meetings, to watch the youngest children interact and learn in their classes, and to observe the school freely as I wished. The outstanding quality here was the gentleness and the affection in relationships between adults and the children. This was reflected in the happy and beautiful faces of the children.



Assembly Hall at Centre for Learning



The junior class at Rajghat School

Rajghat School has a large campus that runs along the Ganges river, and includes reforested land, a Rural Centre, the Krishnamurti Foundation and the well-cared-for Study Centre where I spent many hours reading, allowing questions to settle within me, quietly watching the movement of life on the river, and taking in the sounds of tradition and routine from the old city close by.

I feel gratitude for having had this opportunity to visit our sister schools. I am also moved by the experience of having taken this trip as a solitary traveller. Travelling alone offered me moments of exquisite stillness, moments of fragility, moments where everything felt more intense, alive, present. This time away still serves as a resource from which I can seek inspiration and energy for the challenges of everyday.



The Ganges at sunrise



The ghats of Varanasi

The following is an extract from *Commentaries on Living* which I savoured reading whilst sitting on the banks of the Ganges, looking out at the scene Krishnamurti is describing. It sums up beautifully the intensity of this place, the quality of life here where tradition, death, birth, all of life happens openly side by side.

Fazila Benoit

WITH LOVE AND WONDER

“Along the top of the long, wide bend in the river was the town, very holy and very dirty. The river made a big sweep here, and its main force struck the edge of the town, often washing away the steps leading down to the water, and some of the old houses. But whatever damage it did in its fury, the river still remained holy and beautiful. It was particularly beautiful that evening, with the sun setting below the dark town and behind the single minaret, which seemed to be the reaching-up of the whole town towards the heavens. The clouds were golden-red, aflame with the brilliance of a sun that had travelled over a land of intense beauty and sadness. And as the brilliance faded, there, over the dark town was the new moon, tender and delicate. From the opposite shore, some distance down the river, the whole enchanting sight seemed magical, yet perfectly natural, without a touch of artificiality. Slowly the young moon went down behind the dark mass of the town, and lights began to appear; but the river still held the light of the evening sky, a golden splendour of incredible softness. On this light, which was the river, there were hundreds of small fishing boats. All afternoon thin, dark men with long poles had been laboriously poling their way upstream against the current, in single file close to the bank; starting at the fishing village below the town, each man in his boat, sometimes with a child or two had pushed slowly up the river past the long, heavy bridge, and now they were coming down by the hundreds, carried by the strong current. They would be flashing all night, catching big, heavy fish, ten to fifteen inches long, which would afterwards be dumped, some of them still writhing, into larger boats tied up along the bank, to be sold the next day... Further down the river, dead bodies, brought from the neighbouring villages and from the sprawling, dirty town, were being burnt in great, roaring fires. Here everything was going on, for this was the most holy and sacred of towns. But the beauty of the still-flowing river seemed to wipe away all the chaos of man, while the heavens above him looked down with love and wonder.”

J. Krishnamurti

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO...

THE BRICK THAT IS BROCKWOOD

Pablo Severin, *Former Student*

It was a September morning in 1973 when I watched my mother's car disappear down the driveway on her way back to Belgium, and never felt so alone. I was on my own, in a big white house full of people from many countries. I could not speak to them, as I did not speak a word of English.

Those were my first memories of Brockwood Park! Three years later, I left Great Britain for California to start the long and magical journey that is life; but always with that brick in me that is the foundation of everything I have done. That brick is what I call Brockwood! It was at Brockwood Park that I learned to discover, that I learned about curiosity, that I learned to be me.

Curiosity! That is probably why my life is so 'varied' as some may call it. I studied photography and marine biology; I took part in underwater expeditions beyond the Arctic Circle as an underwater photographer; I earned a living in commercial diving and later ran my own diving and windsurfing business in New England. Those were what could be called the North American years.

I returned to Europe in the late 80s, and started working for a video production company that specialized in 'Extreme Events'. Those events were the craze at the time. I found myself involved in various Off-Road Rallies such as the Dakar where I fell in love with the African continent. These events allowed me to travel across the globe and discover places where few people ever go; but they also had a price which I paid for dearly. Not only did it cost me my marriage but also my health because of numerous accidents.

It was time to become serious. I returned to university to study computer science. I was 36. Being the old man in a university was a unique experience but also very humbling. The kids were full of unreal ideas but had no life experiences against which to compare them, no references. And mine were not the usual ones. It was a time of great learning but also of great sharing.

After graduation, I started working for a radioactive waste management organization in Belgium, and met the woman who became the mother of my son. My son! The idea of becoming a father had never really crossed my mind. I had been so involved in my own curiosity that I had become very selfish. But all of a sudden, my life developed a new meaning. If curiosity had been the main drive before, sharing now overcame it. I felt the need to show my son what the world is, without preconceived ideas. Every holiday, we travelled for fun, but also so that



Pablo Severin

my son could see and experience the 'something else', to see what another place, culture or people could bring to one's experience.

And then, one September day, forty years after I saw my mother's car drive away, it was my turn to be in that vehicle and leave my son in the big white house full of people from so many countries.

Pablo's son, Virgil, is currently a student at Brockwood.



Pablo Severin at age 15 in Brockwood

WHAT ARE YOU PUTTING ON PAUSE?

Coco Tas, Student

It is my fourth and final year at Brockwood and after June I will be making the transition to another stage of my life. Many people have gone through this transition into 'normalcy' before me; yet for every person it's a different experience, a different story. I have experienced my journey at Brockwood like a chapter in a book: filled with struggles, challenges, memories, laughter and a constant exploration with the people around me. I barely recognize the 14 year old girl I was when I first came here, and yet that girl is still so much a part of who I am now. A chapter further on, and that character is still there!

People ask me if I am afraid to leave and go back into the 'real' world. My reply to that is: No, Brockwood has become my real world, the place where I spend every 'real' moment, and I don't yet see the stark contrast (if there is one) between Brockwood and the rest of the world. In fact I feel a curiosity for this change, for the way life will challenge and push me to limits I don't even know I have. Brockwood has given me in the past four years the ability to change, but in spite of this I felt that I was settling into habits and routine throughout this last year; a kind of stasis. Thus, I know it is time for me to go.

So what is my next step? Once I leave where will I go, what will I do? These are questions that I am still asking myself, and overall the answer is 'a GapYear'. As many who leave Brockwood agree, if you haven't yet found that drive and passion in life, after leaving you feel a little lost. The solution for some is taking a year off and travelling, although

the idea that you are taking a year off is already inaccurate. What are you putting on pause? University, earning money, life? It sounds as though society feels that a gap year is an excuse for running away from the responsibility of following a preordained path. If you step back and look at the bigger picture you realize that life is about seizing the moment, about really living it. I feel that university and everything that comes with it is a path best explored once I have found an area or course of interest; something that I can connect with and that drives me on to discover more, through the good and the bad. Perhaps it's idealistic, but it seems to me that if you 'roll with the wave' opportunities become apparent. So for the next year I will be exploring the world, but most of all myself.

In the light of all this, I decided to take on a project that would provoke my asking questions about our society, my ideals and my future. My project is to fund-raise for a charity called Flying Kites, because I am interested in what

continued on page 15



Minouche Tas

Coco Tas



Children from the Flying Kites programme in Kenya

POEMS IN THE GROVE



POEM

Amar Jafra, *Mature Student*

Words Part I

I am aware of the conditioned definitions,
I am the definer;
The definition I am not.

Words Part II

I condition minds with definitions,
All that the word is not,
And all that it could be.

Words Part III

And it (the word) can't be anything,
'Cause nothing is



CLASSROOM POEM

Amanda Rexhausen, *Student*

A focused energy surrounds the flock looking down at their books. The white sheets are doing their best to reflect the sunlight as brightly as possible. From all around the finest of songs are being presented, showing off with high voices. The wind occasionally strokes the concentrated faces so gently it is hardly noticed. Each brain is working with full power; throwing itself at the texts and questions, eager to understand.

But out of nowhere comes the destruction. It dances in the air; plays with the effects of light to create the most attractive colours. The tiny flying thing forms into a gigantic spider and takes over all the capacity of the innocent students' minds. The beast has not yet reached the teacher's attention; the students had only corresponded with their eyes, not yet daring to move their heads.



WHERE NOBODY REALLY GOES

Arina Abramova, *Student*

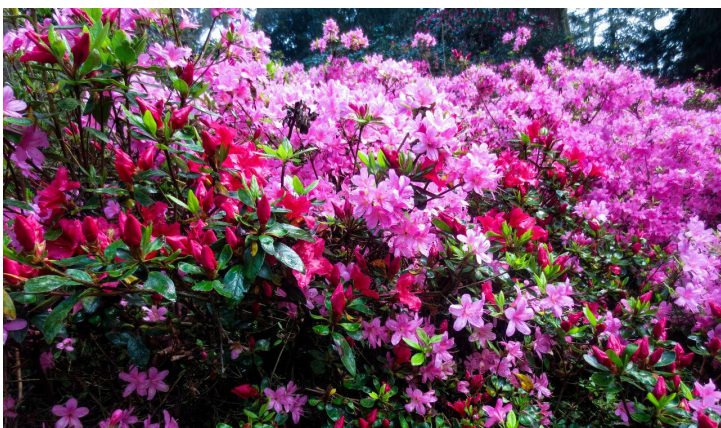
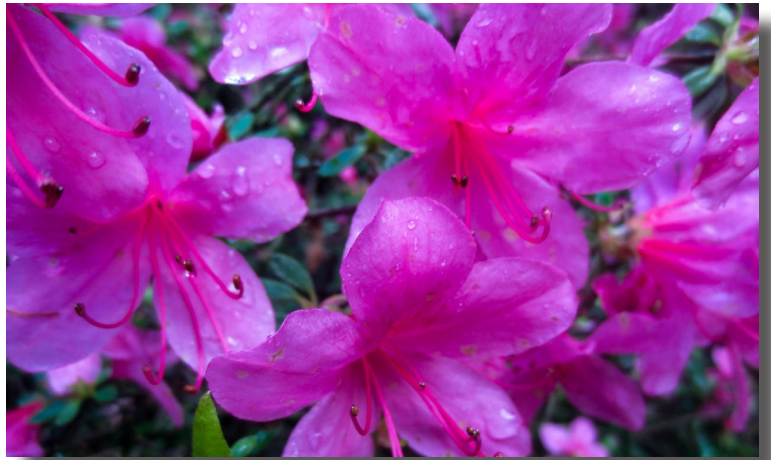
I feel cut off from the world,
Yet here I am, in this,
I press my ear to the tree,
And hear the abyss.
The soothing, crackling, endless sound,
That rings with life inside,
But here I am on such a day
And still in shade I hide.

I climbed through branches on my knees,
To feel this shady womb,
As tiny cobwebs closed my eyes,
Oh, cobwebs of fine loom.
The little patches of the sun,
Feel stronger on this ground,
They battled through this shady mess,
And now to earth are bound.

I am hearing peacock's eager call,
For something far away,
I lift my head and see one leaf,
Falling free, astray.
I see just fractions of this thing,
Above us always blue,
And as majestic as it is,
It scattered now its hue.

I smell the damp, fresh, mossy breath,
And in my memories go,
When I awake, I close my eyes,
And see the pictures flow.
I am seeing people, hearing steps,
But they don't know I'm there,
Invisible as I may feel,
I am close to open air:

Yet, no one really wonders here,
Inside this home, this space,
A place where nobody really goes,
But what a warm embrace
It gives, when reached.



BROCKWOOD OBSERVED

ONE MAN'S TRASH IS ANOTHER MAN'S... SPITFIRE

Bailey Jacobs, *Mature Student*



Dave Madgwick

meteorology, and radio systems. In addition to the self-built cockpit, he used US pilot training films and a flight simulator programme that he downloaded onto computers in the School.

Apart from the flying lessons, there was also an historical component to the workshop. Students learned about what is still regarded today as one of the classic planes, the Spitfire; it transpired that the grandfather of one of the students flew one during World War 2.

On the last day, after learning the basics of flight and how to fly on the flight simulator, students mimicked flying conditions in a Spitfire. They dressed up in flying garb from the period, lights were dimmed to simulate nighttime flying conditions, and for a brief time they were transported back to the night-time skies of the 1940s.

With the help of Luna and Alice, Meli and I organized and manned the Brockwood Stall at the South Downs Green Fair held each year at the Sustainability Centre. It was a project for our Care for the Earth class at Brockwood. Having already prepared basic mixtures, we got up at 4 am on the day of the fair to start baking the bread, pizza, granola and brioche. Inwoods Small School had given us a place as part of their café and we set up all our freshly made food there. This was a great way to raise money for Brockwood and to interact with the surrounding community. It was a very successful day and we sold all the food and talked to many people about Brockwood. We raised around £300 for the School after paying for ingredients, and we have decided to put the money towards the reconstruction of the chicken coop in the School's walled kitchen garden.

Dave Madgwick, long-time Brockwood maintenance man, has a passion for aviation. This past year he spent close to six months constructing a replica cockpit of a British Spitfire, the single-seater aircraft that was used by the Royal Air Force and many other Allied countries during and after the Second World War. The construction took place in the maintenance shed, whenever he had some free time, out of the school's recycled materials and items no one wanted anymore.

During the process of making his creation, various students gained an interest in what Dave was working on and began asking him questions about his passion. From there, he decided to create a Flying Workshop for the winter workshops. The workshop lasted two and a half days; the students who signed up for it were interested in flying. One is even hoping to become a pilot himself after his years at Brockwood.

Dave, who is a certified pilot himself, taught students about aerodynamics, the biology of the human body in flight including the effects of acceleration and deceleration on the body, optical illusions of pilots, weather and

ALL THE FUN OF THE GREEN FAIR

Ara Aman, *Student*



Brockwood stand at the Green Fair

BACH AND BEES AT BROCKWOOD

Felix Bach is a mature student at Brockwood who has discovered a passion for bees and has built two Kenyan Top Bar Hives. He was interviewed by Emma Birt.

My initial inspiration for bringing bees back to Brockwood came from reading an article in a previous issue of The Brockwood Observer about the importance of bees and how they would benefit the garden and grounds. When I arrived in Brockwood last summer, the garden was in full bloom. Everything looked so beautiful. Bees make this possible. The poor bee is in grave danger. There is no clear consensus on the cause of their decline but it's obvious that non-organic pesticides and fertilisers are affecting them.

In the past I have tended to pursue many different projects simultaneously, never wanting to be bound to one thing. However, working on the hives and this project in general, I have focused my whole attention in a new way. Already the bees are teaching me about self-discipline and exploring in depth.

I found a resource on the internet for building my own hives. All of the materials I found in and around the school, in the woodwork barn and nooks and crannies. The maintenance team has been a tremendous help. It's a simple horizontal top bar hive. The bees are free to build their comb as they wish onto the bars. There are five entrance holes for the bees, which can be closed with corks. We have stuck some honeycomb on the inside. Hopefully that will encourage them to move in, but if no bees come, I have been offered a swarm from a local bee-keeper.

Inspection of the bees in this type of hive is easy. You can check on the combs without exposing the whole hive, so the bees feel more secure. The floor is made of mesh. The bees have problems with mites (Varroa Destructor) which suck their blood and kill their young. The mesh floor keeps the bees in but mites fall through. The second hive I've made has an additional bottom which I will fill with sawdust and natural foliage to create a small eco-system. In the wild, bees live in hollow logs, and other insects live in harmony with them.

Natural bee keepers are predominantly interested in the bee. It's not about honey-yield but about giving the bees a secure, sheltered space to live, observing them and studying them, giving them the best possible chance to thrive.

On May 21st a small swarm was introduced to Hive No.1 by Felix with the expectation of another one arriving soon.



Felix Bach, photograph by Emma Birt



Photographs of hives by Felix Bach

GOING PLACES

EVERY VISIT IS DIFFERENT

Suzie Dennis



Suzie Dennis

Suzie Dennis lives in South Devon and has been regularly visiting the Krishnamurti Centre since it was first opened in 1987. Here she describes what brings her back to the Centre every May and September.

I vividly recall my first impressions of the Centre. I had come alone from London. I walked in through the front door and was struck by the beauty of the architecture. Even though the building was new, it fitted into its natural surroundings. I immediately felt at home.

Each visit is different. Sometimes the place is buzzing with life, other times there are just one or two guests. Every time I come here something different unfolds.

Whatever the weather, I walk in the beautiful grounds. I'll also watch some of K's talks or dialogues and dip into a book from the library. There are windows everywhere and the light pours in, so I can always look out at the beauty of the gardens.

During my visits to the Centre there is always laughter but also a sense of calm and space. Nobody is interested in my age or what I do for a living or whether I went to university. The conversations are interesting and enriching. Nobody is trying to define me and I find that very refreshing.

"The right kind of education does not merely prepare you to get a job or to climb the ladder of success, but it helps you to think and gives you space for your mind to grow so that it is not bound by any belief, by any fear."

J. Krishnamurti



Join us for our 45th Anniversary

OPEN DAY

15th November 2014

"Brockwood has been a pioneer in British education in so many ways, not the least in its use of stillness or mindfulness, years before these entered the educational mainstream. The focus on enquiry and active learning is another area where the school has been in the vanguard of educational thinking."

Anthony Seldon

Classes, Tours, Presentations, Music & Refreshments

To register, call: 01962 771744 / email: enquiry@brockwood.org.uk

BROCKWOOD PARK SCHOOL OPEN DAY / www.brockwood.org.uk

EXCURSIONS INTO ECONOMICS

Harald Sydenham, *Student*

On the 18th and 19th of March, a group of us went on a school trip to Devon in southwest England, to visit Schumacher College and the town of Totnes. The College is an alternative school with a focus on sustainable living, offering post-graduate degrees and various other courses. Totnes is one of a growing number of towns and cities in the world that are trying to make a difference in local communities in the face of economic and environmental crisis.

This trip was for those of us who are studying AS and A level Economics, so the purpose was very much academic and educational. Our party included seven students, a mature student and Pedro, our Economics teacher, who so wonderfully and kindly organised this outing for us.

We left early in the morning so we could make our first appointment at the College. We received a brief introduction to the very Brockwood-like place from one of the students. We then attended a lecture by Tim Crabtree, one of the Economics teachers, who introduced us to something called 'new economics'. This is essentially a shifted view on the self-interest based, outdated, underlying assumptions that are made in the mainstream economics that is practised in the world and taught in schools. He went on to say how these assumptions, which have been empirically proven wrong, have led to extensive and exponential damage to the Earth's ecosystems, on which we depend entirely in our attempt to meet people's infinite desires with very limited and fragile resources. These misunderstandings of our basic human nature as consumers have come full circle now, and we are reaping the effects of our economic activities on the Earth.

This brought us neatly to our next lecture of the day, which was delivered by co-founder of the college and friend of Brockwood, Dr Stefan Harding, who expanded on the ecological crisis from a more philosophical and historical point of view. We looked quickly at Gaia Theory,



Schumacher College in Devon



Pedro, Albert, Sarah, Harald, Danni, Cecilia, Dasha, Jun.

a concept developed by James Lovelock, a world renowned scientist and environmentalist, which is also an attempt to shift the emphasis we put on the Earth as a cold, dead object from which we can freely take what we want, to begin to see it in a new light as a very alive and benevolent 'being' with which we directly participate.

We had a delicious lunch, organic and vegetarian of course. Later, the head gardener took us round the grounds, giving us a better understanding of how the College does everything it can to be self-sustainable, especially food-wise.

We left the place a little wiser than before, and wound our way through the Devon roads to Totnes to meet people there who are working in their office on the Transition Project. The main issue they are dealing with is how to keep the flow of money within the area so as to benefit the community and the wider environment, as opposed to letting it leak out through the various chain stores and banks. Because of the nature of their work, which is essentially volunteering and campaigning, as a group we were slightly wary of the way in which they presented their various projects to us, but nonetheless we were impressed with the enthusiasm and commitment they had for their very demanding and challenging work in the face of an apparently gloomy future for local communities.

By early evening we had finished all our meetings and went to the home of the Ash-Wheelers nearby, parents of former Brockwood student, Lark. They generously hosted us overnight and after our long day, a big dinner and a relaxing evening were very much welcomed. The next day we re-paid our hosts the Brockwood way; by working in their incredible garden. By mid-day we started to make our way back home, grateful to the Ash-Wheelers for their care and kindness.

PARENTS WEEKEND

A STRONG SENSE OF BELONGING AND ACCEPTANCE

Bailey Jacobs, *Mature Student*

Parents weekend is a special occasion established as the one time in the academic year when parents and families are invited to stay in the School and have the opportunity to gain a better understanding of their child's education and boarding life. It is also the time for staff to hear parents questions and concerns about their own child and life at Brockwood.

Tamzin Pinkerton, mother of first year student Meli, first heard about Brockwood fifteen years ago through a friend and teacher, who in turn was inspired by a style of yoga



Tamzin and Meli

taught by Vanda Scaravelli, an old friend of Krishnamurti. 'Ever since then, I have always hoped Meli would end up at Brockwood and I was so happy when she said she would like to try the perspective week. I am thrilled that she is now here'.

Meli was struck by how comfortable she felt at Brockwood in such a short period of time; she felt significantly more accepted and part of a community whilst here than at her previous school. She also appreciated the calmer, more respectful atmosphere at Brockwood. Tamzin noticed a change in Meli after the first few weeks of her having started at Brockwood, and said, 'Meli quickly developed a strong sense of belonging at the school and was more confident in herself'. Also noticeable to Tamzin was how aware Meli was becoming, both of her own emotional life and that of others. 'She has always been great at articulating what is going on for her, but she began to do so with an increased sense of openness and kindness. Meli has been to a few alternative schools in the UK, for a number of reasons, but it does feel as though we have finally found her school home. With that comes a strong sense of belonging and acceptance for her. I think also that the strong culture of curiosity and questioning at Brockwood is deeply important for her to find her own way in life, and to develop her own love of learning. With the space that Brockwood provides, she is more enthused and inspired by school than she ever has been before'.

Meli and Tamzin are very close and Tamzin recognized

that. 'There have been a couple of tricky times as we adjust to Meli's new sense of independence and freedom, but this has felt healthy and necessary (she is 14 after all), and has led to useful discussions. As it is only Meli and me in our small family, it has actually been wonderful for each of us to have our own space, but also to miss each other and then thoroughly enjoy the times we do spend together'.

Jose Ignacio Alemany, father of third year student Sol, heard about Brockwood years ago in Spain. 'We went to the birthday party of a friend, and he was telling us that his son had applied to go to Brockwood and had been accepted. As I heard the name Krishnamurti, I became more interested. Then, I arranged a visit to an Open Day the following May with our entire family. We also visited the Krishnamurti Centre and were fascinated by the calm and quietness we felt there'. While Jose's two older children, Pablo and Ines, immediately took an interest and quickly became students, Sol was only 10 at the time so when her turn came it was important to make sure that she was not just following in her siblings' footsteps. Jose remarks, 'She had to see for herself during the prospective week that it was the right environment for her'.



Sol and Jose

The significant change in atmosphere that accompanied a change in school was also very noticeable to Sol who had previously attended a Steiner school. Smiling, she said, 'There it was just school, but here it is an integrated community where you live and study with your friends. I feel how I should feel at Brockwood; loved and surrounded by friends'.

As for the father-daughter relationship, between Jose and Sol, the former reflects, 'Sol has taken some distance from me, and I from her, and this has allowed us to relate more freely and in a less affected way. Our conversations are more relaxed. I have learnt to speak to a new adult, and she has accepted my proposals more as advice than as orders. As a consequence, we really enjoy our time shared together'.



Sarai Alons

PILE THEM HIGH!

Sarai Alons, Staff

Monday morning is Pancake morning at Brockwood. It is the one morning in the week when almost all the students get up in time to get some breakfast! Pancakes are delicious, they make for a filling and economical meal, and they are easy to make.

All you need are eggs, flour and milk. We make the pancake batter on Sunday evening. Leaving the batter to sit overnight, makes the pancakes taste better and easier to digest. I like to use Kamut flour, it is more flavoursome and nutritious than white flour, and gives a light colour to the pancakes. Buckwheat and spelt also work well. To give you an idea of the quantities we use in the school see the recipe below. This should get you at least a **150 pancakes** if not more.

For The Whole School

- 30 eggs
- 3 kilos of flour
- 6 litres of milk
- a couple of pinches of salt or sugar to taste
- oil for brushing the pan

For Two People

- 1 egg
- 100 gr. flour
- 200 ml. milk
- salt & oil as above



Sarai Alons

Beat the eggs in a large bowl, then slowly add flour until it becomes like a thick paste. Now add some milk, and some flour again. Keep alternating like this between flour and milk to avoid any lumps.

When you are ready to bake the pancakes, make sure you use a good non-stick frying pan. Use medium heat and ladle just enough batter into the pan to cover the bottom completely. Fry for about a minute on each side or until brown.

Serve with lemon juice and sugar or honey, fresh fruit, chocolate spread or any other topping you might prefer.

continued from page 7

they do and I would like to visit them at some point in the new year. Flying Kites provides orphaned and vulnerable children with a nurturing home environment and an excellent education. It is very small and relatively new. The charity was founded in reaction to one particular experience: a little boy living in an overcrowded orphanage in the slums of Nairobi challenged a small group of volunteers to see him as a child, not as an orphan. Orphans need bowls of rice; children need families, people to invest in the quality of their education and the possibility of their dream.

I am aiming to raise a total of \$4,000 (£2,500) for the charity, and I will be hiking the length of Hadrian's Wall this summer to raise funds and awareness for Flying Kites. Hadrian's Wall is an ancient Roman wall, spanning 82 miles from the east to the west coast of Britain. It will be an intense week of challenging my physical abilities and of self-discovery.

I would appreciate any help to reach my fund-raising goal. You can donate through a page I have set up online. All the proceeds will go directly to the school and orphanage. The donations will help to buy food and school supplies, pay for medical bills and pay the staff who take care of and teach the children. If you are curious to hear more, I will be posting my experiences throughout this journey on my blog.

Flying Kites Homepage: www.flyingkitesglobal.org

Coco's Fundraising Page: www.firstgiving.com/fundraiser/cocoanna/cocoannatassfundraisingpage

Coco's Blog: www.stargazinglife.blogspot.com

BROCKWOOD IN BRIEF



ALUMNI REUNION AUGUST 2014

BROCKWOOD PARK SCHOOL WOULD LIKE TO INVITE ALL
FORMER STUDENTS, MATURE STUDENTS AND STAFF
TO JOIN US IN CELEBRATING OUR 45th ALUMNI REUNION
FROM 21st – 25th AUGUST 2014



To register and participate in the Reunion, please visit our website
REUNION.BROCKWOOD.ORG.UK