



FRIEDRICH'S NEWSLETTER
AUTUMN 2006

Dear Friends,

I AM WRITING this during a warm September at Brockwood Park, where a new year has just begun at the School. There is a full complement of students from many countries, including two students who are children of former students. There is also a strong and innovative staff, which includes seven former students.

I asked one of these former students, now staff, to write about his current activities, because I have heard concerns that the young adults who leave such a harmonious and protected place might not be able to succeed in the wider, competitive society. (See also the article on pg. 48.) The following is from Valentin Gerlier, who teaches singing and guitar at the School and organises the musical events at the end of each term.

I play jazz and various other styles in bars and clubs in London and have toured in England, Germany, Austria, Ireland, France and Italy with groups and duos. More and more I have been writing my own music and lyrics and am quite committed to playing and recording it as of this summer.

I have also written a novel, 'Aegis of the Mountain', which has been two years in the making. And I am currently completing an MA in the Study of Mysticism and Religious Experience, and am looking for funding to go into further research, writing a PhD in which I would most certainly bring in Krishnamurti. Eventually I would very much like to teach Philosophy and Religious Studies and inspire students, very possibly Brockwood students!

You also asked me to write about what Brockwood has meant for me as a student. It is very difficult to sum up in a few words. Coming into contact with Krishnamurti has awoken an undying concern in me, and has certainly changed my life completely. I see my academic studies, rather than being intellectual and limited, as being in keeping with this life 'quest', if that is what one calls it. But even so, being at Brockwood has been so much more than that. I have come into contact with many amazing teachers, human beings who have inspired me and helped me shape my life. I have met true

Front Cover: In the Rose Garden at Brockwood Park, England

friendship and my eyes have been opened by an environment of outstanding, silent natural beauty. For these reasons and many more I feel truly privileged to be able to be here and I see my work as trying to hand down the flame that was once handed down to me.

Here is some more news from former Brockwood students. Lauren Russell and George Mathew, who met through a former Rishi Valley student, organised a performance of Beethoven's 9th Symphony at Carnegie Hall in New York to benefit victims of the Pakistan earthquake. And Suprabha Seshan, a former student of several of the Indian schools as well as Brockwood, recently won, on behalf of the Gurukula Botanical Sanctuary in Kerala, India, one of the UK's most prestigious environmental conservation prizes – the Whitley Award, presented by Princess Anne at London's Royal Geographical Society. Suprabha wrote to me saying, "One good outcome of this is the big improvement in local relations... everyone in the neighbourhood is very proud and there is a strong sense of 'we have got an international award.'" (Suprabha has written the article on pg. 18.)

There is an article on pg. 42 by Colin Foster, a former Brockwood physics teacher, and one on pg. 45 by Ashna Sen, a new maths teacher there. In her article, Ashna refers to a mathematics conference she attended in London, and she wrote to me in more detail about it. She said that two professors, one a director of a mathematics institute and the other the chairman of a mathe-

Photo Website

An updated catalogue of photographs by Friedrich Grohe, including those printed in The Link, can now be viewed online at www.fgrohephotos.com.



The website features slideshow viewing, a facility to order prints and posters and to send online greeting cards, and links to the Krishnamurti Foundations and Schools.

matics centre and a government advisor for mathematics, gave her the impression that:

they were both hesitant about implementing any radical change in the system. In fact, the government advisor mentioned that she was aware of all this 'alternative type' of thinking regarding 'what is education' etc. But there was a clear reluctance to think outside the box. It seemed to me that the emphasis was more on 'how to provide greater rigour at the school stage so that the students can more easily face the tough road ahead.' Of course, I was very disappointed with this general atmosphere of adhering to the old methods of 'cram' teaching – a very straight-jacketed approach, in my opinion.

For me, visiting Brockwood Park means catching up with the many friends who work at the School, the Foundation and the Centre; it means joining in the School's Morning Meeting, where the students and staff begin their day together; it means attending K-classes; and the School's end-of-term concerts are not to be missed. It also means interesting discussions with guests over lunch at the Centre, like the one with the French-speaking professor working in education at the Université du Québec. A recent thesis of his concerned self-learning: *Pour une phénoménologie herméneutique des moments d'autoformation*. He was a Centre guest while his daughter had her prospective week at the School, part of her application to study there. She was looking for a different kind of education and had found Brockwood on her own. Her father had been to several Saanen Gatherings in the 1970s, attending all the talks, but he had never told this to his daughter. And now she was bringing him to Brockwood! He found this amazing. I told him I was sorry, having learned in the early 1980s that Krishnamurti was speaking every year in Saanen, that I didn't attend the talks right away (I waited until 1983). He replied that he was sorry he hadn't continued to attend into the 1980s.

On to Oak Grove School in California, from where the principal, Ellen Hall, wrote that they are working to develop the school as:

a place of revolution in education, a place where sanity and intelligence emerge. ... We have begun to publish articles about our unique approach to education and next year we plan to have some of our teachers present our



Lauenensee, Switzerland

approach at educational conferences, therefore expanding our impact even more.

Towards that end, Paul Herder organised a Teacher's Academy at Oak Grove School last summer (see the article on pg. 35):

the participant group ranging from graduate students to a school director with thirty years' experience. We had a teacher working with special needs students as well as one working with gifted students. We had public school teachers and private school educators. About half were from California, with the rest coming from the southeast of the U.S., Nebraska, Canada, Belgium and the Philippines. Three participants were Oak Grove teachers.

In addition to these references to what is happening at Brockwood and in Ojai, you can find out about two programmes in Rishi Valley on pp. 51–52 and some of the work of the Krishnamurti Foundation India on pg. 62. On pg. 54, there is a report by Raman on activities in Ukraine, Turkey and

Azerbaijan. Our old Brockwood friend Ray McCoy, a former teacher in several of the schools and one of the KFT's editors, wrote:

I was very touched by your (Raman's) reports about your recent trips, especially to the Ukraine. As I read your vivid description of the adventure of getting there and then the wonderful setting in which all those people came to listen and participate seriously and eagerly, I could 'see' K sitting there with all of you and smiling at the enthusiasm of the people and the beauty and uniqueness of the surroundings. (Remember how he said he would have walked a thousand miles to hear the Buddha.)

In the spirit of this international Friedrich's Newsletter, I recently wrote to the Foundations:

"I have been thinking again about K's statements that the Foundations are one and that the Schools and Centres and so on should be international. He put a great deal of emphasis on this.

Is there a way that more of the publicity materials from the Foundations can incorporate this sense? I often hear from readers of The Link that they appreciate learning about the worldwide interest in K and the varied and farflung activities – for example, that there are small groups in Vietnam, an expanding centre in Thailand, emerging activities in Africa. Perhaps each Foundation's newsletter could include some news from the other Foundations – for example, the FKL visit to South America, the KFI distribution project, and the joint efforts, like the Archives programme and the worldwide one-book dissemination project. It may give a more global feeling to the work. There was also to be a joint Centres brochure, I believe."

The Foundations responded very positively.

Friedrich Grohe, September 2006

P.S. Once upon a time, a religious teacher was approached by one of his disciples. "Master, you say that truth is a pathless land. So, how do you get there?" The master, smiling compassionately, replied, "Get lost."

K: The Light of Meditation

THE VULTURES WERE on the usual tree, and the train was rattling across the bridge, and the river flowed on – here it was very wide, very quiet and very deep. Early that morning you could smell the water from a distance; high on the bank overlooking the river you could smell it – the freshness, the cleanliness of it in the morning air. The day had not yet spoilt it. The parrots were screeching across the window, going to the fields, and later they would return to the tamarind. The crows, by the dozen, were crossing the river, high in the air, and they would come down on the trees and among the fields across the river. It was a clear morning of winter, cold but bright, and there was not a cloud in the sky. As you watched the light of the early morning sun on the river, meditation was going on. The very light was part of that meditation when you looked at the bright dancing water in the quiet morning – not with a mind that was translating it into some meaning, but with eyes that saw the light and nothing else.

Light, like sound, is an extraordinary thing. There is the light that painters try to put on a canvas; there is the light that cameras capture; there is the light of a single lamp in a dark night, or the light that is on the face of another, the light that lies behind the eyes. The light that the eyes see is not the light on the water; that light is so different, so vast that it cannot enter into the narrow field of the eye. That light, like sound, moved endlessly – outward and inward – like the tide of the sea. And if you kept very still, you went with it, not in imagination or sensuously; you went with it unknowingly, without the measure of time.

The beauty of that light, like love, is not to be touched, not to be put into a word. But there it was – in the shade, in the open, in the house, on the window across the way, and in the laughter of those children. Without that light what you see is of so little importance, for the light is everything; and the light of meditation was on the water. It would be there in the evening again, during the night, and when the sun rose over the trees, making the river golden. Meditation is that light in the mind which lights the way for action; and without that light there is no love.

The Only Revolution, pp. 64 – 65
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Winter sky near Haus Sonne, Black Forest, Germany

The page numbers mentioned in Friedrich's Newsletter refer to various articles in the upcoming issue of the Link No. 26, 2006–2007.

Friedrich's Newsletter is sent out in advance of The Link (printed towards the end of each year), as this allows a more immediate and somewhat personal contact.

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