



IT'S EDUCATING YOU AS WELL!

by Robert Poynton, *Parent*

The Parents' Weekend is something you will not find in many schools; it's an occasion when parents of pupils come and stay in the school for two days while it is in session to meet teachers, attend classes and join in on all the activities. Here a parent of two Brockwood students reflects on what the School has meant for his boys and the weekend for him.



When I left Brockwood Park at the end of the Parents' Weekend, I had one of the best, if not the best conversation I have ever had with my sons. The three of us talked in the taxi to Winchester, all the way to London on the train and through and after dinner. We talked openly and enthusiastically. We talked about the weekend but not just the weekend. We talked about feelings, ideas, hopes, dreams, anxieties; about their future, my future and what we might do together, all three of us. This was no coincidence. In the space of a weekend, Brockwood had brokered a different kind of possibility between us.

There is a levelling effect of spending time at the school – a place which is home to my sons but where I am a stranger (even if I have been there a few times). Sitting in a history class with Mateo and Bruno, finding myself caught up in the conversation, I stopped feeling like an observer. I

wanted to join in and when I did, it didn't feel like an intrusion. Which is amazing. How does that happen?

The physical place is part of this too. The beauty and quiet, the smells and the way people move through the space all have a subtle effect. It is like an island - more remote than I would have thought possible in Hampshire. The calm, not just any calm, but the calm that my boys live in, seeped into me as well.

We shared activities as well as space. Mateo and I were both doodling in class, not out of boredom, but as a way of being there. I played football with Bruno and found that we saw the same patterns in the game – endless hours of watching and talking about Real Madrid have left their mark. It was wonderful to have the chance to connect with him again in this way and to feel something of how he might feel, stepping outside on a Saturday afternoon and straight into a kick-about game with your mates.

And beyond the direct connection with my sons,

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After many years in the Co-Principals' "hot seat" at Brockwood, Adrian Sydenham is about to exchange it for an airline seat as he travels the world doing much needed outreach, the purpose and pitfalls of which are reflected upon in this article.

06 FROM BROCKWOOD TO BANGALORE AND BACK

One of the benefits of a Brockwood education is the opportunity to experience India via a visit to our sister Krishnamurti schools. Students Anna and Tejo recount the importance of such a trip for them.

08 THE PERFORATED MOMENT

We learn the important lessons in life in a variety of ways, and for Arina that seems to have happened at the pottery wheel when she saw "...what is real exists now, in front of me; it is the hands, the cold wheel, the murky grey clay, the flying specks of dust". She learnt that to centre the clay is to centre oneself.

10 AN INSPIRING FARM ADVENTURE

How many of us would be game enough to take a group of lively 8 to 10 year olds away for three nights on a camping trip to an organic farm? Well, a group of Inwoods staff did, and it inspired them as much as it did the children.

12 POETRY PLEASE

Sometimes we are able to include only a fraction of the poetry that is submitted to the Observer, but we have found space for three poems, including one written by two students visiting from a sister school, Shibumi in Bangalore, as well as for the wonderful art work of student Leonie.

14 ALL THINGS NEW

In previous issues of the Observer, our cook Sarai was pictured peering over the top of a cookbook as she introduced us to yet another recipe from the Brockwood repertoire. This time she is peering into the eyes of her new baby, and contemplating a new beginning.

16 A LIFE BEYOND CULTURAL IDENTITIES

While working on a Masters degree in Developmental Studies, former student Soonya began to realise the harm unquestioned beliefs and values cause, even amongst the most well-intentioned people. This and her subsequent work experience had a dramatic impact on her life and led her down a very different path.

FRONT PAGE PHOTOGRAPH:

Bruno and Mateo, brothers jazzing it up at Brockwood. Both brothers have been improvising together since their early teenage years when they formed a band with a group of friends from their hometown. Photographer: Jennifer Kowalewski

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there was the connection with the ideas that the place is founded on, that it endeavours to live. Ideas that I knew, but which took on body and voice, in the form of parents, staff and students, in conversations of a dozen kinds. Dialogue in the Assembly Hall, students meeting parents, a curriculum meeting full of challenge and question, convivial chats over the washing-up, exchanging of notes in the lunch queue, discovering the parents of the boys' friends.

I came away with two simple ideas, firmly anchored in the experience. First, that underlying many of the initiatives, debates and decisions at Brockwood is the intention to shift students from being passive recipients to active agents. It reminds me of Tony Benn's thought about becoming "participants in our own future, not observers of our fate".

The second was a shift in my understanding of where I myself fit. Though it might be a boarding school, I came away feeling that up until now I have perhaps been too distant from Brockwood in ways beyond geography. Now, I feel more able to get more involved both with my sons and with the school, in a three-way relationship, with the development of my children at the heart of it.

This is a tiny, yet huge shift. It is hard to describe because it is manifest in feeling not action. But it reminds me of a day when I was chatting with my great friend Jorge Alvarez at home in Spain. He was asking about Brockwood and how much it cost (and in Spain, it sounds like a fortune). "Well, from what you are saying, maybe it isn't such bad value for money", he said, "after all, it's educating you as well".

THE BROCKWOOD OBSERVER

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RUNNING OVER GOATS

by Noemi & Francisca, *Students*

Dear teacher,

I don't feel free. I don't want to compete anymore. I don't want to compare myself with others. I feel frustrated.

I feel trapped in a little box and I cannot come out. I feel lonely in the crowd.

What are we doing with our lives? Is this the purpose of my existence in this world? Can we work on it together?

I would be grateful for a response as soon as possible.

Your student.

If you were to ask a young person on the street what education is, as we did, she or he would probably answer: "Education is a certificate, it's a degree to get you a job, that's all!"

Education nowadays is based on knowledge. Education nowadays is a business. We sacrifice our lives for the future. We search for security in the form of pleasure. This prevents us from looking at what is really here around us. We are missing the beauty of life, the connection with the world. This connection is only possible when we listen with a clear mind, free from any system. We can then look at life as a whole and respond to it.

Let's take a moment and go deeply into this. Can we be honest with ourselves?

Everything is there and the question is how to open ourselves, to capture what exists. Everything exists already. Education is to permit a child, a young person to be free of stress. When we are not stressed, we open ourselves and our capacity to learn. There is no pressure and we are free.

Education is not that I know and you don't, or that I teach you. I just permit you to open yourself like a flower, like everything that grows. It's very simple! What is important is to be there, answer to what is needed, which comes in the moment. There is no place for an authority.

Looking at my life, why is it that I see this system but I am still accepting it, and therefore living a life of conflict? Can I be aware of myself and what surrounds me, in my daily life? I can get angry with my friend and then think about it. I can make conclusions in my mind and try to understand the action. Later on, once more, I get angry with my friend. Again, I think about it. What is the meaning of this understanding? Why is it that I keep on repeating the same actions? What is it that I am escaping from?

A group of friends were driving in a car; talking about awareness. Suddenly they ran over a goat without realising it.

Can we find out why this is happening in our lives? Together?



Noemi and Francisca

Michael Ledwith

FLOWERS

A poem by Layla, *Student*

The flowers make me understand
I don't know what
but something.

I imagine them growing from my head
Their roots there
replacing my hair.

I imagine them drooping down while I sleep
And whispering in my ear
dreams I'm glad to hear.

I imagine them sprouting from my fingertips
Instead of nails
daisies, buttercups and bluebells.

I imagine shedding petals
Instead of dead skin
and flowering every spring.

And if I imagine all this
Sometimes I forget
what I really am.

BROCKWOOD OBSERVERED

BROCKWOOD REACHING OUT!

by Adrian Sydenham, *Staff*

Recently I spent a few days in Copenhagen, a guest-participant in a series of talks and workshops given on the occasion of the annual educational conference of the Nordic Network of International Schools. On this occasion I was able to sit back and observe how other schools tackled the issue of health and well-being in particular, the overall theme curiously familiar: “Being well, learning well”.

Away from Brockwood, one cannot help but notice the dangers of jargonising educational endeavours, and the experience throws into relief the care with which one needs to use and expound on such worn K-world castaways as ‘educating the educator’, ‘learning together’, and the teacher must step down from his/her pedestal’. Inevitably, because of the sheer convenience of the short forms, the tongue trots them out as one talks with other teachers about their work. If the eyes of one’s interlocutor glaze over, then of course one has to give greater attention to using a non-hackneyed vocabulary. I’m afraid, however hard I tried, my own eyes began to glaze over at the term ‘mindfulness’, though, to be fair, different speakers or attendees used it with differing degrees of depth and intensity.

Another aspect which struck me was the freshness of the challenge which arises when the teachers one is speaking with have never heard of Krishnamurti. Naturally one proceeds with caution, alert to the possibility that we may have nothing in common or, alternately, that we might simply be adopting different lexical terms. The term ‘child-centred education’, for example, quickly reveals itself as meaning different things to different teachers.

The word outreach too can mean different things to different people. For some it means ‘recruitment’, and certainly we learn to keep our eyes peeled for those who might come to join us, whether as staff or as students. That part of the role includes attending various education or alternative fairs, manning a stand, and providing basic information. Included in all this, then, is the responsibility to let people know, or remind them, according to interest, that such a place as Brockwood exists, be it Centre, Foundation, Inwoods or Main School. Occasionally the situation calls for something more closely resembling a ‘lecture’, as happened in Italy last year, where the Per Corsi convention combined the theme of alternative medicine with alternative education. Parents, through their professional interests, and students, through their friendships, will sometimes find themselves taking on the role of outreach ambassadors.

Another part of outreach may involve more deliberate



Adrian Sydenham

Outreach in a nutshell : above the Admiral Ivar Huitfeldt commemorative column in Copenhagen the goddess Victoria reaches out to new generations across the globe.

dialogue and discussion, for example with various teacher groups, or K-reading and study groups, as has been the case in China in recent years. Then there are the public talks of more general interest, often drawing parents and teachers who are looking for something outside the conventional and competitive route of test-oriented rote education.

But another part of outreach is simply listening, keeping up with what is happening ‘out there’, whether in the educational, psychological, or health fields, as was chiefly the case in Denmark this Spring. There were three presentations in particular which proved interesting: the first involved the chemistry of the brain during the process of learning, the second its nutritional needs, and the third the posture of the body during the working day. This latter workshop looked at the ergonomics of chair and computer desk design, and the great benefits of self-administered foam-roller workouts.

The days when Brockwood brought image associations of an exclusive bubble are, I think, some way behind us now. Internet, the relative ease of modern travel, and financial pressures, among many other factors, have brought changes in the way Brockwood relates to the ‘outside world’, which, of course, is no longer really ‘outside’ at all. When thinking of our own roundabout route to the Georgian white house on the hill, those of us who have been touched by a K book, a talk or a phrase, by the Grove or the Study, the quiet of the Krishnamurti Centre or the togetherness of the Assembly Hall, will recognise the importance and the imperative of tentatively yet deliberately sharing these things with others.

A LETTER FROM A TRUSTEE

In May of each year our annual appeal is launched to raise funds for the Krishnamurti Foundation Trust Ltd and various needs at Brockwood as a whole. This year Foundation trustee, Gisèle Balleys, wrote the following appeal letter. At the time of going to print we have received £14,440 in donations.

Dear Friends

The year was 1966, the place was Saanen, Switzerland, and I was a young woman, raised in a mountain village and curious about the world. I heard Krishnamurti speak on an auspicious summer day and my life was never the same afterward. Just as his teachings awakened the consciousness of thousands, something was born in that moment that breathes within me to this day. That day in Saanen led me to many new beginnings; to an in-depth study of Krishnamurti, to find my vocation of teaching and working with children, to new lands (India and America where I visited several Krishnamurti schools), and most importantly to Brockwood.

I came to Brockwood in 1979 at the recommendation of a friend who thought that Brockwood's culture and new way of teaching would be important for me to be a part of. My arrival there fulfilled a deep wish. Then, as now, it was a place of great beauty. The first year I worked in the kitchen helping the team and also gave some support for teaching French. In the following years I was more involved with the students.

Krishnamurti was coming to Brockwood regularly on his way to America and to India. His presence was discreet but powerful. He brought an energy and a spirit that challenged us beyond our own limitations. Then, as now, this was not a particular truth for the select few. Krishnamurti raised the absolute; i.e. the challenge of transformation. All of this brought a different dimension to my life.

It is this reality - something that is as true today as it was then - that makes me believe so strongly in Brockwood and in what is possible to create together. It is also this that made me accept immediately when asked to be a trustee. I understood the necessity of working not in isolation, but jointly and cooperatively. It is what convinces me that supporting Brockwood in

this year's Appeal is so critical and I deeply wish others to have the same opportunity.

This year the Krishnamurti Foundation would like to buy the rights for the remarkable Krishnamurti video series *The Real Revolution*; in the Krishnamurti Centre we have an ambitious programme to install new double-glazing throughout the building; at Brockwood Park School we are planning to replace our old oil-fired boilers

with a new environmentally friendly and efficient woodchip boiler; and in Inwoods Small School we would like to make an increased investment in staff training and educational trips. So for this Annual Appeal our aim is to raise £100,000 and I am asking you to assist us by making a donation to one, or more, of the project funds that are dear to us at the moment.

As for my own story, my interaction and involvement with Brockwood and Krishnamurti has only deepened over the years. Indeed, coming full circle to my initial experience in

1966, organizers at Brockwood asked me to put together the Saanen events. And while the tent has long since been packed away, the learning continues and the spirit of exploration lives on at Brockwood.

I would be deeply grateful were you to consider supporting Brockwood and this appeal.

With heartfelt thanks,

Gisèle Balleys

Staff member 1979-1985, KFT Trustee 1995-

P.S. Please remember to give your gift by the 30th September, which is the closing date for our 2015 Annual Appeal.



Gisèle Balleys

To donate online please go to www.friendsofbrockwoodpark.org.uk

To donate by post write to The Development Office, Brockwood Park School, Bramdean, Hants. SO24 0LQ, UK

Or you can contact us by telephone: +44 (0) 1962 771 744 or by email development@brockwood.org.uk

THE WIDER WORLD

FROM BROCKWOOD TO BANGALORE AND BACK

by Anna and Tejo, *Students*

For the last few years students and staff from Brockwood have used part of the winter break to visit our sister schools in India.

Landing, with six students and three staff members, in the early hours of New Years Eve in the heat of Chennai coming from a cold morning at Heathrow, we were introduced to the art of waiting whilst two students from Germany arrived late because their baggage had been lost. So began a four-week trip of rickshaws, exciting bus rides, mosquitoes, one or two snakes, no panthers and constant, wonderful hospitality.

We spent the first few days in Vasanta Vihar, a Krishnamurti Centre in Chennai, acclimatizing ourselves to the extreme humidity and the food, and recovering from jetlag. We then moved from the swiftly modernising city to the rural, environmentally-friendly school of Pathashaala. Some of the most striking things about Pathashaala were its ecological awareness using solar panels and compost toilets, and discussion-based classes. All of the students were boarding, with ages ranging from 6 to 16. We stayed in the student dorms, each of which was named after a different species of bird. We attended classes and were introduced to the school's outreach programme. It was remarkable to visit a school where the environment was as much a priority as education.

From the small boarding school we travelled back to Chennai, and spent a few days visiting The School, a day school founded by Krishnamurti, in the heart of the city. Each day we travelled from Vasanta Vihar to the small campus in a car that played 'Twinkle Twinkle Little Star' when it reversed gear. In our time at The School, we heard about their trips to places such as Barefoot College, visited the Theosophical Society and had a dialogue with students.

Next, humid heat gave way to a parched and drought-ridden land in the incredible landscape of the beautiful 300-acre campus of Rishi Valley School. Here we were introduced to their outreach programme which was extremely touching. Rishi Valley had set up a small hospital for the local people, a small village school, helped to reintroduce native breeds of cattle and worked closely with the farmers to determine which crops would be able to survive in the extremely dry region. Because of the drought, the school is forced to bring in hundreds of gallons of water. We visited reservoirs and wells which had once been filled and were now bone-dry. Whilst we had previously heard that the area was suffering



En route in India

from drought, it was eye-opening to actually see it for ourselves.

From there we travelled to Bangalore, the technological hub of India. On the outskirts of the city we stayed in The Valley School, where we celebrated the Tamil New Year festival of Pongal, flying hand-made kites and cooking, eating and singing together. Each Brockwood student spent a night with one of the families from the school. The Valley School was one of the larger schools in terms of students. The majority were day students, but a small group of 24 lived on campus. The school grounds are largely wild, and home to many animals. On a night tour we saw snakes, scorpions, lizards and many different insects. However, we did not encounter the panther which is rumoured to have taken up residence somewhere on the campus.

After a brief drive, we reached Centre For Learning (CFL), a small, part-time boarding school in the countryside near Bangalore. We visited several of their classes, which are run in a way similar to those at Brockwood, being largely discussion-based. The whole school works on different projects with the same theme, which this year was water conservation. Whilst in CFL, we climbed the largest single rock in Asia, and lost Andrew, one of our staff members, along the way.

Our final stop before we returned to Brockwood was Shibumi, a day-school based on independent learning. We were only here for a few hours but it was fascinating to see their unique learning style and how it fired the students' enthusiasm.

Then, following a hospitable stay with one of the Shibumi families, a train-ride, an adventurous taxi journey and a 9-hour flight, we arrived back in frosty England and a warm welcome from Brockwood.

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE

Co-hosted by Brockwood Park School and Winchester University

by Sunsong Clark, *Staff*

"If the teacher is of the right kind, he will not depend on a method, but will study each individual pupil. In our relationship with children and young people, we are not dealing with mechanical devices that can be quickly repaired, but with living beings who are impressionable, volatile, sensitive, afraid, affectionate; and to deal with them, we have to have great understanding, the strength of patience and love. When we lack these, we look to quick and easy remedies and hope for marvellous and automatic results. If we are unaware, mechanical in our attitudes and actions, we fight shy of any demand upon us that is disturbing and that cannot be met by an automatic response, and this is one of our major difficulties in education."

From J. Krishnamurti, *Education and the Significance of Life*.

With the above challenge by Krishnamurti reverberating in our minds and hearts, over 80 students and educators gathered over the weekend of 6th and 7th June for a conference collaboratively conducted by the University of Winchester and Brockwood Park School. Educators from the U.S.A. and the U.K.—Professor Eleanor Duckworth from Harvard, William Ayers, Distinguished Professor of Education and Senior University Scholar from the University of Illinois in Chicago, John Yandell, Senior Lecturer at the Institute of Education London, Jon Berry, Programme Director at the University of Hertfordshire, and representatives of Brockwood Park School—challenged fundamental assumptions about learning environments, student-teacher roles and relationships, the effects of standardised testing on teaching and learning, and the overall well-being of children.

They spoke of the transformative potential of education



University of Winchester Panel

Jennifer Kowalewski

and of children's capacity to learn without external pressures creating a drive toward success or fear of failure. They described children as dynamic, complex beings in motion, rather than as fixed objects to be labelled and moulded. The audience observed a live learning session with Professor Duckworth with two 9- and 10-year old children exploring teaching as attention and inquiry rather than answering and telling. They also saw a Krishnamurti video on learning.

Day two, at Brockwood Park School, involved discussions and participant-centred workshops designed to deepen the inquiry into and understanding of educational pedagogy. Following the conference the educators from the US spent a few days at Brockwood Park school observing and talking with students and staff about the concerns we all have for children, education, humanity and the planet.

We were sad to see them go, and hope to have them return. We intend this to be only the first of many collaborative events with other educational institutions.



Brockwood Park School Workshop

Jennifer Kowalewski

STUDENTS AND ART

THE PERFORATED MOMENT

by Arina, *Student*

I guess it is not at all rare when, within one simple action, a whole world can unfold for you. Everything we do is, in that sense, a reflection of everything else. All that is required is to immerse yourself in the happening moment of that process.

For me this realisation came through clay, when I discovered that pottery-making is not just about centring what is between your palms. It's a much wider process, a magic that starts slowly.

I put on my apron, roll up my sleeves. Inevitably, my head is infused with everyday thoughts, existing in a prominent intangible realm: the mind. But what is real, exists now, in front of me; it is the hands, the cold wheel, the murky grey clay, the flying specks of dust.

Hands mould and play, unsystematically, sensing the clay, discovering the endless amount of possible shapes and curves within it. In pottery, you can't really 'achieve', there is no race; and coming to the wheel with an already set idea won't work. You can't just make something, mainly because you are not the one making it—the clay is. This is a fragile part, for it involves getting rid of a few expectations, a few prejudices. You are there to stir it, guide it, watch it, as it rocks frantically on the spinning wheel. You have to give in to it and focus, be-

cause the moment your pre-set ideas come up, you are back in the realm of the mind and you lose touch with what it is, you are not watching what is happening in front of you. Before anything can even begin to evolve, you need to centre the clay on the wheel as it whirls. The more you try to tame it, the more your idea of how it should be comes through. The more hand-pressure you apply, the wilder goes the clay, farther away from the centre. And where is that balance? In applying it evenly, it seems. Surely that is also vital to our lives beyond the pottery room.

In order for the clay to really find its centre, you have to look first at what is happening inside and around. Empty your thoughts; the lumpy clay is slipping through your fingers, making your whole body sway with it, always in motion, sympathetic to the humming of the wheel. You can't be thinking about other things. It's at this moment in time that everything happens, and you can't miss that, can't make it happen. Neither can you prevent it. Riding its own wave—it glides.

Centre the clay. Centre yourself. It is like the continuous drift of our lives which can't be approached with a set idea of what it needs to be. It just happens. And you can see where it takes you, and, surely enough, something is born.

Receptive, your fingers can begin to find shapes, bending. Forms grow and dwindle back down in the monotonous stir. The moment your schemes return; push them, demand more from them, and they collapse back to the indefinite grey shape. Soft and fragile, the clay's resistance depends only on your own.

In this simple act I found a great reality, in tune with our world. It took time to fathom and see that pottery is not a thing to do; *it is a way to feel.*



Pots thrown by Arina

SEEING WITHOUT THINKING

by Noemi, Student

All photographs by Noemi, taken with a Canon 5d Mark II - with 24-105 mm lens

'I am the only one in the world doing transcendental photography', he laughs, 'sorry for the lack of modesty!' This is what he does, and what he does is unique. This is how Marian Schmidt, Humanist photographer and director of the Warsaw School of Photography and Graphic Design presented himself in the Photography Workshop that he led from the 28th to the 30th of April at Brockwood Park School.

'What is learning? Learning is asking the right question in the right moment and answering the question yourself!' It seemed to me as though Marian Schmidt talked about the truth of photography as Krishnamurti used to talk about the truth of life. See without thinking: 'There is no picture if there is thought while you are seeing', he often repeats, and tries to really touch our subconscious and make us fully aware of what is happening in the spiritual act of taking a picture.



Sensitivity: 'You have to develop your sensitivity.' Marian talked about Sergiu Celibidache, the great Romanian conductor who inspired him. Sensitivity enables us to feel the vibrations emanating from a picture and the unity as well as the harmony between the elements.

I observed myself absorbing the words that came out of Marian's mouth as I felt they carried an important truth. On the trip to London at the end of the workshop I could look through the eye of the camera much more clearly.



A PARTICULAR PLACE

AN INSPIRING FARM ADVENTURE

by Mariamah Mount, *Staff*

Inwoods Small School took their 8- to 10-year old pupils for a three-night trip away (first time ever) to camp at the small permaculture farm of Pat Bowcock, in Dorset.

Our four day trip to Ourganics in Litton Cheney, was - dare I say it? - near perfect for our first residential trip. The kids were challenged and nourished by being away, making their own food (with adult help), sleeping together in a tent, helping out on the farm, learning about permaculture, sharing time together in work and play. Teachers were surprised at how little drama there was, and how invested the children were in working together and making the most of the adventure.

During our stay, we enjoyed the many ingenious amenities on the farm. It was fascinating to learn about using a composting toilet and another flushed with hand-washing water. The water for Pat's home, outdoor kitchen, and shower is heated by solar cells, pumped by lawnmower motors. The electricity is solar, stored in a mass of old tractor batteries.

Our first job was to collect slugs and snails - silently. Pat advocates a lot of silence and observation in her life and farming. The next tasks included moving bark chips, weeding in the forest garden while munching on sorrel, then washing the tools in the babbling stream near the clay pot 'fridges'. We also had a talk with Pat about Inwoods; the children described it as mainly a nature place where children 'are helped to deal with problems'; and have more freedom than at other schools.

Meals included harmoniously preparing the table and washing-up, with the children and adults taking turns cooking and washing up for one meal a day each, along with shared tasks for breakfasts and snacks. We had made the menu before the trip; the children were not only content with the food, but tried new things to their surprised enjoyment.

The first night started a tradition of Mary-Ann reading



The gang being introduced to the Ourganics team



After sitting for a long bus journey, Inwoods release their pent-up energies

from a book of Native American stories which sent most of us to sleep (me included, I must admit). Getting ready for bed was often so full of laughter, that it was a good thing we had a calming story to prepare us for rest. It became a morning tradition to recount the last thing heard in the story, after which the few who had stayed awake the whole time would tell the others the rest of the story.

On the third day, after a shocking shower of rain upon arrival at the beach, we had a beautiful day hiking on the coast, with dramatic views ahead and behind us. We were fascinated by the coast's Jurassic fossils: some of which were hard to leave behind! We snacked on apple-cake bought at the local village store. When there was clamouring for the meagre seconds, Mary-Ann took the opportunity to speak (with lightness and humour) to the children about greediness, gratitude, sharing, generosity and awareness, before sharing out the crumbs.

On the last morning, the children had time to sit quietly, noticing and noting down aspects of their surroundings. After that, many took showers, while others packed up the food, tents and belongings. We helped out on the farm, moving large piles of brush cleared from the last hedge-laying.

During the journey home the children dozed, sang, played and chatted, while the adults conversed on various topics, including ways to bring the teachings of Krishnamurti to life, plans for future trips and the importance of doing this regularly. We all felt it had been well worth the effort to come to share this unique time away together.

ENGROSSED IN THIS EVERLASTING DIALOGUE

by Gea, *Student*

In January I took a plane to India. I journeyed into an unknown setting with new people, vegetation, sounds, buildings, and a new schedule. I immersed myself in India! Writing this it still seems extravagant, yet it is only by saying it and thinking about it that the experience of such a far-off setting becomes real again.

Where I stayed, I felt allowed to be the way I was: sometimes extraverted, yet mostly calm, talking about and doing what I think is right. In a way it made me see how much I am actually free to live the way I want. I can judge what is right or wrong in life; I can then further analyse these judgments to come to other judgments that will take me to better values. One day as I was thoroughly mentally investigating the possibilities of letting go of these values and desires, I realised that during this time a large lizard had been standing right before me.

The animal was about 30 centimetres long, tail included! He looked extremely big. After being engrossed in this everlasting dialogue, seeing such a creature was like suddenly landing on earth. Its skin moved loosely around its muscles, like that of a snake; in fact to my imagination he looked very much like a snake (not that I have encountered many). The major difference was the legs; the thighs, calves and feet resembled those of humans. It was gripping onto a rock that reflected its similar colours, a mix between the colour of rich soil and the green of the pine needles, with shades of grey.

As it happened, it took me a few seconds before I was able to find it again as it had become one with the rock. I probably wouldn't have noticed it if it wasn't for the head moving. The human-snake creature responded immediately

to any fitful sound around us. In a swift reaction, only its head rotated—as if disconnected from the rest of the body. The light skin also followed the movement as the scales stood up across the entire body heightening the crest. After this moment of intense observation the lizard looked hesitant; it must have sensed my presence by then. It stood still like a statue as, inch by inch I moved away, stepping on the dry sand. Its head turned; frightened, it froze.



Gea relating the lizard story to photographer Jennifer Kowalewski

This is a glimpse of an experience from my time in India where I stayed the whole of the second Brockwood trimester. I lived at our sister school, Centre For Learning, on the outskirts of Bangalore. I was part of the school, attended some classes, and pursued my own studies I joined a group of students my age with whom I shared classes. I also spent time with staff members and children—the students were aged from six to nineteen. On top of that, I attended to the unfolding of the

lizard's action-packed life!

I also visited the Gurukula Botanical Sanctuary in Kerala, run by a former Brockwood student Suprabha. I joined Lorenzo, a Brockwood staff member who visits yearly to take young people through an experience of wild life in the forest. This visit definitely changed the course of my journey. I went back to CFL with a fresh perception of how the environment affects us.

Since both CFL and Brockwood face similar challenges as schools inspired by Krishnamurti's questioning, I feel we must keep a connection. Our differing cultures have shaped these schools in different ways, yet ultimately what is valued is much the same. I am most grateful for this experience, indescribable in its entirety.

Jennifer Kowalewski

POETRY PLEASE

DO YOU REMEMBER?

by Alexander V, *Student*

Does it live within us
This understanding of life?
Has it ever really left us?
Why do we not remember clearly
How to live this moment ?

Are we not one with all,
Are we not whole?

Did we forget, did we lose it,
Is it so difficult to recapture?
Do we complicate the simple,
Do we cook a complicated broth
With excessive ingredients
With copious rules and regulations
To be productive
Worthy members of society?

Is this life? Do you agree?

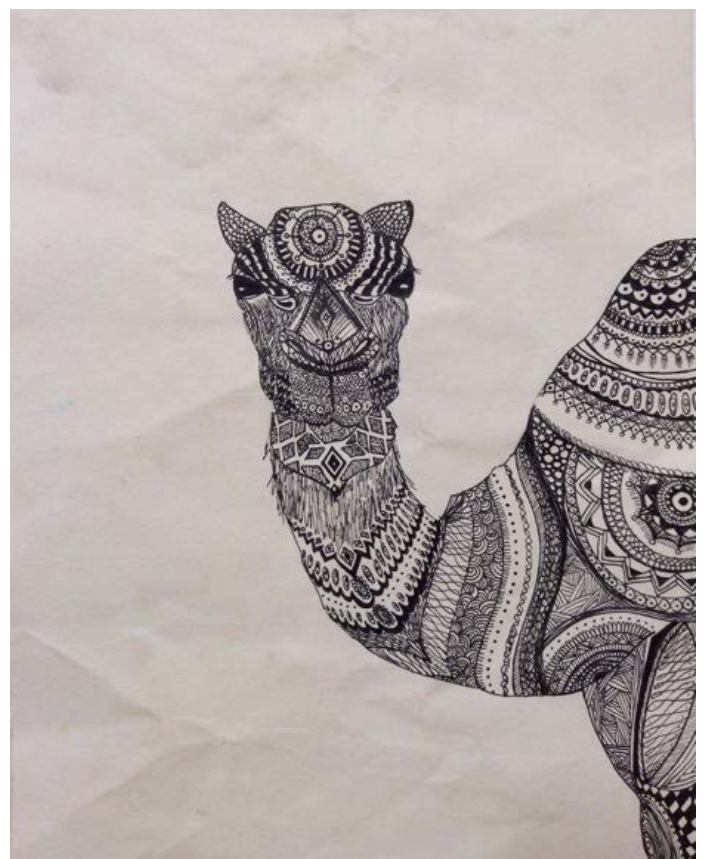
What if, in silence, we took a breath
Retraced our steps
Walked where we have walked before
With open minds, eyes, and hearts?

Will we not recognize our connection
To the wind, the warmth of the sun
The smell of wild flowers
The gentle vibration of the earth beneath our
exposed feet?

Do we only need to remember who we once were
What we are so desperately trying to be again?
Can we not shed our heavy winter coats
Untie our tethered hair and hearts
And let them play in the breeze
Unmask ourselves
To recognize who we all are?

Can we speak not with forked tongues
And tainted hearts
Can we speak sincerely
Live purely and kindly
For are we not akin?
Does it not all begin
And end
With a breath?

All Art Work by Léonie, *Student*





UNFOLDING

by Shibumi Students: Yannick
and Devskanda

Our arrival at Brockwood, a brown board between the plants,
a little down the road the bleating sheep seem in a trance.
The van comes to a stop, on the pebbles bags are placed,
the welcoming English air has a cool virgin taste.
A tour around the School follows soon after we settle,
all along the way, faithfully accompanied by stinging nettle!
At seven o'clock sharp, our supper is deliciously downed,
understandably so, for it's our first meal on the ground.
Night falls upon us, gently and in style,
leaving us happily exhausted, our faces in a smile.

The early morning dew upon the ragged grass,
burdening every blade with its little mass.
The rising sun, so gentle with grace,
little time to enjoy, as the process is apace.
By twelve o'clock noon the dew is no more there,
water vapour now blends with the lunchtime air.
White clouds on four feet graze the land so green,
hovering about leaving the place never so clean.
None the less so cute those very little lambs are,
not knowing their unfortunate fate is not very far.

A place free to access be it during dusk or dawn,
an ubiquitous blanket of green, known as the South Lawn.
Where people of all ages come to cheerfully unwind,
making this pleasant place an awe in the mind.
An assortment of activities that take their course,
ranging from lessons, to football, to Frisbee throws!
However the most watchful spectators out of all,
are the ones that are still, and very tall.
Amongst these trees, one stands out,
it is the Brockwood tree, without a doubt!

THE OLD AUGURER

by Adele, *Student*

The old augurer had a dream the other night,
of grey clouds and storm winds and flood,
and he searched the skies for any sort of pattern -
eclipse or birds in flight.
He looked down
and found himself
plummeting
for he stood not on the ground
but over the abyss itself.
He fell with a pounding of heart and of blood,
awoke with a start,
knocked over the lantern.
His wife grumbled in her sleep, rolled over, took the blankets -
and he, left bare on the bed
as a bird on the slab
under his own knife -
lying still,
and trying to divine some kind of meaning in his life.
Where had the birds been?
The signs?
The teardrops of the gods, to be caught in a goblet, and
perused?
Always, on the wings of disaster,
he had felt the calm of a child on the
cliff's edge -
an unerring stillness,
for on the winds of disaster
came the birds.
But now he knew, as a wingless paralysis
crept up on him as he lay,
that in dreams there were no birds,
so if in waking he should spread the entrails of a raven,
his lord and master would get from him
empty words.
Belief made them true
and belief had also flown.
He looked over at his wife, sleeping,
her world unshattered
and felt keenly that the night was spinning on without him,
felt heavily that his world had passed.
There was no place left for
an old augurer who had a dream the other night
of grey clouds and storm winds and flood,
and when he fell, he let himself fall.
He had no will left in his blood
to spill over again in search of a new god, a new rite.
A world with no birdsong was no world at all.

FOOD FOR THE SOUL

ALL THINGS NEW

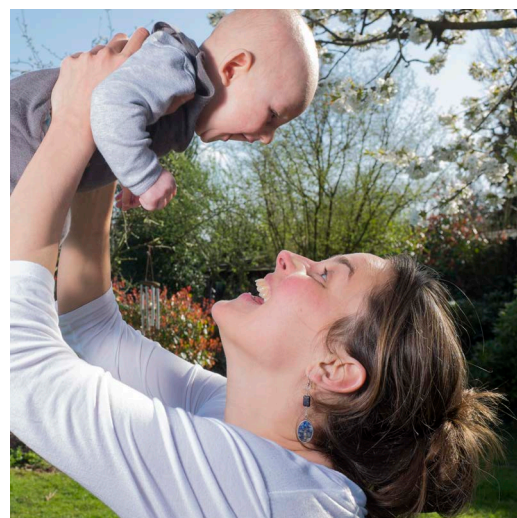
by Sarai Alons, *Staff*

Brockwood cook, Sarai Alons, has a new blender requiring new recipes, a new baby and new plans. We bid a warm farewell to her, her partner Petter, and their baby, Walker, and give thanks for all the marvellous meals she served to us.

A parent of one of our students recently donated a Vitamix blender for the student kitchen. This inspired Petter and me to get one for ourselves too; and I can tell you, it is fantastic. Super quick and easy. We have been making smoothies every day. It also works great for making nut butters, spreads and dips, as well as things like oat and rice milk. As summer is coming up and a smoothie is a great and refreshing way to start the day, I thought I would share some of our recent creations here. You do not necessarily have to have a Vitamix (although it does add a whole new dimension to the smooth in smoothie!). Most blenders will do.

And what else is new? Since January 1st of this year I am a very happy mother to Walker Evan Goldstine. Among other things, this means I am not working in the Brockwood kitchen anymore. Petter and I have also decided to move back to the Netherlands. After having been at Brockwood for 5 years it seems the time is right to move to new shores and new adventures.

But for now... smoothie time!



Sarai and Walker Evan

Petter Goldstine

OAT SO SMOOTHIE

Oats release their energy slowly, and cacao nibs can give you a real energy burst. This is a proper breakfast smoothie in my book!

SERVES 2

- two bananas
- 3 tbsp maple syrup
- 1 tbsp cacao nibs
- 80 gr oats
- 1/2 litre of your choice of dairy or non-dairy milk.

Put all ingredients in the blender and blend until desired consistency is reached and voilà!

PINK CLOUD

This is a smoothie I used to make a lot as a student, when I was working in a small café in Leiden (The Netherlands). It is very refreshing for any time of day and literally makes you feel like you are sitting on a pink cloud. Little kids love this one too!

SERVES 2

- 1/2 litre of freshly squeezed orange juice
- 2 bananas
- punnet of strawberries
- some ice cubes.

Peel the bananas, remove the green from the strawberries. Put all the ingredients in the blender and blend until smooth. Yum!

GREEN MONSTER

Greens are good for you! And this is a simple and delicious way to get your daily dose.

SERVES 4

- big handful of fresh spinach
- chunk of ginger
- 2 bananas
- 2 apples
- 3/4 litre of coconut milk
- some ice cubes if desired.

Peel the bananas, mango and ginger and cut into chunks. Put all the ingredients into the blender, adding the spinach and ice cubes last. Blend on high speed until smooth. Pour into glasses and kick start your day!



Petter Goldstine

WALDEINSAMKEIT: ON THE LAND COURSE AND LIVING WITH NATURE

by Yawen Xiao, *Mature Student*

I remember chancing upon an article about 28 beautiful foreign words the English Language should steal. One of these words was Waldeinsamkeit in German which refers to the feeling of being alone in the woods. Having spent most of my 28 years in life in various cities, I could not imagine what Waldeinsamkeit meant at all. Only after coming to Brockwood did I come to a realization that this is the perfect word to describe my state of mind when I come in contact with nature. I started taking the Land Course sometime after Christmas, without knowing why or what it would be like. I just wanted to take it for fun, and it really has been fun so far. Our first assignment was to go to a specific place in the woods every day at the same time, for 7 days. I did that, and it indeed gave me space to sit quietly and observe the trees, the sheep, the rain and the falling leaves.

I realized that I could not remember the last time I had heard the sound of falling rain. When I was young, whenever it rained, I jumped out and let the rain fall on my face. Cold and fresh, it was like swimming in the sea or an outdoor pool in winter. Not only that, but the rain seemed to wash away all of the accumulated thoughts in my mind, leaving it refreshed.

Before coming to Brockwood, I had not done many things: riding on the tractor to load manure; walking in the rainy, dark night to find the way home; cutting apple tree branches; learning aerial yoga in a tree; and many more. The time spent here is used to learn new things and to interact with people. I often find myself taking part in countless activities, and I cannot let go of any of them because all of them are exciting and enjoyable to me.



Yawen on Brockwood's South Lawn

I never thought of doing or had the chance to do any of these things so close to nature. Now, I am living here and often I feel that I am in a dream. The exposure to all of these new things and the opportunities to take courses like the Land Course has involved me in new ways of thinking and living. I watch documentaries, and learn how people from the other side of the world farm organic vegetables. All of these are meaningful to me, and if I had not come to Brockwood, I do not know if I would ever have found myself in such close contact with the soil - and even horse poo.

Just as I am sitting on the sunset bench in the Grove writing this, I suddenly embrace the pink ocean of sky right in front of my eyes. This patch of pink looks like pieces of strawberry sponge cake. Wow! I am indeed fortunate to be here right now, and yes, I realize too that the cell-phone screen I am using does not measure up to such a beautiful view. With this, I sign off and dive into the last of the sunset with the melody of the birds behind me.

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO...?

A LIFE BEYOND CULTURAL IDENTITIES

Soonya Vanichkorn, *former student*

I vaguely recall leaving Brockwood in 2004 after two years. It was sad to say goodbye to close friends who had become family, but I was also glad to leave, ready to face the world. Little did I appreciate at that time, the extent to which the learning experiences at Brockwood had strengthened me, forming the bedrock for my future career.

Arriving at Brockwood at 16, I was rather fearful of everything and didn't know how to go about doing most of the chores at the school. I spent several years growing up in K schools in India, but the requirements at Brockwood were far from traditional. Here, students and teachers are jointly responsible for everything from doing the dishes, and cleaning toilets to planning and organizing special occasions. Trivial as they may seem, these basic skills actually enabled me to get part-time jobs that paid my way through the undergraduate years.

The openness amongst a multicultural group of students at Brockwood also prepared me for a life beyond cultural identities, making it easy to settle anywhere around the world without feeling uprooted. After obtaining a Masters degree in International Relations in England, I went on to pursue a master's degree in Development Studies in Sweden and China. Here, I found myself in the position to smooth conflicts in class that happened from cultural misunderstandings.

During these years, I was also beginning to understand what harm unquestioned beliefs and values can do. It was evident in class that even though students had the same goals, such as wanting to alleviate poverty, it would not be possible for them to bring that about because their own conditioning would

cause a conflict of ideas which would prevent any real cooperation taking place. If students of development studies were already arguing about liberal policies in class, and were not able to draw fruitful conclusions, what would the situation at a round table at the United Nations be like?

After graduating, I decided to move back to Bangkok where I got a job as a journalist for the Bangkok Post. Journalism was one of the most fun, rewarding, and eye-opening experiences of my life. The more I was exposed to the societal problems of Thailand, the more I realized that

our issues resulted from a wrong approach to education. The current approach has failed to make students aware of what causes human suffering. At this junction, many of the things that I had started to question at Brockwood came up. I recalled the discussions during Bill's K Class about the complex nature of our own minds and why self-knowledge is important above all theories and policies.

Today, I am no longer a journalist. I work at Stream Garden, a small retreat in the south of Thailand, and part of the work is to organize summer camps and weekend activities for children. Located in unspoiled nature, Stream Garden offers itself as a living laboratory for children to observe the natural world. When they closely examine a butterfly, we hope they will be able to do the same with their own thoughts and actions. Through experiential learning about cooking, animal-rearing, forest hikes, drama, art, cleaning and so on, we try to nurture the spontaneous sense of curiosity that all children have, just as Brockwood did, which gives us the ground to grow up free of judgment and fear.

