

The Movement for Compassionate Living

New Leaves

No.96 April-May-June 2010



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The Movement for Compassionate Living - the Vegan Way
founded in 1985 by Kathleen and Jack Jannaway

New Leaves

NEW LEAVES is the quarterly journal of the Movement for Compassionate Living (MCL).

MCL promotes:

- a way of life that is free of the exploitation and slaughter of sentient beings, that is possible for all the world's people and that is sustainable within the resources of the planet.
- lifestyles that depend as much as possible on locally produced goods, thus avoiding the resource wastage and pollution of unnecessary transport and packaging.
- Vegan-organic methods of horticulture and agriculture that use no animals or animal by-products and are free from artificial fertilisers, pesticides and herbicides.
- the planting of trees, especially on the land freed from livestock farming.

Trees absorb CO₂ and store the carbon as wood, thus checking global warming; ruminant livestock (cattle, sheep, goats) emit methane, a far more powerful greenhouse gas than CO₂.

Mature trees of appropriate species produce maximum food per acre.

Wood from trees can be used for many constructive and productive purposes.

Woodland industries can provide livestock farmers with alternative sustainable incomes.

Global warming and nuclear war threaten the survival of all life. Politicians may have the sense to avoid nuclear war but they cannot stop global warming unless people change their lifestyles.

Our herbivorous ancestors turned predators aeons ago when the forests dried up and they lost their food supply. The forests grew again but humans remained victims of their killing habits. Now vegans have proved that we do not need to kill animals for food. Land should go back to the trees.

New Leaves is produced quarterly and distributed in January, April, July and October. The Editors do not necessarily agree with articles published.

DEFROSTING IN SUNNY WALES

The big freeze lasted longer than any of us thought it would. Even today, in the middle of April, the weather forecast mentioned the possibility of snow somewhere in the UK. Here in Wales it has been getting a little warmer – for the last couple of days my fingers have no longer been so very cold.

I have been very touched by all the messages and offers of help and advice - thank you very much indeed. Some of the advice was useful and helped me to be a little warmer than before; some other advice may be useful and I shall certainly consider it carefully as it concerned work on the house that is yet to be done. The main reason for my cold house was the problem with the wood supply, and that was compounded by other problems occurring at the same time. But I am happy to say I have come through the most miserable winter of my life, and I am hoping it will remain so. Spring is coming and I have started stockpiling firewood for next winter. My PV panels are producing electricity (239kWh in the last 36 days). From yesterday morning to this morning, with grey sky for most of yesterday, the production was 4kWh - whereas the user meter (measuring electricity I use from the grid) had gone up by only 1kWh. And for the last few days I have had a full tank of hot water, heated by the sun, reaching close to or over 60 degrees Celsius. The sun is shining and I am smiling.

This issue of New Leaves has the applications for the grants - there are five of them. All will be discussed at the AGM, and allocation of the legacies money decided on. Like last time, if you cannot make the AGM get in touch with me to let me know your thoughts on the applications and I will collate all the views and present them at the AGM. It would be helpful if you could let me know your preferences as to the order of the applications. So if the one that you would like to get the money is not the one others would support we would know your second favourite and so on. All the ways to contact me are on the front cover of New Leaves.

Those of you who are planning to come to the AGM, please let me know in advance, particularly if you are staying a night/nights. As you have been told, there are various possibilities for overnight stays: my house has room for eight people on two single beds, a double bed, a double sofa bed and an inflatable double mattress, and for more on the floor with your own bedding. Brynderwen Community in Swansea (15 miles away) has more overnight possibilities, and Christina Palfrey (a few miles from me) can accommodate a person or two. Bring your own sheets or sleeping bags.

We will do our best to accommodate everyone wishing to come and stay. However, the earlier you let us know the better your chance for a comfortable sleeping arrangement. Even those just turning up and wishing to stay the night will most likely be able to do so, but not in much comfort unless you think a hard floor is the most comfortable place to sleep on, and people stumbling over you is your idea of fun.

There are a few things about travelling here that you need to know, one of them being that there are no Sunday buses to or from the village. It is possible to catch a bus on Sunday from Pontardawe to Swansea or Neath (evenings Neath only), where you can catch trains leaving Wales. Pontardawe is too far to walk to from here but hopefully there will be some people with cars who can give lifts if anyone needs to leave on Sunday. Bus services on Saturday between here and Swansea are reasonable (the first bus leaves Swansea at 8.40 arriving 9.27, and the last bus leaves at 21.04 reaching the train station at 21.58). Coming to Swansea there are direct train services running from London or Manchester, or stations in between. Megabus stops at Cardiff but there is an hourly shuttle service (bus no 100) from Cardiff to Swansea from where the Megabus stops. I have only found information about a day return fare on the Shuttle service, but after 2pm it is only £2.50 from Cardiff to Swansea. National Express has services all the way to Swansea. If you book your travel early you may be able to get good deals with any of these services. I have not included information for people travelling inside Wales as I think they will probably know all the relevant details. But if anyone from Wales or outside Wales needs more travel information then get in touch with me, especially if you intend coming by local bus and need to know where to get on and get off.

All that remains for me to say is 'Hope to see many of you here in June'.

Ireene-Sointu

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING / SOCIAL WEEKEND

Friday 11th June - Monday 14th June

**AGM - Saturday 12th June at 1.30pm
to be held at 105 Cyfyng Road,
Ystalyfera, Swansea SA9 2BT**



FUNDING APPLICATIONS

>>>> 1 <<<<

CFF'S FOREST GARDEN PROJECT

Application for £21,000

Climate Friendly Food, Fir Tree Community Growers and SHOOTs Food Coop

Climate Friendly Food (CFF) is a not-for-profit social enterprise with charitable aims, which was brought together by a group of organic growers concerned about the quality of the information about climate change released to farmers and growers. Its demonstration wing is called Fir Tree Community Growers and it is run on stockfree principles by myself, a longstanding vegan. After nearly a year of hard work we have had a successful funding application for £100k to Lotteries Local Food for a three acre demonstration market garden (which will be fully stockfree organic, and has been in red clover since 2007), with the vegetables being sold to low-income families through the SHOOTs Food Coop supported by social landlord Helena Housing. There is also a health & wellbeing focus for volunteering and training. This is where Elaine Garrett looked nearly three years ago when we were exploring the possibilities of this being a site for a VON demonstration centre. Fir Tree Community Growers also have access to a 10 x 60m barn on a day rate. The centre is set to engage with 2000 beneficiaries in the next three years, predominantly from hard-to-reach groups (low income, poor health, unemployed), and the land is of course stockfree.

CFF is registered as a community interest company (CIC), with an asset lock like a charity and a legal declaration as to our charitable aims[1]. The reason we did not become a charity was because we have kids and mortgages and need an income, so becoming trustees was not an option at the time. However, in the future if we may get together a group of trustees, who can do it without remuneration, then it is quite straightforward to convert a CIC to a charity.

In my research with CFF I have come to realise just what a visionary Kathleen Jannaway was with her "trees" as edible food crops. In truth forest gardening is a much more efficient food system in terms of calorific output per hectare and carbon sequestration than market gardening. Its disadvantage is the long lead-in times between planting and harvesting. I have regularly corresponded with, and am inspired by, Martin Crawford of the Agroforestry Research Trust.

Forest Garden Project

We would like to create a satellite "commercial" forest gardening project on land that is currently used for grazing. The produce from this will also be eventually sold to low income families through the SHOOTS Food Coop. I think vegans struggle with food production arguments on lower grade land (i.e. that it is only suitable for grazing livestock), and we need a demonstration to show the alternatives, especially income generation. We would like to locate a site of approximately one acre within two miles of the main centre, and on this grow commercial forest garden species. We know that in the North West the following will do well:

- Upper storey - bramleys, plums, elderberries (for wine and cordial), hazel
- Shrub layer - gooseberries, raspberries, blackberries, rhubarb
- Lowest layer - herbs
- Plus willow, nitrogen fixers and dynamic accumulators like comfrey
- There would be opportunities for remembrance edible trees.

This knowledge is based on what did well in my parents' (neglected) garden when I was growing up. We are also seeking consultancy from Martin Crawford as he is the No.1 expert in the UK on forest gardening.

The ownership of the land

I think the site needs to be owned for reasons of permanency, and as land managers we are prepared to commit to this for the rest of our lives (I am 37 and Keith 39). We are very settled in our community of the village of Kings Moss (and are well liked within the village, particularly our children, Alice 5 and Emily 1). There are lots of aspects about this project that feel right. There are two possible ways to buy the land: (1) CFF buys the land arranging the legalities in such a way that the land will remain vegan at all times and would pass to a vegan organisation if CFF fails. The mechanism for this is called an asset lock and it could be set in favour of VON. (2) The Vegan Organic Network (VON) buys the land and rents it out to CFF. This has been agreed by VON in principle with some conditions [2].

The costs

Land prices are typically at £8k per acre but very small pockets are often more. VON has estimated that there will be an additional £5k legal fees etc, and CFF estimates if it were to be the owner the legal costs would be

half of this. Martin Crawford's design and consultancy would be £450. Plant and mulch costs would be approximately £7k. So the budget we are looking at is approximately between £18k and £21k for one acre, and more if the land is bigger. However, there is much value in demonstrating how much food can be produced from just one acre so this is probably the scale we would like to stick to.

Conclusion

In time we think that this project could be a massive attraction for not only the vegan movement but sustainable food in general. The land will be only 14 miles outside the city centre of Liverpool, and will be accessible by public transport. It is important that we have projects near population centres, and as we are already engaging with thousands of beneficiaries this project could make a real difference.

Jenny Hall

Notes

[1] CFF legal declaration

CFF is to advance the education of the public by promoting a full understanding of the relationships between food production, climate change and use of natural resources	General public – awareness raising. Reduce agriculture's contribution to climate change. Farming and growing community – information dissemination to improve food production practices. Consumers – awareness raising.
CFF is to advance the education of the public by carrying our research (and disseminating the results) into agricultural and forestry production methods and the effects of these methods on greenhouse gas emissions and fossil fuel use	General public – awareness raising. Reduce agriculture's contribution to climate change. Farming and growing community – information dissemination that will lead onto best practice information about food production techniques.
CFF is to preserve, conserve and protect the environment through the prudent use of natural resources	General public – help protect the environment for future generations. Reduce agriculture's contribution to climate change. Farming and growing community – awareness raising e.g. when the community preserves the soil they can also create carbon sinks.
CFF is to promote and enhance farming and food production techniques by producing information as to best practice in relation to climate change and fossil fuel use	Farming and growing community – this information is generally not acknowledged and we aim to publicise it in a user friendly form.

CFF is to advance a community-led and inclusive certification scheme with regard to greenhouse gas emissions	<p>General public – reduce agriculture's contribution to climate change.</p> <p>Farming and growing community – they will be consulted at every stage so that the scheme is relevant. The cost will be kept low so that food producers can be involved.</p> <p>Consumers – will for the first time be able to identify best practice farms.</p>
CFF is to advance a demonstration farm which shows best practice with regards to greenhouse gas emissions, renewable energy and community-led education	<p>General public – farm visits and information dissemination.</p> <p>Farming and growing community – farm visits, information dissemination and accredited qualifications in food growing.</p> <p>Residents in St Helens – farm visits, able to buy the produce from the farm, access to low cost training about food growing and access to accredited qualifications in food growing</p>
If the company makes any surplus it will be used for...	Research into climate friendly techniques of food production and providing free events for farmers and growers and local residents.

[2] VON conditions

- VON – buy and own the land. CFF – lease land from VON. Lease to be on a full maintaining basis.
- CFF pay for all infrastructure, plants, insurances, council tax, water rates etc, and wind-up costs if project fails. Site managed, including health and safety and public liability, by CFF. CFF to search for land. Payments, eg for plants, other than for the land, to be made direct, rather than through VON.
- CFF to give assurance in the lease that animal free status would be maintained. CFF to specify how the project would further education in stockfree organic principles (involves simply stating about visits, write-ups, etc). Length of lease and rent to CFF to be decided (initially rent free, to be reviewed at intervals). VON not to have any legal responsibility for monitoring animal free status of the land during lease; there would be a condition that it is stockfree organic certified.
- Costs must be funded – eg legal advice on asset locks, valuation, conveyancing, any taxes, planning investigations, stamp duty, administering set up of local matters such as land registry on start of lease, drawing up and administering lease.
- To avoid ongoing or permanent liability, its very important that agreement is made with MCL and CFF that if the land is not used within a given time or not within the terms of the lease, or the project fails, then VON can if they wish try to transfer the land to an appropriate group, or if this is not possible to sell it. If the project or CFF failed, and transferred assets to VON, VON would not want any permanent liability to maintain the site in any way.

- Importantly, a satisfactory soil analysis/evaluation of any proposed purchase is needed at an early stage. Land is often sold by tender or at auction, and a strategy for dealing with this is needed. A risk analysis would be required. It's unlikely that planning consent would be needed but this would need to be investigated and confirmed.
- All the above must be clarified before starting the legal process with any land. As VON would be the legal landowner, all funds must be used in accordance with its charitable status. The above are the minimum requirements; there may be other conditions in the light of discussions.

>>>> 2 <<<<

SPREADING THE WORD ABOUT GREEN, CLEAN, CRUELTY-FREE GROWING

Application for £5,500

Last year the Vegan-Organic Network completed production of a video about Stockfree Organic growing, based on Tolhurst Organic Growers, the renowned stockfree organic farm. This proved to be a most worthwhile venture; it is clear to us from our experience with this that video films, distributed as DVDs and used for example on websites, and in press releases, can make a huge contribution to spreading the word about the benefits of animal free/vegan-organic growing. Only recently we were in touch with a new contact in Oregon USA and were quickly able to provide an online copy of the video for them to use in a presentation about veganism the very next week. We are about to mail out this DVD to the 450 horticulture growers provided by the Soil Association.

VON is presently in the process of contracting a professional filmmaker, located as near as possible to Graham Cole in Southampton who will be the experienced vegan demonstrator in a new video about home growing Grow your own - the animal free way, based on small scale food production. This DVD will be widely distributed to allotment societies, Garden Organic (formerly HDRA), etc. As with the previous video it will be available to view on the VON website (and could easily be used on the MCL and other sites).

In order to do a professional job and reach the widest possible audience, producing this video needs funding. VON would like to apply for a grant of up to £5,500 towards the costs of completing the filming and producing 1000 copies initially. We would be pleased to provide a copy of the quote we are likely to accept.

The contribution of MCL, together with MCL's website address, would appear on all copies of the DVD.

THE BURSARY FUND

Application for £10,000

The Bursary Fund, opened in 2005, exists primarily to support students who wish to undertake courses relevant to vegan-organic food production. As MCL members will know from the regular updates in New Leaves, much progress has been made thanks to the fund. Donations came in from individuals and groups, most notably when MCL granted the interest from the £70,000 Centre Fund. Now, by agreement with MCL, the Centre Fund will be put to another good use over the next five years by promoting a Network of Stockfree Organic Centres - operational details are available from VON.

Eight grants have been made, helping students who would otherwise not have been able to start their courses. All grants have so far been made to students at the Welsh College of Horticulture/Glyndwr University. With VON's initiative and involvement, the Stockfree Organic Standards and principles now form part of the curriculum of the foundation degree in Organic Horticulture Management. This is a world first and something to be celebrated. All VON/MCL funded students have passed their exams, and have gone on to promote our joint work. There have been many positive spin-offs, for example VON's advertising of the Bursary Fund has been reproduced in the horticultural press, making the principles of stockfree growing more widely known, and two VON-funded students laid on an end of term demonstration of vegan food and lifestyle for their colleagues.

The future of the Bursary Fund needs to be ensured. Interest rates have shrunk to almost zero for charities. Although small donations continue to come in, the Bursary Fund will shrink as capital is used to make grants instead of providing income. To keep the fund on a sound foundation, VON would like to apply for a grant.

Glyndwr University has introduced a two year foundation degree course, replacing the diploma and certificate courses. This higher level course is also more expensive. The fees are £2500 a year making it £5000 per student for the two years. To support this is an enormous drain on our existing resources. Even if only a half contribution is made to each student, the present fund will soon run out, so this is a pressing matter. Therefore VON asks MCL to consider a grant of £10,000 so that we can ensure we can fund at least two students a year for five years. The latest

news is that the University is planning to re-introduce the HNC course in addition to the degree, an excellent move because the HNC is more hands-on than the degree – so more students needing bursaries can be expected.

With this aid the vegan-organic farmers and growers of today and the future can be assured and encouraged.

>>>> 4 <<<<

PLANTS FOR A FUTURE

Plants for a Future is a plant-based project, situated on a 28 acre paradise in Cornwall, that was started in 1989 when we, Addy and Ken Fern, first purchased the land. Ken had spent many years prior to this in developing a database of over 7,000 species of useful plants that could be grown in this country and, armed with this knowledge, we began to develop a windswept field of barley stubble into the wildlife haven it is today.

As a result of our work a charity named Plants for a Future was established, and this has been instrumental in making all the knowledge contained in the database freely available on the internet (see www.pfaf.org). Many hundreds of people have visited and been inspired by the land over the years – many of whom have had life-changing experiences from the visit. In addition many, many thousands of people from all over the world have accessed the database and been empowered to make fresh choices in life. In addition a book, '*Plants For A Future: Edible & Useful Plants For A Healthier World*', was written by Ken, and this continues to be sold by Permanent Publications (ISBN 1 85623 011 2).

It may seem a little strange that we have put in two conflicting applications below, but there have been some problems that may prevent us from moving to Brazil (see first application). If this is the case, the alternative application is for developing the project on the land here in Cornwall. We will have a better idea of what is happening well before the MCL AGM in June, and we will then withdraw one of the two applications.

Plants for a Future in the Tropics Application for £40,000

We have now decided that the time has come for us to move on. The land in Cornwall is too beautiful a place ever to go back to the plough, so we have decided not to sell it and, instead, to ensure that there are people here who can look after it and, hopefully, develop it further.

We have decided to move to Brazil (Addy was born there so she and both of our children hold Brazilian passports). It is our intention to buy land there in order to demonstrate vegan self-sufficiency in a country that at present tends to worship the consumption of meat. Ken has been working for some time on developing a database of tropical plants (2,800 species as of March 2010), and this will be made freely available on the internet in the not too distant future.

It is our intention to buy somewhere between 3 – 10 hectares and establish a woodland garden that will primarily be a productive source of food, as well as supplying many other commodities and space for the wildlife. We intend to encourage visitors to the project, especially volunteers to help with the work, in order to show them the possibilities of such an integrated method of growing food. Above all we want to show people that it is possible to provide a decent standard of living from the land without having to go out and destroy the rainforest - and then have to go out a few years later and destroy some more because the soil on the first piece has been so depleted and degraded that it is no longer productive. Our way of growing will enable food gardens and forest to grow side by side, and people to appreciate the natural beauty around them without having to destroy it.

We have a certain amount of funds to do this but, because we do not want to sell our land in Cornwall, funds are rather restricted. We have the possibility of using some land at an environmental project in the Atlantic Rainforest (see www.iracambi.com for details of their activities). Whilst this is very positive, it would mean a certain lack of security since we would not own the land. We would rather buy some land close to Iracambi and work together with them in this way. Therefore, if you should choose our project for funding, then all the money you allocated would be used towards buying the land and a dwelling. Since we do not yet have a specific property in mind we cannot give an exact figure, but we anticipate the property will cost in excess of £40,000, so if you felt able to allocate the whole amount to us then it would all go on obtaining the land and dwelling.

Plants for a Future in Cornwall

Application amount to be determined before the AGM

The project on the land at Plants for a Future in Cornwall has always been held back by a lack of facilities for the people who come, whether as short-term volunteers or as longer-term members, so this must be the first priority. We would like to convert the existing agricultural shed into a

structure that can be used for:

- 1) accommodation for a few people living and working on the land
- 2) workshop space for educational activities
- 3) a cooking and dining area and a shelter for workers and visitors - this would include compost toilets and washing facilities
- 4) storage of tools and machinery
- 5) a drying room for seeds and herbs
- 6) storage for apples and other produce from the land, ideally in a secure, brick-built underground area

The present shed is badly in need of repair. Replacing it with something more serviceable would be far more cost-effective than patching it up, and would enable us to incorporate appropriate technologies for renewable energy to provide heat and power.

We hope to put an outline of the cost on the PFAF website (www.pfaf.org) before the MCL AGM in June. A grant towards even part of this will make it much easier for us to obtain matched funding from elsewhere.

We would be very interested in hearing from any vegans who would like to become involved in the project or come as volunteers.

We would like to thank you for reading this application and hope that you will be able to look upon it favourably.

Addy and Ken Fern

>>>> 5 <<<<<

A FUND FOR SMALLER PROJECTS

I'd like to suggest the idea of putting aside maybe up to about £5,000 as a fund for smaller projects as and when the demand arises. Grants (or sometimes temporary loans) of between say £100 and £1,000 would then be available to help anyone, or any small group, who wants to do something but can't afford to risk or spend their own money.

This could be advertised in each issue of New Leaves, and a small committee could be formed to decide quickly whether or not to allocate funds - perhaps after a mention in the next New Leaves, but with no need to wait around for an AGM. It might be necessary to advertise this outside New Leaves (eg in the Vegan Society's magazine, or on the Vegan Village online noticeboard), but this would in turn bring publicity for MCL and no doubt more material for New Leaves.

Malcolm Horne

REPORTS FROM MCL FUNDED PROJECTS

VEGAN-ORGANIC NETWORK THE CENTRES NETWORK PROGRESS REPORT MARCH 2010

This is a condensed report - fuller details will be gladly provided to anyone who would like to contact VON. We are in the process of applying for grants to employ a worker to implement our comprehensive programme, in particular the Network of Organic Stockfree Centres. The thrust of this is to promote stockfree organic methods, and the philosophy of non-violence upon which this system is based. The Directory, available from VON, is a guide to how the Network will be organised. It also provides a list of stockfree organic farms that VON intends to be the foundation of the network.

The fund from the MCL grant has already had positive benefits. A grant of £700 has been made to support Oakcroft Organic Gardens, Malpas, South Cheshire, and this will be used to facilitate demonstration of stockfree organic methods.

As an example of the positive interaction between elements of the Centres Network, Mehr Fardoonji, Gandhian, owner and previous grower at Oakcroft, and Tim Carey and Lloyd English, the present growers there, will be meeting the current Organic Horticulture Foundation Degree students at Glyndwr University. They will share experiences and offer insights into the stockfree organic system. A visit to Oakcroft for the whole department is planned. Tim is a former VON/MCL sponsored student and Lloyd is completing his studies sponsored in the same way; the present students include three sponsored by VON/MCL.

Tim Carey welcomes volunteers to help on the Oakcroft project in return for food and accommodation. There is an open day at Oakcroft on Saturday 10th July. Contact Tim on tim@oakcroft.org.uk or ring 07726 266 501 for details and more information.

For details of VON's programme of other allotment and farm visits in 2010 please contact Peter White at advice@veganorganic.net or ring 0161 928 3614.

Thanks to all MCL members for their support!

CREATING WELHEALTH CO-OP

PROGRESS REPORT MARCH 2010

This winter has been a test for the newly grown monkey puzzle trees. There wasn't time to get the seed boxes inside the workshop before the snow came - they were exposed to temperatures of -15C and they came out of it OK and in one piece.

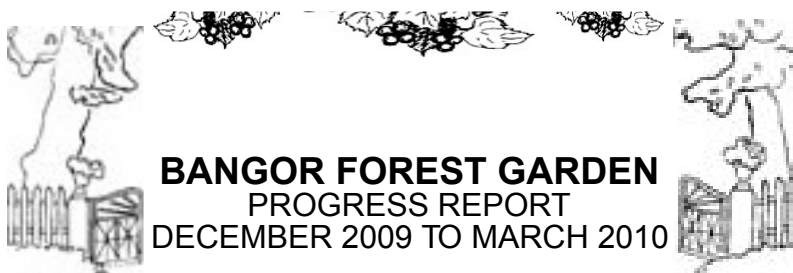
We have had heavy snow over January and February, and it has been far too hard and cold to do any of the outdoor MCL projects (recovering the polytunnel and extending it with a shed at one end, erecting a 30ft potting shed in the nursery area, and work on the roof, walls, windows and door of the house). It has been the worst winter we have had for a long time, and a real test!

So, with winter being scarcely over, and spring barely starting in March, it was time to get over to a community garden at Kinmel Bay, near Rhyl, to help coppice their large willow maze, and also obtain the cuttings from them to plant here at Tyn Y Nant. When I did this last year, I got 2,500 willows cut in a day and planted them all out in four days! It's incredibly easy to plant a forest of willow quickly.

This year I'd sent hundreds of emails to my network, Transition Town groups, low carbon groups, and the North Wales Freecycle groups, telling them about getting (for free) nine varieties of super biofuel willow, basket willow, and structure willow. We had a good turnout compared to last year, and left there with just over half their willow maze coppiced, for which they were very grateful. Luckily I had two people helping me, and I'd estimate we came away with 3,500 willows. The very next day we started planting them, and with another person coming to stay, and also my daughter at the weekend, we had them all planted out in about three days! So, in three to four years' time, when they are settled and growing well, they too will be ready for coppicing, and will be offered to people for free as a resource to grow their own trees, also for basketry and biofuel. So now we have nearly 6,000 willows spread out over various terrains (a lot of the basket willow is quite near to the house, for ease of basket making).

Come and stay and help - all very welcome.

Frank Bowman
Telephone 07980 158661
E-mail frank_bowman@yahoo.co.uk



December: The work on the DIY guided tour is going well. We are putting the new garden plan, and newly-written plant list with one-line descriptions, onto both sides of A3, ready for laminating. These are to be handheld, to refer to, as one goes round the garden, looking to see where the plants are, and also what they can be used for. We also repaired the tarp which shelters the wood, and the cob oven.

January: Chippings spread on the paths, and we cleared some dead stems of burdock and teasel, etc, and put them on the compost heap. Prepared bamboo for canes, and did a lot of tidying up. The garden looked really tidy at the next workday.

February: We radically pruned the Sea Buckthorn, which has a tendency to grow heavy and high and then split and crash to the ground, which is how it spreads. We have enough Sea Buckthorn and we don't want it crashing on people! We did a lot of other pruning, gathering the prunings for the next workday's pear grafting, and planted some of the prunings from the rootstock trees to propagate more trees for rootstock. Rootstock are those used for grafting fruit trees, they are fantastic rooters and they determine the size the fruit tree grows to.

March: We grafted the Moonglow and Concorde cuttings from the month before on to four crab pear trees, as well as Bramley apple cuttings (brought in by volunteers) on to apple rootstocks. A member had brought in Apple Rhubarb, so we've made a start on a rhubarb patch - rhubarb has never done well here, so it will be interesting to see how it grows in the pond area. The pond was full of frogs, popping their heads up and singing in chorus, all very interested to see what we were doing! We also planted two new pear trees, a Beurre Hardy, and a Doyenne de Comice, and eight plum trees (Opals, Golden Gages, and a Victoria).

We are in the process of applying for a £5,000 grant from the lottery fund. This would be used for a polytunnel, a shed, some tools, a garden open day, and for broadband, and initiatives to increase community membership

and involvement, including child-centred activities. We are looking into having a stall on a local farmers' market, as well as making a shop front at the BFG for selling forest garden plants. We are also supporting a proposal for a project at Bangor, near to Treborth Botanical Gardens, which is a large area where allotments and other sustainable and environmental initiatives are proposed, including a new forest garden.

Our AGM is on Sunday April 11th with a garden tour, and coffee and tea provided. We usually have a camp fire and make a soup or a stew from the produce in the garden.



Frank Bowman

EVENTS FROM ANIMAL AID DIARY

www.animalaid.org.uk

info@animalaid.org.uk Tel. 01732 364546

Saturday 1 May: London street collection

We are allowed to collect money ONCE only in London every year, so this day is really important. Contact by email karin@animalaid.co.uk or by telephone 01732 364546 ext 223.

Saturday 8 May: Global Boycott Proctor and Gamble Day

A day of action organised by Uncaged Campaigns to increase the pressure on Proctor and Gamble to change their cruel animal testing practices. Contact by email info@uncaged.co.uk or by telephone 0114 272 2225

Saturday 5 June: Animal Aid's Annual Sponsored Walk

Animal Aid's 7th annual sponsored walk in Hampstead Heath, London. More details later www.animalaid.org.uk

Saturday 5 and Sunday 6 June: Vegan Beer Festival

A fun weekend festival promoting vegan beers and ales. Starts midday at the Sumac Centre, 245 Gladstone Street, Nottingham. Contact by email nvvs@veggies.org.uk or by telephone 0845 458 9595 / 07804 203459.

COLLECTIVE, STOCKLESS, ORGANIC FARMING

See <http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/csofarming/> for discussions on making the world a better place for us and the rest of the animals. Join in the discussion, volunteer some of your time, even possibly get a full time job.

STILL DRIVING

I am sure all MCL readers are trying to lower their carbon footprints. Probably most of us would feel it is part of our being vegan, living compassionately with the values and beliefs of our founder – the late Kathleen Jannaway (a Quaker).

I and some of my local Quaker friends in Blackheath have formed an Eco Group. We meet monthly to tell each other what changes we feel able to make, and to encourage and support each other. We are even working towards a Transition Town. Some people with big gardens are sharing them with those who wish to grow vegetables. I myself share my vegan-organic allotment with a friend, and also belong to VON. A few years ago I did a permaculture course, and dedicate the whole of my life to live by those principles.

Yet, and I expect you will all now be horrified, I **still** drive a car! I shall try to justify this to you (and myself!). Then perhaps I will not be seen as an absolute hypocrite? Also maybe it will help others to work out why **some** green things are **not** possible for us in our present circumstances. It has to be a personal individualised decision for each person.

The car is a Renault Clio, a 1.2, so very green. I bought it new, part-exchanging my old camper van, paying via a four year scheme with 0% interest. I will have completed payments this next June (2010). It is the most reliable and comfortable car I have ever owned. Especially valued is the press button radio tuned to Radio 4, so I can keep up to date with the world (I do not have a TV), and Radio 3 and Classic FM for my love of 'Early Music'. As I'm an 'Advanced' driver (a member of IAM) I believe I drive very well and so 'economically' regarding emissions etc. I am often able to give lifts to elderly or disabled friends without cars.

Yes, I do cycle whenever I can - and walk at least twice daily for the exercise of myself and my dog. However, if you have read my piece in New leaves (No 95), 'Coping With Animal Myths', you will know that I try to take Twixt everywhere with me. The backseat, when folded down to extend the boot makes a big comfy kennel. We can even curl up together to sleep if I need a rest on a long journey! I am 75 and Twixt is nearly nine (63 in human years). We can have weekend breaks at residential conferences (instead of holidays) with Twixt living in the car by day, frequently visited and exercised by me.

I work as an Autogenics Therapist and Quaker spiritual healer – visiting my clients in their own home. I specialise in caring for the terminally ill – helping them to have a 'good death'. This often means night work, where a car is essential to keep me 'safe' in the dark, 'guarded' by Twixt; and so that I do not become over-tired.

I only need one 'big shop' a month for the plant food etc (that which I do not grow). I try to combine this one journey with as many errands as possible. Thus I do not have many little uneconomical trips. I would not, therefore, be able to carry everything on a bicycle. Also Twixt would need to stay home for longer than the two hour limit (see issue 95). So once again a car is best.

Finally my allotment is a four mile round trip away – requiring three infrequent buses which do not link up! Twixt can come too if I go by car – being a helpful companion whilst I'm working - although she does not really understand my 'No Dig' method! Then at the end of the allotment session I can drive home in comfort when I am tired, achey and dirty. I try to avoid public transport when I am tired, as I believe I am more likely (with Atrial Fibrillation) to have a fall or catch germs. A car therefore ensures I remain healthy and autonomous.

So I hope I have convinced you all that for **this** eco friendly vegan, a car is sometimes necessary.

Elizabeth M. Angas
February 2010

FootPrints for Peace

Creating Change Through Peaceful Actions



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Towards A Nuclear Free Future
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More information coming soon.

<http://footprintsforpeace.tripod.com>

Email scotlandspeacewalk@yahoo.co.uk

GLEANINGS

US military warns oil output may dip causing massive shortages by 2015



The US military has warned that surplus oil production capacity could disappear within two years and there could be serious shortages by 2015 with a significant economic and political impact.

"By 2012, surplus oil production capacity could entirely disappear, and as early as 2015, the shortfall in output could reach nearly 10 million barrels per day," says the report, which has a foreword by a senior commander, General James N Mattis.

guardian.co.uk, Sunday 11 April 2010

The above echoes what was stated in a speech by Jeroen van der Veer, Chief Executive of Royal Dutch Shell plc two years before this, on 25th January 2008:

"After 2015, easily accessible supplies of oil and gas probably will no longer keep up with demand."

http://www.shell.com/home/content/media/news_and_library/speeches/2008/jvdv_two_energy_futures_25012008.html

A two day Conference Christianity and Vegetarianism

Nature, Creation and the Peaceable Kingdom

14th & 15th August 2010

Leeds Humanities Research Institute,
University of Leeds

29-31 Clarendon Place, No. 25 on Leeds Campus Map

This two-day conference will unite Christian vegetarians and academics working in the field of religion and diet to reflect on the relationship between Christianity and vegetarianism and consider how the call to a diet of meat-abstention might manifest in Christian life, belief and practice. The exploration of these issues will be facilitated by ample discussion time, with the added opportunity to engage in discussion groups to enable those not speaking to get 'hands-on' with what is often (regrettably) a controversial issue within the churches.

Contact Don Gwillim: don@caninestyle.co.uk or tel: 01428 723747

Or visit www.christianvegetarian.co.uk.

LETTERS

Lake Sahara

I should have made my point about Lake Sahara (Letters Page, New Leaves 95) a bit clearer. Now little more than a large oasis, during the last ice age it was the size of Lake Victoria today. Like the rest of the now desert, as the ice cap melted and the seas rose, the water table on the rich agricultural land and savannah fell so far that both became the desert we witness today.

The inhabitants took refuge along the coast and in the Nile Valley. There is significant evidence of declining agriculture right across the Western Desert (Egypt) and the Fezzan (Libya), of irrigation tunnels (not channels) etc, and of settlements. The coastal plain in Roman times was 150 miles wider than now, and was the 'bread basket' of Rome. Climate change will eventually see the cessation of the Gulf stream Drift, another Ice Age, and total realignment of natural vegetation patterns - hence my prediction of farming the Sahara.

Steve Oxbrow

Archaeology is the key not to the past but to the future.

Coping With Animal Myths: An Endorsement

I heartily agree with Elizabeth M. Angas's article on companion animals and just want to add a few words. One particular myth is that dogs are carnivores – WRONG!! They are scavengers and eat whatever comes their way. They became 'camp followers' by choice and opportunism, and so progressed to being guards and companions to early humans.

Foxes, also, are not true carnivores, as they eat fruit and berries as well as meat, mostly carrion. Having canine teeth does not mean carnivorous. Canine teeth are used by apes and monkeys to strip bark and leaves from branches. This applies to many other species.

So, I suggest we sally forth with confidence and enlighten the 'carnivorous know-alls'. I often wonder who is 'exploited' and/or 'enslaved', the dog, the cat or the human!!!

Stella Smith



Struggling With Animal Owners' Self Deception

Vegan-'ism' is, before anything else, a philosophy that puts compassion for all life as its ultimate principle. Regardless of any nomenclature that we may apply to other 'life' abiding with us, they are subject to our comings and goings, work schedules, or any other of the myriad calls on our time by society. All non-human pets, companions, guard dogs or whatever, are still, for **some of us** vegans, 'the bird in the gilded cage that sets all heaven in a rage'. It is, I propose, philosophically and ethically indefensible to **'own'** any other life-form; and for a vegan to do so is incomprehensible, and beyond the self indulgence of 'norms' or the general population.

The argument that to take in or 'home' an abandoned dog, or any other animal, as a compassionate act, may appear to be obvious, a given. But the breeding of pet animals, something that may well be compared to the 'house slave', is, like the breeding of 'farm animals', a business, and a business that vegans consider an abuse of other sentient life. To take in or 'home' an abandoned animal merely makes room for the next one on the business conveyor belt; in exactly the same way as it is to buy an animal from a breeder or pet shop. A sentient life-form has been reduced to a commodity, and very often a mere toy. Someone bought the creature, abandoned it, and may well go on to purchase another. Thus to 'home' an abandoned pet, one may well become another link in the chain of animal abuse, however well-meaning. In this process I don't doubt the genuine compassion that people feel when they take in an abandoned 'pet', indeed I have vegan friends who have filled their homes with such abused life, and regard me as a hard hearted so and so. But I've become convinced that those who do this just become another link in this chain, and one that helps salve society's conscience, and like animal sanctuaries they keep the abuse 'less visible'.

The Indian Sadhus generally strive to reach a state of 'detached compassion'. I'm not sure that compassion can ever be truly detached; but nor must it become blind to consequences of action. Compassion is the ultimate ethic, and is expressed more clearly and profoundly in veganism than in any other philosophy; our compassion for all life, even non-sentient, must be expressed to the general population in such a way that the whole consequences are shown. Pet cats for instance are estimated to kill sixty million songbirds every year, while other creatures are killed to feed pets, mainly cats and dogs of course but also other 'exotic' pets. Humans who indulge their desire to 'have a pet' engender terrible consequences for the 'pets' themselves, and other creatures.

Regarding 'Coping With Animal Myths'

In the last issue of New Leaves, Elizabeth M. Angas wrote about keeping pets. In principle it is exploitative for humans to keep animals as pets, as the animals are not free. But keeping dogs/cats is not a big issue. More interesting is if a rich person were to keep an elephant as a pet. This person could claim the elephant was not a pet, but a 'companion'. One could say elephants do not belong on the British Isles, but then that could be said about many animals humans keep as pets. I'd better admit that I keep cats and hens as pets, but I am not too worried about what other people think. The cats come and go as they wish. The hens roam around at the bottom of the garden and only make themselves known when they are hungry. Not sure my pets even know they are 'exploited'.



Knut Caspari

Elizabeth Angas, in her article 'Coping with Animal Myths', leaves out an important aspect of the issue of keeping animals as pets. I use the word 'pets' because, in my view, that's what such animals are. To be companions, in the normally understood meaning of the word, they would have had to choose to be in that situation. Most pets clearly haven't so chosen. However, pets or companions, what Elizabeth has failed to mention, surprisingly, as she is a pacifist, is that most of these animals have an act of violence committed against them. They are neutered. That is, they are biologically altered to fit into our society. The result of this is that they are denied their natural animal rights to have sexual relationships, to bear young and to be parents. Of course, many pets have a comfortable and happy life but I do think that we should be honest with ourselves about what they are and about their place in our society.

From a Humanist pacifist,

Martin Lake

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Tel: 0845 345 5314 or 01296 422008, e-mail: bron@places-to-be.com

The Contact Scheme aims to provide opportunities for mutual support, co-operation and friendship, and/or to further the aims of MCL locally and regionally. Details of contacts are only provided to those participating in it.

Contacts in Antrim, Bedfordshire, Belfast, Birmingham, Bucks, Cheshire, Clwyd, Cornwall, Derbyshire, Devon, Dorset, Essex, Gwynedd, Hampshire, Hertfordshire, Isle of Wight, Kent, Leicestershire, London, Middlesex, Norfolk, North Yorkshire, Northumberland, Nottingham, Powys, Shropshire, Tyne & Wear, West Glamorgan, York, Co. Galway (Eire), Goult (France). For further information send a stamped addressed envelope to Bronwen at the above address.

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should be typed or clearly hand-written and marked 'for New Leaves'. Any press cuttings/references should be recent and identified with name and date of the source publication. Food items promoted in articles and recipes should be appropriate to MCL's policy of encouraging use of produce that can be grown in the writer's local region, rather than imported crops.

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Veggies and Sumac Centre: Catering for animal and social justice campaigns. Vegan cafe (Fri, Sat, Sun); vegan-organic demonstration garden; distribution of MCL booklets & leaflets; compilers of the Animal Contacts Directory (£5.80 incl. p&p / £5 unwaged). 245 Gladstone Street, Nottingham NG7 6HX. Tel: 0845 458 9595. www.veggies.org.uk.

Wales Vegan/Y Figan Cymreig, bilingual (Welsh-English) magazine, £3 for 3 copies a year. Bron Yr Ysgol, Montpellier Park, Llandrindod, Powys.

Vegan Views – a forum for vegan opinion. Details from Longridge, Bankend Road, Dumfries DG1 4TP, email: sjolberg@online.no, tel: 01387 265348.

Sarah Two welcomes women & anyone interested in growing fruit (field turning slowly into orchard) & vegan permaculture. Le Village, 09600 Dun, France. Tel. 0033561604688.

Vegan female, non-smoker, preferably car driver, financially solvent, pensioner perhaps, required to help useful 81-year-old lady in exchange for accommodation in the Potters Bar, Herts area. Please ring 01707 651143 evenings.

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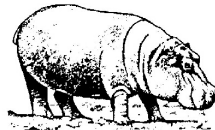
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