



Making Waves



Turning the Tide Programme of Quaker Peace & Social Witness
advancing active nonviolence for social change

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Editorial

"We must be the change we wish to see in the world". Gandhi's words make a catchy soundbite, and one that's repeated a lot these days. But what a revolutionary concept! Actually being the change puts a huge responsibility on each of us to live in contrast, even opposition, to the norms of our society. It places us as outcasts. It requires that we do difficult and possibly painful work inside ourselves. It demands that we remake our relationships with each other and the wider world. If we want the world to be a certain way, we must model it ourselves. Quakers would say it's about letting our lives speak: "Be patterns, be examples" said George Fox. This is the hard core prophetic role of nonviolence: we resist and say a loud public "no!" to what is unjust and death-promoting, whilst raising up and saying a loud public "yes!" to that which is just and life-affirming.

Effective social change movements incorporate both approaches. Within those movements we find people who tend to focus on one or the other. But what if we were to incorporate both approaches into our individual lives? Is it sufficient only to be on the campaign front line, confronting and resisting what the powers are doing? Surely we are required to demonstrate what we would have in its place. Similarly, is it enough to concern ourselves solely with our own behaviour and lifestyle and disregard political action? Surely the hurt and damage being done to others demand our active resistance.

Authentic nonviolent action combines both approaches and makes them indivisible. It's about challenge and transformation so that our thought processes and behaviours do not replicate what we oppose. It's simply a way of bringing the future that we are making into the present. Ambitious? Yes! Impossible? No!

In this issue Amanda Woolley gives us an inside look at building the alternative through the Transition Towns movement, and Alison Crane reports from an inspiring gathering at Findhorn. A book and recent dvd on these themes are reviewed. We have a montage of impressions from this year's Climate Camp (which did feature both the above approaches), and a tribute to singer and nonviolent fighter for justice Utah Phillips. Also, an account of Turning the Tide's 2007 year-long nonviolence course – and information about our next one.

Steve Whiting, *Programme Manager, Turning the Tide*

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Nonviolence for a Change Training 2009

For those who wish to

- Become more effective in their campaigning and activism
- Learn about tools for radical change
- Train as facilitators for activist and community groups working for social change

Workshops are available as a year course or as one-off events. Booking is essential.

See back page for more details.

Peak oil and Transition Initiatives

Steve Whiting

Experts calculate that there are about 1 trillion barrels of oil left in the ground. The world currently consumes around 29bn of those a year. According to the Association for the Study of Peak Oil, 54 of the 65 largest oil-producing countries have already passed their peak of production. We are approaching "peak oil", the point when oil extraction peaks, after which supplies will drop by 3% every year. This will mean a 50% reduction in oil by 2030. Current global oil consumption is running at 84m barrels a day and the International Energy Agency predicts this will rise to 116m barrels by 2030. We have a problem that is turning into a crisis, and our lifestyles will have to change dramatically.

Many people are not waiting for governments to come up with an answer. They are organising themselves into Transition Initiatives committed to "relocalising" food, energy, transport and their economies. The idea of transition is catching on, and communities in the UK and across the world are developing tools to be self-sufficient and withstand the kind of shock that the absence of oil will bring.

A Transition community recognises that as a species we can call on the same immense amounts of creativity, ingenuity and adaptability to respond to this energy decline as we did when we created the energy boom. Also, if collectively we plan and act early enough there's a strong chance we can create a way of living that's significantly more connected, more vibrant and more in touch with our environment than the one we're in today.

Transition Initiatives are characterised by a comprehensive and creative process of:

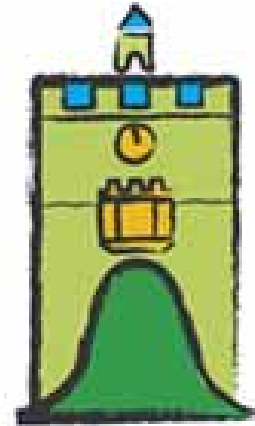
- awareness raising around peak oil, climate change and the need for a community response
- forming groups to look at all the key areas of life (food, energy, transport, health, heart and soul, economics and livelihoods)
- connecting with existing groups in the community
- dialogue with local government
- connecting with other transition initiatives
- kicking off projects aimed at building people's understanding of resilience and carbon issues and community engagement
- eventually launching a community defined and implemented "Energy Descent Action Plan" over a 15 to 20 year timescale.

For more information see: www.transitiontowns.org

Transition Town Totnesian

Amanda Woolley

I wanted to write this article because I love living in Totnes and am tremendously excited to have Transition Town Totnes on my doorstep. Totnes was the first Transition Town in the country and I'm proud of it. It's fun to know that our little town and its inhabitants are being heard of worldwide. Did you know we were on CNN? And in *The Guardian*? Not to mention Britain's favourite radio show, *The Archers*! And the *Transition Handbook* was in the top 5 of books that MPs took on holiday.



Transition Town Totnes logo

Two years ago I was thrilled to be in at the start of the Unleashing of Transition Town Totnes. The Civic Hall was packed with around 300 people and there was a buzz of interest as we heard clear presentations on oil as a finite resource and the consequent end of cheap oil. I was inspired and intrigued to encounter the idea of us being addicted to our oil-based lifestyles and how it made sense to wean ourselves off rather than having to face cold turkey! I felt at last there was a way I could be supported to move more effectively on some of my good ideas and intentions knowing I was part of a community doing the same and starting with the things I felt were possible.

Rob Hopkins, founder of Transition Town Totnes and author of the *Transition Handbook*, describes 12 steps of transition starting with a steering group which plans for its own demise – seeing itself as a catalyst not the overall campaign. It raises awareness with films and presentations and links with existing groups and key individuals to the point when it's time to launch. In Totnes there was a well constructed programme of inspiring talks to address different themes each linked to an open day which enabled local concerns, leaders and working groups to start to constellate.

Tangible outcomes keep the initiative practical and visible and community courses such as "Skilling Up for Power Down" explore the information and re-skilling we need. Links with local government, a co-ordinated response to the local development plan and projects that draw on the experience and local

memories of older people have all played an important part. Rob may have his own dreams and visions but he is also clear that it's a community process that has to go where it wants. One significant marker will be the Energy Descent Plan. More a pathway than a plan it will bring together the work of theme groups and the broader community to generate ideas and initiate actions to create a resilient, less oil dependent future. We are just beginning this process of visioning and "back-casting" from the future to see the progressive steps needed year by year. Early on the Food group got started and an immediate spin-off was a campaign for more local allotments. Several Quakers have got dug in to that project and another helped produce a local food guide. A garden share project is now matching aspiring gardeners with people with underutilised gardens.



Totnes pound

We even have our own local currency to strengthen the local economy whilst preventing money from leaking out. The Totnes Pound has been a headline grabbing feature which raises awareness of economic issues as well as being an experiment in supporting the local economy.

Some theme groups have emerged from the work of existing local groups such as Traffic and Transport and Co-housing. (See panel or the website totnes.transitionnetwork.org). In May 2008 we held a review meeting to hear from all the groups. People had been working so hard in individual groups, we realised we didn't know all that had been happening. Now we anticipate a phase where there will be more joint projects, eg a Health & Well-being garden, which aim to strengthen the transition initiative and do outreach to the wider community.

An Outreach group has now formed; they work with newcomers who want to know how to participate in Transition Town Totnes and existing groups and longer term residents who may not yet feel part of the initiative. Transition Town Totnes knows its enthusiasm needs to respect and build on what others have already researched, achieved, planned and experienced.

Heart and Soul

I am drawn to the Heart and Soul (H&S) group because of my background in community care and interests in psychology and spirituality. Also because I see that facing change, learning to deal with change, and being and becoming that change

are vital and integral to the practical projects we carry out.

Facing a crisis of the proportions we are dealing with can sink us into fear apathy or denial. Those of us moved to act may do it out of panic, or desperation resulting in exhaustion collapse and burnout. Transition Towns is about building local resilience and I feel that applies as much to our communities and our personal psychology/inner life as to economies or food production. It means we need to find ways to acknowledge fear and despair and our sense of disconnection from the earth. Transition to a post-oil society is also an opportunity to explore and create new paradigms, structures and ways of relating. I like to think that we are creating the conditions for healing.

Transition Town Totnes Groups and some current projects

- Building & Housing
- Economics & Livelihoods: *Totnes Pound; Oil Vulnerability audits for business*
- Education
- Energy: *Totnes Renewable Energy Supply company; Solar Heating scheme*
- Food: *Local Food Directory; Nut Tree planting; Seed Swaps;*
- Health & Well-being
- Heart & Soul
- Local Government
- Outreach
- The Arts
- Transition Tales: *drama and video with local schools;*
- Transport: *Cycling group and Rickshaw Company*
- Reminiscences Project

For me, stepping into a Transition Initiative and in Heart & Soul in particular is stepping into an energy field that seems to magnify things. When I have dared to follow, wait, allow and trust the process there is often a revelation that what I find not only helps me but is also relevant to the group process or wider community.

Transition Initiative working groups in each community taking up a will have particular traditions, strengths and leanings. Totnes attracts many people with a spiritual practice, therapeutic training and/or creative background and even before Transition Town I noticed it as a place where people came who were going through a major transition in their own lives or were seeking a more simple life. H&S (Heart and Soul) has organised talks from key speakers and dialogues, often using the fishbowl style where discussion takes place between 4 people witnessed by an outer circle who can join in by taking an empty chair in the fishbowl. We've looked at what it means to deepen our engagement with transition where

people shared their dilemmas, such as whether or not to fly, as well as questioning long-held strong beliefs. We look forward to one on belonging – a chance to reflect on who does our town belong to, where is our sense of belonging now we move around so much?

The H&S group cultivates being as well as doing, allowing silence, humour and insights to arise, which mean that I often go away from H&S meetings feeling resourced and nourished personally as well as knowing that things have been set in motion.

The work of H&S within the context of change is hard to define as it has less tangible products than other groups. But H&S's work is integral and needs to integrate itself into the whole of Transition Town Totnes. One of H&S's visible products is helping with events and facilitation and offers resources for groups and individuals responding to requests from key people for mentoring or supervision. H&S recognises it needs to engage with all the other groups to enable us to challenge and learn from each other. We have facilitated setting up Home groups where individuals can support each other in practicalities and process of change.

Personal Challenges

I am getting more used to living with uncertainty - discovering that it's not always possible or desirable to know what's going to happen or have a clear plan in order to have a sense of safety. It's about cultivating being OK with not knowing, and concentrating on what makes me and us as a community more resilient.

Much of my day-to-day life is taken up with being a carer and I work part time for a disability organisation, and in Quakers we recently had house groups exploring aging, illness, death and dying. I have been struck by what we can learn about change and transition by daring to look at these issues. For me, Transition Town Totnes brings together both inner and outer change as expressed in community and at a personal level. It is about understanding ourselves and our motivations enough so that we may compassionately address the barriers which hinder us from embracing the changes we need for our own survival.

A cartoon might once have portrayed me as fence sitter not fence cutter but now, instead of feeling embarrassed and seeing myself as a faint hearted activist, I have found a role for me and those like me.

The Transition Handbook: from oil dependency to local resilience by Rob Hopkins. Green Books £12.95. www.greenbooks.co.uk
Available for loan from the TTT library.

Transition Town Totnes website:
totnes.transitionnetwork.org

Creative community responses to peak oil and climate change, Findhorn 2008

Alison Crane

Last winter I came across a quotation by Joanna Macy, the American Buddhist ecophilosopher, which inspired me to check out more about her. I noticed that she was going to be a major part of a week-long Easter conference at Findhorn in Scotland, sharing her teachings at an event entitled "Positive Energy – Creative community responses to peak oil and climate change". The title seemed to speak directly to me. When I looked at the other speakers, which included people I had been reading about and admiring such as Rob Hopkins, who started the Transition Towns movement, and Richard Heinberg, an expert on peak oil, I decided that I must go!

My sense was reinforced throughout the week that there are growing numbers of people worldwide that are being motivated and empowered to respond to the twin threats of climate change and peak oil within their communities in a mind-blowing variety of ways, contradicting the despair or indifference that seems to characterise the more conventional responses. Over 200 of them made their way to the pioneering community for this conference with a difference, and I was one of them.

Photo: Sverre Koxvold



Joanna Macy, ecophilosopher, at Findhorn

The first half of the week encouraged us to be open to our creativity and to connect with the earth and with ourselves at a deep level. First Joanna Macy led a two-day exploration of her "work that reconnects". Based on systems theory, spiritual teachings, and deep ecology, it is a programme of exercises and rituals that trains us to see in new ways, noticing our interconnectedness in the web of life and our authority to take action on its behalf. She

talks about the “Great Turning” – the exciting times that we are living in, as the world shifts from the industrial growth society to a life-sustaining society. Our contributions may vary from holding actions, (eg protesting) or creating structural alternatives, (eg co-operative living), to shifting consciousness (eg creation spirituality). A recurring theme was not to be afraid to feel the pain of the world, and not to look at things as “us” and “them”, “good guys” and “bad guys”, but to notice how we are connected to each other, to past and future generations, to all living things, and to the earth itself. For me the challenge was to really allow access to my emotions, rather than just accepting the situation on an intellectual level, and numbing out the bad bits.

Richard Olivier then led a 1-day workshop using mythodrama, looking at the themes in Shakespeare's “As You Like It”. I had no idea what to expect, and was a bit concerned that I might be expected to be part of a performance! Described as a journey of renewal, it was a fascinating and entertaining exploration of the play, which encouraged us to immerse ourselves in the story, as a means of challenging ourselves on our own journeys – what do we need to let go of, to move forward in our journey through life? We worked in small groups on the different stages of the play, or the different characters. I looked at “redeeming the other” referring to when Orlando saved the life of his brother, who was intending to kill him. Again this was a reminder not to blame “them” and we talked about everything from personal conflict to the role of multi-national companies.

Like Joanna Macy, Richard pointed out the need for the balance between head (thinking), hand (doing) and heart (feeling) all contributing to the whole, for effective and sustainable change. This was another theme of the week, which is very much part of Rob Hopkins' philosophy regarding Transition Towns.

All this reflection and creativity put us in a good place to hear the messages in the second half of the week, which was a more conventional conference format with speakers looking at the many positive responses that are already emerging from communities around the world. We heard from Megan Quinn, an inspiring young woman who helped produce the film “The Power of Community – how Cuba survived peak oil”. She talked about the value of community, how we can intentionally decide to take care of each other in hard times, and the positive benefits of interconnectedness, goodwill, trust, honesty, integrity, loyalty that this will bring. Having the intention, while being prepared to live with uncertainty, is a theme from Joanna Macy, which is no doubt influenced by Buddhism.

We also heard from Alan Hobbett, who worked with the inhabitants of the Scottish Island of Gigha in the regeneration of their community-owned island. He talked about their experience, and the potential of renewable energy, particularly in Scotland. Richard

Heiberg, Research Fellow of the Post Carbon Institute and expert on peak oil, also managed to be hopeful. He told us there is no chance of things continuing as they are, but that is good news. Happiness, co-operation, ingenuity, beauty are not about to peak and go into decline. In a second presentation, he spoke about a strategy for building resilient communities and managing crisis.

But for me the highlight of the presentations was Rob Hopkins, talking inspirationally about the Transition Towns movement. I first heard about Transition Towns from Amanda, another Turning the Tide Resource Person and author of the previous article, and was immediately struck by how simple and empowering this approach is. I am convinced by the statistics on peak oil and climate change, but I don't need to know all the details, or when the crunch will come. Being careful with non-renewable resources makes sense which ever way you look at it; and socially, replacing fear and isolation with trust and sharing can only be a good thing. Richard Heinberg described Transition Towns as “more like a party than a protest march”.

The conference also found time for the delegates to offer mini-workshops on their individual experiences and expertise, which were many and varied. I learnt from a resident at Findhorn how to set up a car-sharing scheme, had a tour of the community, and heard about the “Change the Dream” programme. During breaks I met people from all over the world, and shared stories about community projects closer to home. I was particularly interested in the other ordinary people who were setting up Transition Towns around the UK.

Finally, I must mention the music and singing that interspersed all the workshops and presentations. I imagine this must be a feature of all events at Findhorn. I am not a musician, but I was very moved and impressed by all the contributions and how appropriate they were. It was particularly powerful when we were encouraged to join in. For example we sang this poem by Adrienne Rich:

My heart is moved by all I cannot save
So much has been destroyed
I have to cast my lot with those
Who age after age, perversely,
With no extraordinary power
Reconstitute the world.

Needless to say, there were opportunities during the conference for us to consider what we might do next ourselves. I decided to tell others about Joanna Macy's work, and to make sure that my home town of Stafford became a Transition Town. At that time Transition Town Stafford seemed daunting, because I wasn't sure who would do it with me, but people have emerged, and I am supporting rather than leading them. In July we became the 80th official initiative.

And Joanna Macy's words that initially inspired me to go to the conference are:

I don't think we've been given any absolute guarantee that conscious life on Earth will continue. It might. It might not. In either case, this is a most extraordinary and beautiful moment. Because in this moment we can make a choice for loving life and taking care of each other. Right up to the end, we can make that choice, and that's glorious. So we don't need to ask, "Will it go on forever?"

DVD review

The Power of Community: How Cuba Survived Peak Oil

Directed by: Faith Morgan

Produced by: Community Solutions.

www.powerofcommunity.org/cm/index.php

DVD – 53 minutes

Review by Bob Banks

Soon, the world will have to use far less fossil fuel: firstly to avoid catastrophic climate change, and secondly because the oil is simply running out. Peak oil - a term for when world oil production will reach its all-time peak and begin to decline forever - will soon be upon us. Until I watched this video I thought no-one had successfully negotiated peak oil. But Cuba has gone through the process of massively reducing its oil consumption, survived, and in some ways thrived, albeit with a lot of pain and hard work. Like so much about Cuba, the story, told by this film is virtually unknown outside of the island.

When Soviet communism collapsed, oil supplies to Cuba suddenly dried up. Oil consumption fell sharply from 14 million to 4 million tons per year, precipitating a 34% drop in GDP. In the years after 1989, the economic crisis led to big increases in poverty, but also to huge social changes which enabled Cubans to weather the change, and in many ways improve as a result. What happened?

First, agriculture: in the 1960s and 70s, Cuba had embraced the "green revolution" – the approach to agriculture that allowed more production per worker, through large-scale use of chemicals, and mechanisation. Extraordinarily, Cuba used more chemicals per acre than the United States. Cash crops were grown extensively, in large

monocultures, on big state farms for export, whilst the majority of Cuba's staple foods were imported.

Without plentiful oil and pesticides, and with an intensified US blockade preventing exports and imports, this had to change. Although government rationing prevented starvation, people couldn't afford to eat well. To survive, they had to adopt organic agriculture and permaculture. For example, people made urban gardens from patches of wasteland. Now, 50% of Havana's vegetables come from these urban gardens. 140,000 people moved to working in agriculture. Many large state farms which had grown cash crops were split up and moved to collective or private cultivation of food crops for local consumption. Without a ready source of chemicals, a switch to organic agriculture was unavoidable: today 80% of Cuba's agriculture is organic, and pesticide consumption is 5% of what it was in 1988. There was no fuel for tractors, so older farmers, who remembered how to farm with oxen were recruited to train a new generation. And, after massive hardship and malnutrition in the first few years, the population's health improved from this organic diet.



These changes are echoed in other parts of Cuban life. Instead of 3 large universities, there are now 50 smaller ones, so people travel less to study. Government cars are (apparently) required to pick up hitch-hikers (imagine this in Britain!). Use of solar panels to generate hot water and electricity has increased and, for a quarter of the year, 30% of Cuba's electricity is generated from the biomass left over from the sugar harvest. Also, there is far more use of bicycles and buses, and less use of cars.

A strength of this film is that it tells the story in a straightforward way, with the voices of Cuban (and some Australian and American) people shining through. It paints a very rich and thought-provoking picture. For me, the weakest part of the

film is when it goes beyond the Cuban experience – in the first few minutes, summarising the global picture of peak oil in a rather simplistic way. Once it gets to Cuba, there is the occasional cliché of Cubans dancing and singing in the sun, but this is far out-weighted by the mixture of inspiration, wisdom, sophistication and hope which runs through the film. It explicitly sets out to portray a positive picture of the achievements of the Cuban people in moving through peak oil. I imagine that not all Cubans share this positive assessment – for example, there are issues around civil rights. No doubt there's an alternative viewpoint, and I'm not knowledgeable enough to assess this.

I'd love to think that, in the words of the film's cover, "Cuba provides a valuable example [for the whole world] of how to successfully address the challenge of reducing our energy use." However, the

uniqueness of Cuba lies not just in the spirit of its people, but in its political system and enforced isolation. In the rest of the world, the huge power of corporate lobbying, and the corporate-controlled media, and so on, may well to impose barriers which don't exist in Cuba. As the film says, in Cuba, the response to the lack of oil was "we have to work together to consume less": in America, for example, it will more likely be – "why should I consume less, if I can pay for it?" Ultimately, "the problem is with our society – not with the world's energy". But, in the end, the film's message is optimistic. We face huge changes, but adapting to change is exactly what humans are good at. I was left hopeful that peak oil is "a time for sharing and working together ... maybe we'll have a better world."

Climate Camp 2008

August 2006, the first Camp for Climate Action. Six hundred people gathered in West Yorkshire near the Drax coal-fired power station, UK's biggest single emitter of carbon dioxide. They shared ten days of learning and sustainable living, which culminated in a day of mass action against the power station. Their aim was to start a social movement to tackle climate change.

The following August over 2,000 people came to a weeklong Climate Camp a few hundred metres from Heathrow airport, (see *Making Waves* issue 19) attracting great media interest. The focus this time was to resist plans for a third runway for Heathrow.

This year, Climate Camp was at Kingsnorth, the site of the first in a proposed new generation of coal-fired power stations.

In the words of the organisers: "The Camp is a place for anyone who wants to take action on climate change; for anyone who's fed up with empty government rhetoric and corporate spin; for anyone who's worried that the small steps they're taking aren't enough to match the scale of the problem; and for anyone who's worried about our future and wants to do something about it."

Every Camp for Climate Action event weaves four key themes: education, direct action, sustainable living, and building a movement to effectively tackle climate change both resisting climate crimes and developing sustainable solutions.

What follows is a series of different accounts, experiences and impressions of this year's Climate Camp from people involved with Turning the Tide.

For more information see www.climatecamp.org.uk

Climate Camp Impressions

Zee-Zee Heine and Denise Drake

Q: What was the most outstanding thing about climate camp?

ZZ: The thing that impressed me the most was the cooperative atmosphere, the way people just pulled together to get things down. I've never been at a gathering of that size where everyone was taking responsibility to make it all happen.

DD: Being inside and part of this social experiment called 'building the constructive alternative'. It's not just an idea or something for tomorrow, it's happening today and now. The challenge is to take the energy and inspiration from climate camp into our daily lives, which will require us doing some hard work, but it's certainly possible.

Q: What did you get involved in?

ZZ: I was involved in delivering workshops, which was the reason I'd gone, so I was pleased that it worked out and most of us who'd volunteered were utilized.

DD: My main objective in going to climate camp was to learn *just what is climate camp*. I also got involved with the action support team in delivering workshops on consensus, and doing ordinary camp jobs like "gate duty" (which was great fun) and helping to clean up and keep the site tidy.

Q: What could have been better?

ZZ: The police, I suppose. Aaahhh, well the other thing was the soya milk kept running out, and I suppose one of the reasons for that was the sheer difficulty of getting supplies onto the site. Campers were stopped and searched by the police coming and going from the site. And not once but several times! I heard somebody say it was like living in Palestine with all the check points.

DD: The food. The food was good, but a few times the London kitchen ran out of food before I had a chance to eat. Thank goodness for Yorkshire kitchen, they were welcoming to us "food refugees".

Climate camp 2008

Bob Banks

This may sound over the top, but Climate Camp was one of the most inspiring experiences of my life. We talk a lot about building the alternative, and sometimes have doubts about whether it can be done. After Climate Camp, I know it can. Not only that, it can be built in the most challenging circumstances - in four days in a field in Kent – with police doing their utmost to disrupt it.

The stories of climate camp are told extraordinarily well – in the words, photographs, and TV coverage at www.climatecamp.org.uk. But for me, some of the tastes of this alternative were:

- The best vegan food I've ever had.
- The network of wheelchair-paths – boards laid down so that people in wheelchairs could readily get around the site. Given the difficulties of getting stuff in past the police, and the 3 days to set up, how many groups would have prioritised that? But the fact that climate camp prioritised the inclusion of everyone so strongly was a huge statement for the whole feel of the camp.
- Joyful celebration – head, heart and joyful energy, all fitting together - for example when Radio Revolucion filled the main marquee with ecstatic dancers. (www.myspace.com/radiorevolucion)

Photo: Mike Russell



Riot police take up the line and campers sit in a peaceful bloc and take turns to sing and speak of their reasons for coming to the camp.

- Working with the police. A whole sub-plot of the camp was the successful campaign to keep the police out, and to keep our space free, autonomous and safe. The “front-line” of this was the top gate where the police focused their efforts to get in, with dawn raids and a constant presence, sometimes augmented by offensives of riot police. Throughout the camp they were faced by campers, whose spirit and bodies kept them out. We:
 - Put our hands up in the air, when the police attacked, to say “we are peaceful”. This had an extraordinary tangible effect in calming us and the police.
 - Sang.
 - Held a “front-line workshop” where people shared their emotions and reasons for coming to climate camp. This was so powerful that some of the police were visibly affected, a couple having to withdraw.
 - Joked: some wonderfully persistent light-hearted comedians drew smiles even from the stoniest police.
 - Sat down. Some blockaders were for this, some against. But it did keep the police out, even when we were outnumbered.

Many people really grew and discovered their own power through being at the camp. Like me, people who were unsure of their role when they arrived went away feeling part of an exciting new movement.

Climate Camp Diary

Matthew Herbert

Sunday 3rd

I arrive at Strood station and within minutes am dealing with the first of a number of stop and searches. The police demand my name. I inform them they have no right to my name. They tell me that under section 50 (Police Reform Act) they believe me to be about to commit antisocial behaviour and I must tell them my name or face arrest. I decline – they have no evidence of any antisocial behaviour... and so it goes on. They search me and my rucksack. I come away satisfied I've not given my name but less than happy with the tone of the search. It could have been equally assertive whilst less confrontational. Down the hill from the Camp I'm searched again despite showing them my receipt from the last search – too long ago apparently, who knows what nefarious characters I could have met up with in the meantime. This search is equally unlawful: there's no reasonable suspicion that I have articles for use in criminal damage - but at least the tone is friendlier and I retain my right to keep my name and address to myself. I'm lucky though, I understand the law reasonably well. Many others don't and, believing the threats and intimidation, hand over their personal details. Many more have innocuous items “confiscated”.

I put my tent up and head off to the Action Support trainers meeting. At 37, I feel old! The Action Support team is full of young trainers from Scotland. They've taken on the co-ordination and have turned up en masse. They're frighteningly organised and for once it looks like we have enough trainers to keep our workloads sustainable. This is an enormous step forwards, and I look forward to co-facilitating with them.

Monday 4th

“Cops on site! Cops on site!” The day starts with a jolt of adrenalin, and I'm glad my ear plugs fell out in the night. I'm out of my tent in seconds scanning the horizon. It's just after 5am. I've seen too many false starts and rumours to take the shouts at face value. But this time it looks like we do indeed have cops on site. Our site is a legally squatted autonomous zone. We police ourselves. The cops aren't welcome, but they're at the main gate in numbers. I dash over with Kathryn, my Seeds for Change comadre. A small group are holding back the wall of police. Wheelie bins are being pushed forwards to block the way. There are no legal observers present, so we dash to the legal tent, grab high-vis vests and notepads and we're back noting down numbers of the cops who

are needlessly shoving against the growing mass of Campers. The wheelie bin wall is working and lids are being slammed repeatedly as an improvised alarm call. It's mad, frantic, physical, but still well within my understanding of nonviolence. More people turn up.

Then the call goes out that the police are coming at the back gate. I signal to Kathryn that she should stay and I'll go there to observe. I have time to reflect that I'm not as fit as I once was as I run. Police are in helmets and boiler suits pushing against a hastily arranged wall of Campers. A number of our vehicles are parked here. Rumour has it that the police are trying to seize them on the pretext that they're abandoned. No more abandoned than the car parked outside its owner's house, but this is Climate Camp policing and normal rules don't apply. The wall holds. The police push but are held. Tempers are fraying and five police from the Met are batoning protestors. I grab a photographer and point out the faces I want pictures of. Two medics dive into the fray, holding hands to ensure that they stay with their buddy. They drag out the wounded and give emergency first aid. I approach a man they're treating to see if he can tell me which cop hit him, but he's too shaken – it can wait. As the crowd thickens it becomes impossible to see clearly, so I hop over a fence and nip behind the police lines where the view is less obstructed, and I'm there for the next 5 hours. I don't want to leave because they may not let anyone else through their lines and I have good views of the action, and if I'm honest I take a certain pleasure in being on the wrong side of the law! In the lulls the legal observers scribble down numbers of all officers there, after first tackling a Kent inspector to get him to tell his officers to give us their numbers which are covered by their boiler suits. Tension eases and the sun comes out. By 8am it's hot and you have to feel for the cops in uniform, boiler suits, helmets and utility belts. One group of Campers are singing protest songs to accompanying guitar – even the vehicles being used as percussion. On the other end of the line a woman in a Quaker t-shirt runs a yoga session, and somewhere in the middle a renewably powered sound system makes occasional announcements and plays music. People dance in front of the lines of police. We're definitely having more fun than they are! Helmets come off and soft hats go on – a gesture towards some sort of lessening of tension. At around 10.30am someone passes a jam sandwich and a mug of water through to me, for which I'm immensely grateful. At 11.30am Kathryn comes and we negotiate a shift change - she slides behind the police lines and I wander down to the Camp where for many life goes on as usual.

But it's not over. At around 2pm everything "kicks off" again at the back gate. This time I'm ready and have a shoulder back of supplies, water, sunscreen, spare pens etc. I'm over the fence again, dodging groups of police this time in helmets and shields. They try to spread our line and attack us on two

fronts. Two cops are using their shields to beat Campers on the other side of the low wooden fence, but our line holds and they withdraw. I have their numbers in my notebook, glance at my watch and note the time and the place. Up and down that fence they go, and I can't believe that our ragged little "army" can still be holding the line, but we are and the police are forced to give up.

Kathryn and I cancel our "know your rights" workshop – no-one's in a fit state for it and there's work to be done in the legal support tent.

Tuesday 5th, Wednesday 6th

No ear plugs overnight and too many false alarms. Stopping rumours before they spread too far is a constant challenge. A sighting of a couple of police at the perimeter of the site can become "Police raid!" in a few easy steps. I'm up early and help clean the kitchen and get hot water on. The neighbourhood meeting is dominated by a discussion of policing. I facilitate a meeting in which we respond to a letter of demands from the police. They want to put a mobile police station in our autonomous zone and regular police patrols at their "tactical discretion". The group is clear: we have strong objections to a permanent police presence on site. They want back the items they dropped in Monday's fracas – a baton, some "incapacitant spray" canisters, some police hats. We support putting out a call to return the items, but only once they've been made safe, all spray discharged. Should we cut the baton in half? Maybe not – too provocative. We agree it could be painted pink before being returned. I'm spending more and more time in the legal support tent where it's clear there's a need for experienced people. That wasn't my plan, and I see my vision of action support training growing dimmer.

Thursday 7th

The police seem to be playing mind games. At 3am, 10 or more vehicles with sirens blaring and lights flashing arrive at the main gate. A line of "tooled up" cops forms across the entrance. The floodlight they've erected goes out, it's dark, and there's total silence. Inevitably the Campers brace for an attack of some kind. More and more people are tumbling out of tents and making their way to the gate. We're already chronically tired. The tension's lifted by a witty Camper who regales the police with a health and safety briefing: "You have not completed a risk assessment. This site contains multiple trip hazards. You are wearing boots with an urban tread unsuited to this rural environment...". Somewhere amongst the adrenaline and the tension I find myself smiling. Then the light snaps on and the police are gone as quickly as they arrived. The familiar sound of the police helicopter ensures we're kept awake for a good while longer. I've been asleep for about an hour when the inevitable 5am push at the back gate comes and once more I'm stumbling up the field whilst shrugging on my high-vis legal observer vest. This time it's done more quickly and I'm back in the main Camp in time for my legal tent shift and to co-

facilitate a fence climbing workshop on the practice fence we built out of pallets. Then there's the kids consensus workshop (a lovely interlude in the madness) and the "know your rights briefing". I finally leave the legal tent at 1.30am and fall into my sleeping bag. I'm not even bothering to get out of my clothes any more – too much chance of being up in the night. It's been a very long day and I've had 15 minutes to myself.

Friday 8th

The fence climbing workshop has caused controversy. According to one activist, our pallet fence isn't realistic enough and gives people the impression it's easier than it is. If people injure themselves, it'll be our fault, so we're told. We try to mediate a solution, but in the end the action support trainers come to consensus to cancel the workshop rather than to make the fence any more dangerous/realistic to climb. Legal support is getting easier – the systems are up, running and tested, and we have plenty of volunteers for the day of action. We've dealt with more arrests through the stop and searches than we did during the whole of last year's Camp. The "know your rights" workshops are packed and my voice is going from competing with the wind and rain. I've managed to get in one "intro to direct action workshop" but have given up hope of doing more. Police are now cutting locks and confiscating bikes locked up in the car park near the site which acts as a police stop and search centre. Only yesterday they told people to leave their bikes there. More games. Affinity groups are leaving site. Blue group, who will approach Kingsnorth by boat, are holding very lively "safety" sessions.

Saturday 9th – day of mass action

The arrests start early and mount up quickly. 16 rafts make it on to the water but are all detained. Amazingly they release the rafters. The Orange march gets to gate C of Kingsnorth and a few stalwarts refuse to leave when told to do so. A group of around 25 make a stand. There are 19 arrests. We hear that the fears over the fence were groundless. The Green Guerrillas have made it to the fence and utilised temporary "harris" fencing as ladders to climb over the spiked perimeter fence. E.ON has switched off the electric fence and activists get over. Police are waiting for them and there are more arrests. Kathryn and I get the afternoon off and go in search of tea. We spy vegan cake and detour. We sit down and chat. People are buzzing as they return from their actions. It's one of the few times when everyone seems happy – no disappointments or recriminations. I head to my tent to grab a little sleep before the evening shift in the legal tent, which takes me to 1am.

Sunday 10th

I get up, pack up and then go to the legal tent for a final morning shift. The rota is empty but the police stations are still full. I'm determined to leave this morning, which means dumping responsibility onto another legal volunteer. I don't like this – I know she

sat in the cold outside police stations for at least 12 hours yesterday, but she's still smiling and says yes. On my way out I pause to watch Ella. Ella is 10 at most. Her mum's been co-ordinating the legal observers and Ella's been in and out the legal tent all week. She's running the front desk, dealing with enquiries with all the confidence of the most experienced activist. "No, you take your pink receipts (from stop and searches) and then fill out this form. Then you staple it together and we use it to complain against the cops" she repeats. The future is in safe hands.

The smallest ever action

Zoe Broughton

The week of the camp was too busy. I only made it down to Kingsnorth for the last day – and having seen it, I wish I could have been there longer, and taken the children.

At least it was climate-change related work that kept me away. It started with me filming the "The Smallest Ever Action" at Legoland. At the Windsor theme-park, there is a model coal fired power station, emblazoned with the logo of E.ON, built of lego along with a train loaded with coal going around a track. A group of protestors couldn't resist adding some lego character protestors to the top of the cooling tower, complete with a banner saying "Stop Climate Change". They also attached a police helicopter on a wire off the top. It took security over an hour to notice the new addition.

Photo: Hans Bricks



Then I headed up to Derbyshire to film the eviction of a squatted farmhouse near Smalley. A group called "Leave it in the Ground" are trying to stop an open cast coal mine being dug right next to National Trust land. Two other squatted sites were evicted during Climate Camp – the authorities correctly presuming that many campaigners would go to Climate Camp and they'd have less opposition.

Talk of heavy-handed policing made me apprehensive of Climate Camp. I object to being treated as a potential criminal when it is clear that I am a journalist. I find it outrageous the presumption of criminality on everyone attending. But there was no choice but to submit to the police search.

I was there not to film the action – but to collect material for an update of the Turning the Tide video, *Nonviolence for a Change*. After clambering over the barricade I headed to the press tent – and was shocked that I knew nearly everybody. Are there really only so many alternative press? And I knew quite a percentage of the campaigners from other actions I've been on – so even though I have been out of the action for a while as my small children take up so much time, it was nice to feel welcomed.

The plan was to link up with two campaigners I'd filmed for the first version of 'Nonviolence for a Change'. Neither was taking part in the action – their experience meant they were vital behind the scenes. Martin was in the Well-being tent, supporting campaigners shocked by the situations they had ended up in, and needing a cup of tea and a listening ear. Martin was nearly killed during a protest at the G8 in Switzerland and has learned the value of support – both for his physical injuries and the mental impacts of such trauma.

Paul O'Connor, my other interviewee, has filmed hundreds of protests over the years, and was standing in front of a line of hundreds of riot police when I last interviewed him. Now he's running an internet TV channel, interviewing protestors as they came back to site and putting their stories straight online for the world to access.

It felt strange being there and not being on the action itself, but it made me realise that there is a large number of hardworking people not in the limelight who help make these events run smoothly. I hope they get the recognition they deserve.

A poem from Climate Camp

Hannah Lewis

Back in winter two oh oh seven,
When Londinium was rainy and dark,
A friend introduced me to an action group
That lit a fire in my heart.

Since then I've spent Tuesday evenings
Huddled in a room for consensus meetings,
Spurred on by my new friends' motivation,
And trust in the power of direct action.

Months roll by, Camp's getting closer,
London Neighbourhood is getting strong,
Who ever said we can't do this –
Now is the time to prove them wrong.

Then one morning we received the special call,
Seven of us piled in – guitar, map, tents 'n all,
Drove the hire car to a secret location,
United by our faith in direct action.

In our holding spot....pacing....
Then "Time to go!" History is waiting!
Keep a low profile, try to miss the plod,

Then "What's that on the hill"? By jove, a tripod!

"Everybody out!" Climb over the gate,
Adrenaline's pumping, this is great!
About twenty here already, securing the site,
Tripods, marquees, building goes on till night.

For the next ten days the camp grew and grew
Wind turbines, singing, cooking, compost loos.
Young and old living the alternative,
The politically charged carnival superlative.
I learnt a lot from life on the police line,
Never before had I seen them commit so many crimes.

At times it was a struggle to not fall into violence,
But I'd like to share some great Camper triumphs:

One sunny morning at a Camp entry gate
A hundred Campers and police were standing face to face.
The atmosphere had calmed, everyone's ok,
But no one's moving, we're all here to stay.

Back down the hill the workshops have begun,
But we're not missing out on any of the fun.
We've a captive audience to whom we tell our tale,
One by one, why we're here instead of watching Emmerdale.

Scores of people took a turn,
At explaining what makes *their* fire burn;
"I'm scared for our kids, the future we leave them"
"World leaders won't listen so I'm trying direct action."

During this gathering of a couple of hours,
We *all became* the spirit of grassroot powers,
Working together in the face of oppression,
To create power stronger than this destruction.

Photo: Denise Drake



Hannah with guitar and friends

And what would I change about the Climate Camp movement?

One thing – it desperately needs YOUR involvement.

If you ever need a reason to take action – this is it
Cos many species depend on us doing more than "our bit".

Countless pockets of Climate Camp oh oh eight
Showed people power with the will to create
True sustainability – earth care, fairshares, fun
See you next year – the future's already begun.

Kat's Climate Camp

Kat Barton

I felt inspired by my experience of Climate Camp last summer and was determined to go back again this year. My developing concern about climate change and increasing involvement in activism meant that my main motivation this time was to take part in direct action.

At the camp I got together with a group of like-minded people to form an affinity group. We spent the next three days having twice-daily meetings, doing a bit of research to find out what might be possible and going to workshops on all sorts of useful things, including fence-jumping, legal support and safety training, as well as venturing out of the camp to do a "reccy" of the area. When it came to the day of action, we split into two groups – each with its own blow-up dinghy – and paddled our way across the Medway river towards the power station. The group I was in managed to make it to an island in the middle of the river where we battled our way through brambles twice our height, scaled a 15ft wall and dropped our banner off one side of an old World War 2 fort. Aware that all media eyes during climate camp were on the Olympics, our huge banner read "CO2AL: Starter gun for climate chaos". Meanwhile, our other group had been intercepted by a police boat and towed away; but they managed to escape simply by untying the rope that joined the police boat to theirs and they joined us on the island. From there they paddled off again in the direction of the power station where they later dropped their "Climate Hazard!" banner before stumbling ashore – wet and muddy, but thoroughly exhilarated.

Photo: Amy Scalfie



It was a great action but we could certainly have done better in terms of media coverage – we spent so much time planning the logistics of the operation that we failed to give enough thought to publicising what we were doing and why. Whilst the day of action was definitely the highlight of the week, and was what attracted me to the camp, my abiding memory of Climate Camp 2008 will be the support and sense of community I experienced there. What really sustained and inspired me during my week's stay at Climate Camp 2008 was the genuine sense of community that permeated the entire place.

There was a real sense of common commitment to what we were doing and in particular to the processes involved in making a camp of that size work. Everyone seemed willing to pitch in to make the camp function on a day-to-day level and people were friendly and supportive in their dealings with others. I've honestly never felt so well supported, accepted and at home amongst a group – mostly of strangers – as I did at the camp. When you return from an action with nothing but the muddy, wet and smelly clothes you are wearing, to be greeted by people offering you clean clothes, fresh underwear, food, money, a tent and a lift home... you know you're among friends.

If I'd ever questioned whether "another world is possible", the proof that it really is was there in a field full of climate campers in Kent.

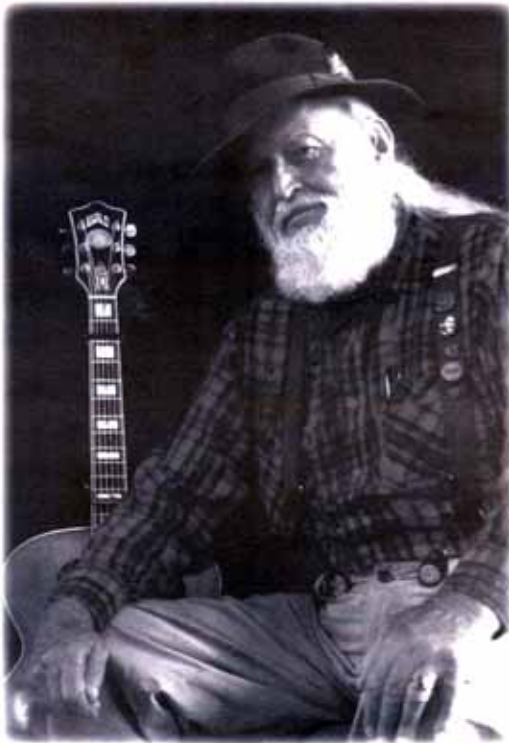
Utah Phillips, an appreciation

John Pietaro

Utah spoke directly to each of us in that filled auditorium on April 24 this year. It didn't matter that it was his disembodied voice, speaking over a cell phone held to a microphone by Pete Seeger, one of the event's headliners. The strength of Phillips' message was as clear as the vitality in his tone. I was happy to be there to hear Utah's response to our benefit concert on his behalf, happier still to witness the warm exchange between him and Seeger, another elder of fighting the good fight. But this room on that sunny spring day in New York was dedicated Utah Phillips; we'd all come with the intention of helping this man who'd been there for the greater "us" for decades. Utah told us of his life and plans for the future. Sure, he sounded tired, but none could accept that Utah would not get through this challenge. He told us so. None would believe that he would pass away just about a month later. Damn, at least we can say that it took a lot to silence Utah. But the echo of his work rings loudly, as sonorous as the music onstage that day.

Utah Phillips was born Bruce Duncan Phillips in Cleveland Ohio in 1935. Not simply because he was a Depression baby, not only due to the powerful example of his parents' work in the militant labor movement, but perhaps due to a calling, Phillips decided early on that he would dedicate his time to social justice. By the mid-1950s, he was a rambling veteran of the Korean War, damaged from the sites and sounds around him, a drifter with a taste for drink. Ending up in Salt Lake City, twenty year-old Phillips arrived at the Joe Hill House, a Catholic Worker shelter facilitated by one Ammon Hennacy, an anarchist and associate of noted humanist and socialist Dorothy Day. Hennacy had a tremendous impact on the young Phillips, not only aiding him to get clean and focused, but by way of his radical beliefs and tales. Phillips absorbed these ideas and, adding in the influence of Woody Guthrie, Pete

Seeger, Borscht Belt comedians, raconteurs and various country musicians, Phillips “created” U. Utah Phillips, the character whose life he’d maintain as his own throughout the decades. Hennacy also introduced Phillips to the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW, aka the Wobblies) and Utah became a life-long member and activist with this global labor organization. He would later use many of Hennacy’s teachings and statements in his oratories, at once satiric, sentimental and revolutionary.



Bruce Utah Phillips
May 15, 1935 ~ May 23, 2008

Though Phillips engaged in several noted career journeys (including an unsuccessful run in '68 for US Senate on the Peace and Freedom ticket), he will always be remembered as a folksinger. Making full use of the amazing heritage of song within the Wobbly repertoire, Utah came to champion the IWW and their Little Red Songbooks. His rounded baritone adorned more than one collection of IWW recordings. In between writing many powerful original songs such as “All Used Up”, Utah brought to life the ballads of Joe Hill, Ralph Chaplin, T-Bone Slim and the “Unknown Proletariat”, who could have been most any of us. But Utah never failed to see the importance in the smallest of the small.

Oddly enough, Utah became something of a cult figure with the college crowd in recent years. Two strong CDs with Ani DiFranco brought him a bit of notoriety, but Utah remained, well - Utah.

Sometimes singing and fighting are just that interchangeable. Each time we lift up a guitar, put pen to paper, speak our mind or simply count our blessings, let’s pause a moment for Utah Phillips.

John Pietaro is a labour organiser and cultural worker from New York.

www.flamesofdiscontent.org

Industrial Workers of the World (Wobblies)
www.iww.org

Utah Phillips www.utahphillips.org

Book review

Do the Right Things! A Practical Guide to Ethical Living 2nd Edition.

Pushpinder Knaneka

New Internationalist 2006 1-904456-38-3

Reviewed by Jenny Gawain

“Did you know British national income per person went up from \$18,700 in 1995 to \$28,350 in 2003? Over the same period national income in sub-Saharan Africa went down from \$501 to \$496”

We are so used to reading such comments that it is easy to become de-sensitised to the outrage they should cause, or so demoralised that action feels impossible, or pointless.

In an era of growing environmental awareness and a global social conscience it can often be impossible to focus on exactly what the problems are. It can be overwhelming trying to work out which ones we can do something about, and how to actually personally do that, especially as most of what we hear is what we shouldn’t be doing rather than what we can do.

Starting with an excellent introduction by Benjamin Zephaniah, that highlights the common problem where we *know* things are bad but not what to do, and ending with a “Seeing Red” directory of contacts and organisations at the end, this brilliant book offers clear and well thought out ideas to help us “do the right things”. It provides practical and easy ways to make real differences to our lifestyles and thus the people and environment around us, from our local community to the global community.

The majority of the book is broken in to six chapters, each tackling not an issue but a solution, from those involving money; both as consumers and donors, to environmental changes based on the green mantra “Reduce, Reuse, Recycle” but developing it, and campaigning. To slowly break the reader into their new lifestyle, the end of each chapter contains three easy steps to make, such as recycling old mobile phones through charities and putting a hippo in your

toilet (and if you don't know what this means, read the book and find out before you try a living one!).

Statistics and facts are kept to a minimum and are provided as a background rather than focus of the book – giving you enough information so that when people challenge you about your “crazy” changes you can quickly explain why you are making them. For those who want to look deeper, a further chapter provides resources for developing your knowledge through magazines, papers, books and web-based information covering a wide range of subjects.

Due to the easy-to-read layout, and cheeky cartoons dotted throughout, this book can be read and used by anyone. It will be a useful tool not only for individuals wanting to change their own life, but those working in their local community, from religious groups and youth groups, to schools and community centres.

Plugs for our friends

Housmans Peace Diary 2009



The 56th edition of the Housmans Peace Diary is now available. It makes a great gift for your loved ones, fellow activists, or even yourself! Not only is it a good pocket-sized diary, but thanks to its World Peace Directory it serves as a unique reference for peace, human rights and green activists everywhere. The Directory lists almost 2000 peace, environmental and human rights organisations – including Turning the Tide and Quaker Peace & Social Witness - in 150 countries, and is the only directory of its kind.

The Diary and its Directory are produced largely by voluntary labour as a non-profit service to fellow activists.

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It can be sent direct to any destination worldwide for just £8.95, post-free.

civilresistance.org

A valuable new on-line resource has been launched at www.civilresistance.info

It includes the full text of a bibliography on nonviolent action since 1945, compiled by April Carter, Michael Randle and Howard Clark, plus a supplement added in March this year. Also, there's an updatable file adding to the bibliography. Suggestions for further additions are welcomed.

The website also has a section of papers from an international seminar held in Coventry last July, 'Unarmed Resistance: the transnational factor', and soon should have a section using some older papers

And, if you look closely, you'll find a reference to Turning the Tide as item 936 in the bibliography!

Nonviolence for a change: training 2009

In 2007 Turning the Tide ran a pilot year-long nonviolence course for social change activists who wished learn about tools for radical change or train as facilitators for social change groups. We were astonished at the interest generated by the course and by the positive feedback we received, both of which indicate that we're doing something that lots of people find valuable.

As with all pilot projects, we made mistakes and learned some lessons. We've spent much of this year evaluating the course and using what we found out to plan the next one in January 2009. Details are on the back page.

Several participants of the course decided to continue their involvement in Turning the Tide and are now active as volunteer Resource People. Hannah Lewis is one of them, and she describes her experience of the course in the next article.

My experience of Turning the Tide's year-long course

Hannah Lewis

I took part in the year-long Turning the Tide course in nonviolence in 2007. The people I met and the skills and knowledge I gained over the year have become an important guiding force in my life.

What were my impressions when I began the course?

I was looking for projects to get involved with. I had just come back from working on farms in France and wanted to hook into British life again. I didn't have a background in nonviolence – all my activism until then had been around ecology. I was in a 'well, why not?' kind of mood, so decided to go ahead and book onto the course.

When I began I felt completely overwhelmed by the whole process – never before had I been in such a participative learning environment. I struggled with talking in small groups, with people I didn't know, about issues I was completely new to. I was the youngest participant and had the impression that I was the least experienced – it was true that some had decades of experience as activists. On the first day I was so far out of my comfort zone that I couldn't really learn much. I was a bit like a rabbit in the headlights, stunned with this totally new way of going about the world. After this day I decided that I wouldn't continue with the course – I wrote to one of the facilitators telling her that it wasn't for me. Somehow her reply persuaded me to continue.

How did my impressions evolve over the year?

The second session was bearable as I knew what to expect, but still felt unable to fully participate. The third was a lot easier and by the fourth I was looking forward to seeing my friends and being in this safe learning environment. By the end of the course I was even running some sessions!

As I got used to the methods and the people, I became more involved. The variety of topics, facilitation methods and case studies used was a great way to keep things fresh and energy up. I remember there were lots of discussions, not just about the material, but about how people reacted to the material which sometimes can be the really juicy bit! It was great that space was made for these tangents, which were often where the real learning took place. Talking about each other's experience was important, and of course the better we got to know each other the easier this was.

The facilitators were very flexible to the group's needs, so the course adapted to what we needed from it as time progressed. Having spent so long in academic institutions where teachers can be rigid with their curriculum, I was amazed at the facilitators' ability to morph with us; I'd say that was a great strength of the course.

I developed friendships over the course that have supported my growth as an activist – its great to know that I'll probably bump into fellow TTT'ers at a demo! I'm so glad I stayed on to complete the course; it has certainly nudged my life direction.

How have I used any of the skills and knowledge I gained on the course?

I can think of four areas in which I have used what I gained on the course:

1. Perspective shift

The course involves a lot of 'deep' learning. It taught me to see through a nonviolence/violence lens. For me this has become more than a tool, it's now part of how I see the world. I remember after one of the training days I came home and switched on the telly. The children's film Shrek was showing – all I could see was the physical violence used by the goodies to beat the baddies. I've also learnt to 'see' other types of violence: for example environmental violence plays out as Climate Change and cultural violence is seen in the treatment of the Australian government towards Aboriginal peoples.

2. Becoming a Resource Person

Once I got used to the participative learning methods, I understood that the more I got involved, the more I learnt. I also learnt a lot from the facilitators about how they managed the group. Towards the end of the course I ran a couple of short sessions. We were encouraged to do this, as many of us were being trained up as Resource People or volunteer trainers for the Turning the Tide programme. When I started the course I wasn't part of the Resource People group, but as the year progressed and I grew in confidence I joined it. This year I have started to co-facilitate workshops for TTT. As I am effectively a trainee I am always coupled up with a more experienced trainer.

3. Working with International Alert

During the year I successfully applied to be a QPSW 1-year Peaceworker, and was placed at International Alert, a peacebuilding NGO, where I worked with the training team as student outreach worker. The facilitation skills and group-working skills I learned through the TTT course gave me a great foundation to build on at Alert.

4. Activism

Becoming part of a community of nonviolent activists was a great inspiration for me – to be part of bunch of committed people grappling with nonviolence was just the support I needed to develop myself and help me realise that actually I've been an activist all my life. Since completing the course I've become involved with Climate Camp, and have trained as a community mediator. I take these 'deep' lessons of nonviolence, and the tools that go with them, into many parts of my life. I still hum 'Be the change you want to see' under my breath.



turningthetide

NONVIOLENT POWER FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

About Turning the Tide

Turning the Tide aims to advance the understanding and application of active nonviolence for positive social change, using the experience of contemporary and previous nonviolence movements.

Turning the Tide provides

- Public introductory interactive workshops exploring active nonviolence.
- Tailor-made workshops, for groups. These can cover campaign strategy, empowerment, building strong groups, group process and preparing for nonviolent action.
- Resources including a website www.turning-the-tide.org, a nonviolence resource library, and a journal *Making Waves*. Turning the Tide also has an award winning video, *Nonviolence for a Change*.

Turning the Tide is a programme of Quaker Peace & Social Witness.

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Edited by Steve Whiting and Denise Drake

Nonviolence for a change: training 2009

- Are you working for a better world?
- Would you like to connect with the long and courageous tradition of nonviolent struggle?

<u>January 10</u> Nonviolence: a dangerous idea	<u>February 14</u> Playing with power 1: understanding the system
<u>March 14</u> Playing with power 2: changing the system	<u>April 18</u> Campaigners do it together! How we can make change
<u>May 15, 16, 17</u> Is everybody happy? Tools for effective group work	<u>June 13</u> Don't just sit there! Exploring direct action
<u>July 11</u> D-I-Y day: self organised by group	<u>August</u> no session
<u>Sept 12</u> The living revolution: building the alternative	<u>Oct 10</u> Inner and outer: spirituality and activism
<u>Nov 13, 14, 15</u> We can do that! Empowerment for social change	<u>Dec 12</u> Celebrating nonviolence

This training is for people who wish to

- become more effective in their campaigning and activism
- learn about tools for radical change
- train as facilitators groups working for social change

Each workshop will explore key concepts of nonviolent social change and teach tools and skills. Participants can join the year-long course or one-off workshops. The course will be held in London. Places limited, booking essential. For more information and an application form, see contact details in panel left.

Views expressed in *Making Waves* and any leaflets enclosed are those of the authors and are not necessarily endorsed by Turning the Tide, Quaker Peace & Social Witness or Britain Yearly Meeting.

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