

The Green Collective



GREEN COLLECTIVE
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GREEN COLLECTIVE SUBSCRIBERS

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U.S.A.F.
MOLESWORTH



INSIDE
THIS ISSUE

ARE WE GOING
TO SIT IT OUT
ALL WINTER?

THE COLLECTIVE MEETING took place, in the end, at Higher Rockes once again, over the weekend of July 28/29. Many thanks to Chris Black for letting us share his space so often. The Leominster Inner Gathering had to be cancelled at short notice because the site became unavailable (the farmer's wife didn't like the idea), but the plan is still alive and will maybe happen next year. So we had a regular 2-day meeting, mostly sitting in the sunshine on the lawn. Lengthy, detailed and accurate minutes of this meeting were taken; but they seem to have disappeared somewhere in the direction of the Green Roadshow for the time being, so I shall have to make up my own version.

The meeting began on Friday night, when at least half of us arrived and met each other, mostly round the kitchen table. Ideas & energies and greetings, cups of tea, kisses, hugs, hello for the first time since Glastonbury in most cases; and we're meeting here on the weekend when the Gathering would normally have begun. Then a whip-round for food money, completed in the morning, and the first half of Saturday was spent visiting Glastonbury (including a jumble sale), buying food (a good deal on 10 lb of eating apples; yesterday's bread from the Wholefood shop @ 10p off w each loaf, 7 loaves in all; 14 pints of milk from the dairy, purchased with a soya-milk-drinking mother's milk tokens; and so on), then back to Butleigh and peanut-butter-sandwiches for lunch before starting business at 2 pm precisely (give or take several minutes) out on the lawn in the sunshine. (Continued...)

LOCAL COLLECTIVE CONTACTS. Subscribers now have a list of other subscribers in their geographical areas. As yet this is still a bit sparse, but the mailing list is being added to steadily, and up-dates will be provided as and when the lists seem to have grown long enough to make it worthwhile. It's up to you to make local connections where they may be useful.

Below is a list of regional contacts, which at present is an incomplete and nominal list with no particular function. If people on this list have ideas as to how the Collective can be developed regionally, please let us know. Antony Sutcliffe, from Yorkshire, wrote to say that "I think the best thing I can do is keep a central point for people to contact, offer lists to any events I go to, and help collate information to pass on back down to yourself", which seems a commonsense way of going about things for the time being. Let me know if you'd like a few sample copies of the Mailing to pass around. And most of all, let us know if there's any support we can provide for local events.

If anyone would like to become a contact for areas not covered (which still means a fair amount of the country north of Luton), then we'd be glad to hear from you.

South West: Dean Holden, 37 Parkers Way, Totnes, South Devon. Totnes (0803) 864568.
Wessex: Bruce Garrard, 4 Chase Crescent, Woodcutts, Salisbury, Wilts. Handley I (07255) 652.

South: Anne Waterhouse, 55 Stuart Close, Emmer Green, Reading, Berks. Reading (0734) 478297.

South East: Mike Richmond, 223 Mangold Way, Erith, Kent DA18 4DD.

London: Lin Simenon, 97 Shepherdess Walk, London N1.

West: Chris Walford, 2 Gransden, Parabola Road, Cheltenham, Glos GL50 3AF. Cheltenham (0242) 520329.

Wales: Don Jenkins, Gorphwiffa, High Street, Penmachno, Gwynedd, North Wales. Penmachno (06903) 315.

East Anglia: Huntingdon Greens, 4 Bridge House, St Ives, Huntingdon, Cambs. St Ives (0480) 63054.

:: Norwich Peaceful Green Collective, Andrew Pratt, 143 Argyle Street, Norwich, Norfolk NR1 2BZ.

North West: Mike Edwards, Elaine Corlett, 12 James Street, Birkenhead, Merseyside.

North East: Antony Sutcliffe, 9 Spring Grove, Harrogate, North Yorkshire.

Scotland: Peter O'Neal, Muirton House, Lossismouth, Morayshire, Scotland.

Cover: Photo - Rupert Hopkins. Design - Bruce Garrard; all complaints at its lack of taste should be sent direct to him at 4 Chase Crescent, Woodcutts, Salisbury.

We began with attunement, holding hands in a circle, and introductions; we all told everyone our names, along with something nice we'd been doing recently. There were 2 or 3 new people (hello Mike & Elaine !) and about 20 of us in all; Kim had got an agenda together, which was dissected and adjusted. Then business began, but I can't remember what with. Somewhere near the beginning there must have been a report from

The Green Field

The Green Field at the Glastonbury CND festival has been acclaimed all round as a success, and received considerable attention in the Channel 4 TV programme about the festival. Here are a few of the responses which arrived in the post:

"I felt I had to write to say how much I and my family enjoyed the "Green Field" and how good it made us feel to know something of your activities and intentions"
- Louise Thompson, Gwynedd

"June 22-25: The Green Field at Glastonbury CND festival was an unqualified success. Festival-goers reported a unique and almost tangible atmosphere of harmony and peace which many found inspiring. There were workshops, exhibition tents, solar showers, windmills, healing sessions and all manner of colourful events representing a holistic and multi-faceted approach, towards peace in its many dimensions. One other thing remarked on was the almost total absence of litter !"
- 'Green Branch' (West Wilts Eco newsletter)

"The Green Field at the Glastonbury Festival was a wonderful haven of peace - we congratulate you on an inspirational weekend !" - The Bowles family, Shepton.

"Spirals & Circles: Circles are closed, non-open spaces and two dimensional. To become part of a circle you have to be swallowed/initiated/surrounded. To withdraw your energy from a circle once in (rather hard this) you have to disrupt/break out against the circular will.

"Spirals are 3-dimensional energy fields that come from somewhere and go somewhere else. You can merge into a spiral without losing your individual identity, and you can leave a spiral without disturbing its flow. Geo-centric and helio-centric world views are circular impositions on our mental processes. Whereas our solar system is just another star on one ever-expanding spiral limb of our ever-expanding spiral galaxy which is just another ... ad illuminatum.

Circles are possessive, enclosing and corrupt.
Spiral into the future rather than running round in circles."

This last item may seem a trifle irrelevant (or is it ? Could the Green Field have a spiral site-plan ? I doubt it); but it was specially sent to us for publication by Captain Spirulina, C.O. Swami Barmi Army, Nocturnal Mission To Decoy Industrial Estate ... so who am I to leave it out ?

After the festival, Michael Eavis had given us all the expenses we'd asked for (which was definitely over the top of our original estimate), but being hassled by all and sundry - including the local drugs squad who had invaded Worthy Farm with the farcical notion that a huge stash of cocaine had been secreted in somebody's car boot, and who duly made thorough fools of themselves - he had held out on actually paying us for the job. A figure of £1000 had been mentioned, but never firmly agreed; and it seemed like protracted negotiations would still be required to secure such ansum. Bruce and Chris went down to Pilton to sort this out 3 weeks later. Protracted negotiations did not happen. Michael handed us the thousand quid in used tenners before we'd had time to drink a cup of tea.

Which brings us to a suitable next item on the agenda:

Finances

Apart from the £1000, the Green Collective by this date possessed virtually nothing. Money continues to come in from Mailing subscriptions (including 2 Lesotho Maloti from a subscriber in southern Africa, who said try it on an unsuspecting bank clerk for a laugh. The bank clerk laughed, and said try Thos Cook's. The man in Thos Cook's laughed too, and beamed 'Ah! Central Bank of Lesotho!' 'Yes!' I exclaimed,

'Can you tell me how much it is worth?' 'I don't know' quoth he, 'It isn't up on the Insta-Read Bureau-de-Changamatic Tele-Chart. I'll have to look it up'. So he opened an enormous book which has separate pages describing the currencies of every single country in the world, and he told me that it was the right colour, had the right picture on, and said the right things except it ought to read 'Lesotho Monetary Authority', so he really wouldn't like to say. It could be sent away to London for verification, identification, and authorisation, but that would take a while and would cost far more than the face value of the note, which might be worth about a quid.)

Money continues to come in from mailing subscriptions (which were boosted by the Green Field), but goes out just as quickly, currently on expenses for people working on 'Harvest for the Hungry', trying to put a video together (still on its way since last year's Gathering), setting up meetings, distributing minutes, and putting out the mailing itself. In addition, several peoples' expense claims connected with the Green Field had come in too late to be reimbursed directly by Michael, there were numerous outstanding items for things which should be done or had been done and should be paid for, and more outstanding expenses, some going back to last summer. We made a list of all these things. It was very long.

The Land Fund

But at least the Land Fund was now to be properly constituted, even though there seemed to be no spare cash to give it a boost. Here's a report from Chris Walford:

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LAND FUND PROGRESS REPORT

You've probably picked up the information that £1 from each of your valuable subscriptions to this mailing goes into a Green Land Fund. Until now this cash has been living in the Green Collective bank account, but we are in the process of opening an account with the Ecology Building Society, which seems an appropriate home for the £100 that is presently in the Fund.

Many of us acknowledge that land, control of access to it, ownership and use of it are key green issues, and we hope through the fund/trust to be able to explore some responses to these in a practical way, and perhaps influence current practise through that example. Other anticipated purposes of the fund include providing permanent sites for Green Gatherings, the preventative acquisition of land, and the provision of a base where some of the Collective's projects could be co-ordinated more effectively.

The project is very much in its formative stage. The plan is to form a trust; this will probably be quite costly and is still some way off. How it should model its purposes, structure and line of action are very open; your comments and ideas, and of course, any additional donations, will happily be received by: Chris Walford, 2 Gramsden, Parabola Road, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire.

THANKS,

CHRIS

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Where to next? Saturday afternoon was turning to evening, cool shadows were stretching over the lawn; someone noticed that the minutes from the previous meeting, as typed by Chris, included the following remarkable item: "WINTER GREEN CONGRESS - an idea which could widen our contact with the public and involve those who a'r'm't (sorry about all those apostrophes, but I'm too lazy to wait for the correcting fluid to dry; insert 'e' in wherever it pleases you most. This mistake will be available in kit form for you to construct right in your own home in the next mailing, pressure of other work notwithstanding.),)" ... closely followed by: "DRONGO - Did you know that this word appears in the Shorter E-Dictionary? 'A name orig. of a Madagascar bird, Dicrurus (Edolius) Forficatus; subseq extended, to the numerous other species of Dicruridae'." (Continued ...)

Anyway, cool evening shadows etc, and we resolved to deal with various smallish items before retiring for dinner. I can't remember exactly what they were, but I think it was mostly to do with publications. I'll start then with

The Mailing

This is now fairly well established, with nearly 100 subscribers so far and a print run of around 250 - the balance going to inquirers and other interested folks (in the hope of picking up new subscriptions). At the moment Bruce does all the work himself, which is fine whilst it's such a limited operation; but it is growing steadily - all the time will come when the printing, collating and posting will be more than one person's job, and when the editorial side (maybe even paste-up) can become more adventurous, and will need to be done collectively.

Anyone with inclinations in this direction please contact Bruce. Also, don't forget that the mailing is open to all subscribers to include material publicising projects groups and events which you are involved in. The most effective way of doing this is to include an A4 flyer, which can be collated in with the duplicated sheets. (Address: 4 Chase Crescent, Woodcutts, Salisbury, Wilts).

The Advice Pack

This has been selling slowly but steadily, and must have just about covered its costs by now. Notably, Festival Welfare Services purchased 5 copies, which have been handed out to worthy causes and helped to give us a good name. Comments have generally varied between "not at all bad" and "wonderful", but there's been virtually nothing in the way of practical and constructive feed-back.

This is needed with a view to putting together a second, revised, expanded and even more splendid edition at some unspecified time in the future. We could include one or two whole new sections, e.g. on putting together a women's space, or on the particular problems faced and lessons learnt in putting on a small local Gathering (does anyone out there think they'd like to provide the latter?) But mostly we could do with short comments, one-liners even, such as "this saved time", "that saved money", "we found our local Women's Institute could provide us with all of them with no trouble at all" and so on. (Continued ...)

GREEN GATHERING ADVICE PACK

The Advice Pack has been prepared by members of the Green Collective, and is based on their experience in organising the Glastonbury Green Gatherings. It is intended as an information resource and, through its availability, as an encouragement to other groups who may be planning similar events.

The material covers all aspects of putting on a Gathering, and is arranged in sections covering: Working as a Collective; Finance and Budgeting; Press and Publicity; Police and Local Authorities; Site Arrangements and Site Management; Site Kitchen; Gate; Health and Welfare; Information; Workshops; Entertainments; Kidz; Stalls; Site Services and Facilities.

The sections are printed on different coloured paper for easy reference, and are designed so that they can be divided up between the different members of an organising group.

The cost is £4 (including postage, and packing in a neat cardboard folder), or @ £2.50 each in bulk. Collective subscribers may purchase single copies at the bulk order price. Please make cheques/Postal Orders out to 'The Green Collective' and send to: Bruce Garrard, 4 Chase Crescent, Woodcutts, Salisbury, Wilts, or: Chris Walford, 2 Gransden, Parabola Road, Cheltenham, Glos.

"The information is worth its weight in gold" - Greenline.

"The Green Gathering Advice Pack provides a wealth of most excellent advice, and any organiser who fails to get a copy (AND LEARN FROM IT) is asking for disaster".
- STONE newsletter.

The Leaflet

A special Green Collective leaflet, explaining to everyone who we are, what we do, and why it's important for everyone else to get involved, has long been awaited. David assured us that it's now nearly ready. This is going to be produced to a high professional standard, and will be particularly useful in raising funds - impressing people with oodles of money and making them think what better could they do with at least some of it but give it to us? David will be fronting the money for the printing costs, as a loan to the Collective. Exactly how much was a bit vague. Let's hope that its effectiveness in raising funds is enormous.

The Pamphlet

The scheme is to publish a pamphlet containing articles covering all the major areas of Green politics - something which so far is not available. Editing and producing such a pamphlet is a job for the winter - so watch this space next spring.

'Sunflowers' Trading

Sunflowers continues to have a steady turnover in badges, stickers etc. Please note the change in address, which is now: Ann Gunn, 8 Wordsworth Road, Braintree, Essex CM7 5SX (0376 21184).

A new envelope resealer is to be designed. This will be printed in one colour, and therefore more cheaply. Help is needed from someone who can use an air brush for this undertaking.

Information and Contact Sheets

Lists of organisations and individuals involved in different aspects of the green/peace/alternative movement are still available from David and Richard. Full details were included in the mailing before last, or on request - St Ives (0480) 63054.

And so to dinner, which was a serve-it-yourself combination of stew, salad, baked potatoes, etcetera. Pudding was Soya Choco Dessert with chopped fruit mixed in (inspired by Fran). The washing up was done by several people who'd never been seen doing such things before. After dinner we gathered indoors for a lengthy discussion concerning

'Harvest for the Hungry' at Molesworth

By now you're either at Molesworth, or you've already got home, or you decided that you wouldn't go after all: so there's no need to include details of the event. David and Richard have been co-ordinating things from St Ives, in co-operation with Tim and Bridie Wallis of the 'Molesworth Wheat to the Starving Campaign'. CND Projects Committee have come up with some cash (though not enough, and only to be paid out after the event) and the Green Collective's first overt political action is under way.

There was a protracted conversation concerning how to co-ordinate a large convoy of vehicles, who would arrive at Molesworth a day or two beforehand and 'take' the site. Is this macho approach the right way to go about things? I don't know; but the latest issue of Peace News tells me that a work camp is being organised at Molesworth for August 20-24, during which preparations will be made for Harvest for the Hungry and the site established - so there's no need to worry.

Perhaps I should just repeat, particularly for the benefit of anyone now at Molesworth for the first time, that the air base (proposed site for cruise missiles, due to be installed in 1988), includes over 1300 acres of wasted land, which if sown with wheat and other crops could save the lives of over 15,000 children who will otherwise starve to death by this time next year. At Easter time an acre was sown with wheat. This will be harvested during September, and handed over to the Eritrean Relief Association who will ship it to Eritrea following a major rally at Molesworth on October 20th. A new crop of winter wheat will also be sown during the next few weeks, whilst the peace chapel, 'Eirene', will be dedicated by the Bishop of Huntingdon on September 2nd.

Between the early hours of Sunday morning and later on on Sunday morning everyone was asleep. I'd like to take the opportunity of this natural diurnal interlude to insert here a brief report from

The Fifth Test at the Oval

I write as someone who has been following this event for the past 4 days, via the Radio 4 'Test Match Special' commentary. As I write, England have lost all the first four Test Matches against the West Indies and go into the final day of the fifth needing 375 to win. They have so far scored only 151 for 5, which means a further 224 to go, and in the first innings they mustered only 162 all out. The situation is desperate. "Can Ian Botham do it?" the nation is asking. "Probably not" is the general reply.

By the time you read this, the result will be history. But already lost in the mists of time, I fear, will be the story of the BBC's outside FX microphone. They have several of these round the ground, adding 'ambience' for radio listeners by relaying the hallowed sound of leather upon willow, the genteel clap from the Members' Enclosure; the masterful 'Howzat?' from the fast bowling professional. But this being the Kennington Oval, and a West Indies match, all of that has been drowned out by a caribbean welter of drums, trumpets, claxons, whistles, and transistor radios. This cheerful cacophony has resulted in considerable differences of opinion, concerning both commentator and listener alike, as to whether such things should be allowed during a First Class Cricket Match. But this, however heated the debate (and one F.S. Trueman became very heated), has not been enough to have the FX microphones switched off.

Worse was to come. Immediately below the radio commentators' box is the Special Guest Box, hired on this occasion by Rolls Royce, for the exclusive pleasure of their most welcome guests. And who might such honoured guests be? Well, Brian Johnson had tea with them and said 3 of them were Sirs, as well as being 'jolly nice chaps'; but this is beside the point. The point is, one of the special FX microphones was dangling down from the commentators' box dangerously close to the Special Guest Box, and may (I say may with emphasis, since I had been listening to the radio all afternoon and had heard none of this at all): may have been recording the conversation of the Guests, who were all top notches in the Ministry of Defence. As soon as this KGB-inspired piece of skullduggery was discovered, a young secretarial lady was despatched urgently to the commentators' box, to point out the Looming Danger to National Security.

The special FX microphone was immediately switched off.

The others were left on, and the Caribbean crowd-carnival continued as if louder than ever; but this one was switched off. After all, as the West Indian Tony Crozier so adroitly pointed out, people in general are much more interested in the cricket than in the doings of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. How true. And Brian Johnson (famous for his line, uttered over the airwaves during the West Indies tour of 1976: "The bowler's Holding the batsman's Willey") ... and Brian Johnson and his pals continued unabashed.

SPORTS FIXTURES

- Sept 1: Magic Mushroom Free Festival, somewhere in Kent (all month).
Sept 1: Burnham Market Harvest Festival. Details from: 'Rest Harrow', Friars Lane, Burnham Norton, Kings Lynn PE31 8JA.
Sept 2: Molesworth - Dedication of the Peace Chapel by the Bishop of Huntingdon. Contact: 'Molesworth Wheat to the Starving Campaign', The Caravan, Peace Corner, Old Weston Road, Nr Brington, Huntingdon, Cambs.
Sept 6-9: Whitworth Fair. Details: Walter Lloyd, 070685 3266.
Sept 7-9: West Midlands Peace Year Festival (Green Deserts, Birmingham Urban Green Group, West Midlands Nuclear Free Council). Details: Juliette Yelverton, 14 Rochester Rd, Coventry; 0203 79552.
Sept 15-16: Dolgellau Peace Festival. Details: Ross Willis, Dolgellau 423462.
Sept 22: The Gathering at Cwm Penmant, Gwynedd, has been called off because it now coincides with the Bindon Tree Fair, but anyone wishing to travel on from Dolgellau is still welcome. Contact: Charley Barley, Gilfach, Cwm Penmant, Garndolbenmaen, Gwynedd, North Wales.

Sept 23: Free Fair and Harvest Festival, Bindon Home Farm, Langford Budville, Milverton, Taunton, Somerset. Details: Green Deserts, Geoff's House, Rougham, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk.
Sept 24-28: Week of actions including STOP THE CITY, London, September 27.
October 5-14: Liverpool Peace Festival '84. Details: Peace Festival, c/o The Peace Shop, 91 Whitechapel, Liverpool L1 6DX; 051 236 0748.
October 20: Molesworth rally.

Sunday: Gardening

Being dedicated Greens we went out after breakfast and did an hour's work in the Higher Rockes vegetable garden with a varied assortment of makeshift tools. Thence back to the meeting on the lawn.

The Green Roadshow

After 2 months on the road, Richie was visibly tired and had a touch of flu as well. The Roadshow had spent most of July in Wales, doing small events, not making much money. Richie had to spend a morning busking in order to get a bit of cash to come to Glastonbury, and said he felt strange leaving the Roadshow to come to the Collective meeting; a new gig had been arranged, together with the Tibetan Uktanian Mountain Troupe, for the weekend originally earmarked for the Inner Gathering at Leominster.

I think people felt a little strange about Richie too (not to say that we didn't all love him). He was a bit distant, and talking about "the reality of life on the road"; which is a different reality from cosy meetings on sunny lawns on Sundays. The Roadshow has been doing good work - but the political content hasn't been there, not in terms of workshops and visual displays of eco-culture. The Green Roadshow had changed in some indefinable way, away from the dream of taking the Green Gathering on the road, towards bringing people who are on the road in to calling themselves Green.

The Green Roadshow will have a lot to teach us all after its first season. As, no doubt, will the

Winter Green Congress

- A scheme which at the present time can only truthfully be termed Ambitious, is nevertheless going to happen, at Pontin's in Torbay. The costs involved will put the budget well into 5 figures; which is of the same order as the Glastonbury Gatherings, but here we only have space for 500 people. So tickets will cost £30 or £40 each, and the concept has changed a little from being a Congress of Independent Green Groups to being a Congress of All Green Organisations.

There was a similar moment in the development of the Green Roadshow idea, when it was realised that the costs of putting the whole dream together as originally conceived was well beyond what anyone could lay their hands on. The response then was to put it together anyway with whatever people could muster from their own dole-cheque-level resources, and see what came out. Here the money required is not so enormous, but more than people had thought about; and the response is to enlarge the dream to match.

There was a lot of talk about making sure that people with only 'grass roots' finances will not be barred by economics from attending; and even more talk about whether we approve of Pontin's catering - part of the deal will almost certainly be that they feed us. But we'll provide the Wholefood menu. Also, there'll be a need for plenty of workshop facilitators, stewards, and general helpers - so even if we can't afford special zero-rated UB40 tickets for the masses, there will certainly be space for people to work their passage.

The Congress is planned for March now, so it's time for a working group to get on with it in earnest. The idea originated with David (St Ives 63054), and the Torbay end of it is being handled mainly by Dean (Totnes 864568); so if you'd like to get involved, especially if you're within reasonable travelling distance from Torbay, contact one of them.

For lunch we had Suzie's famous Lettuce Soup, followed by the remains of the vegetables cooked up in a variety of manners, and then an approximation to Gooseberry Fool which I made myself by stripping two large gooseberry bushes of their fruit, boiling it all up, putting the result bit by bit through a liquidiser, and mixing in some soya milk. Not too bad, but I wouldn't recommend it if you have plentiful supplies of Choco Dessert or similar.

By now, with all these grandiose schemes and wilful expenditures going on, you're probably wondering just what did happen to

The Thousand Pounds ?

Well, the last I saw of it, it was wrapped in a plain brown envelope and on its way to the bank. And it was in the bank on Saturday afternoon. But it's an amazing thing; by lunchtime on Sunday so much of it had evaporated. So many people, and this is the way of the world I suppose, discovered that they needed or were owed just a little bit of it. And I'm just as guilty; I'd had £30-worth of expenses (which, just like everyone else, I needed) before the meeting had even started. Poor Roger, with the Treasurer's cheque book, was beset by it all. And so, when we sat down to discuss what to do with this long-awaited thousand notes, the first thing we had to do was to have a protracted round of computations, which revealed the following:

We were here to discuss what to do with £400.

I have to confess to feeling a little sad; but not to worry. It made decision-making very simple. £300 to the Roadshow, to make sure they all get to Molesworth equipped to put on a good show, and £100 to get the Green Congress ball rolling. And that was it.

One final item of significance came from Dean:

Green Promotions

Dean spoke about this Totnes-based venture, which was set up to manage bands working in the alternative movement and which has so far been mainly associated with Planetwaves, a lovely bunch of people who are unfortunately beginning to go in their separate directions before making anybody's fortune. But Green Promotions has big plans for the future, and some of the ideas for attracting business sponsorship for rock concerts in the same way as Britannic Assurance sponsor the County Cricket Championship were so outrageous that I won't even write them down (though no doubt there were plenty of people in the Members' Tavern at Lord's who felt just the same way about Britannic Assurance etcetera). Anyway, Dean and David went off later to the pub deep in conversation about how Green Promotions could become a limited company and handle the management side of the Green Congress. Anything could happen, and something lively surely will.

Somewhere in amongst all this stuff was a more lighthearted discussion concerning the disappearance of

The Green Grail

The Green Grail is a large and lovely glazed earthenware jug, patterned and inscribed with the words from the old Incredible String Band song: "May the long time sun shine upon you, all love surround you, and the pure light within you guide you all the way on". It was brought to the Gathering in 1981 by two women from Die Grunen, who came in the place of Petra Kelly, who had been invited but couldn't make it. It was presented "to the Gathering" and came into the safe-keeping of the Collective; and specifically of Anne, who (like the German women) is a woman, who believes she was the first person to have been actually handed it, and who looked after it safely for a year.

Now all this about women is significant, as you shall see. After the 1982 Gathering, Anne was going on the road in her truck, and she left the Grail with Stephanie - who lives in a house, who is also a woman, who lives in Glastonbury close by the Gathering site, and who kept it safely on top of the piano for the following year.

(Continued ...)

Now in 1983 Stephanie decided to concentrate on her other work rather than with the Collective, so after the Gathering she gave the Grail to David, who took it home to St Ives, Cambs. And there it still was on the evening of 23rd May 1984, when the Green Roadshow stopped off in St Ives on its way from the Thorpe Tree Fair to the Coventry Peace Festival. That was the night that Planetwaves did a local gig in St Ives, to help keep things going on the road.

Now if David had been a woman, I feel quite certain myself that he would have left the Grail at home on the piano; but he isn't and he didn't. He took it to the gig and displayed it on the stage.

That was the night when strange things happened at the gig. There was a fight in the audience. And all the while this fragile Grail was somewhere on the stage. For all I know it could have been saved from destruction when it was removed, by a woman, whose name I shan't mention here since I haven't checked the circumstances with her, but who apparently claimed the Grail in the name of Women, and who certainly wouldn't return it to David. So when David was asked about the Grail, he said he'd rather leave that subject till the following meeting.

When pressed, he explained who had it in much the same terms as I have above, but said that the present holder of the Grail would return it to the Collective, but that first she would send in a letter in time for the next meeting explaining for herself why she took it. So as yet there's no call (or excuse) for anyone to climb up on a Green Charger and go off a 'questin'; but maybe I'd better send a copy of all this to her, to help find out more about it.

As regards our other icons, the Totem Pole is still standing in farmer Eavis' field - except that it isn't his field, he rents it off a neighbour, and he'd like it moved. Nothing at all has been done about this to date. The Dragon recently returned to its birthplace, Barnstaple, for a refit. There are interesting stories, I know, to be related about the dragon: but I'll leave that to someone else. She should by now be back with the Roadshow.

The Meeting Closed with an evaluation, which was more like an appreciation session. Then Kim suggested a country dance routine where instead of dancing and holding hands with alternate partners, we walk round slowly and give everyone a hug. We all did that and finished feeling really happy.

Post Script

Owing to, or is it due to?, the enormous and inordinate quantity of space taken up by my own editorial/report on the last Green Collective meeting, other items meant for inclusion in this mailing have been thrown in the waste bin: these include our 4-page cover story, an anarcho-confabulist critique of the current counter-cruise campaign, 'USAF Molesworth - Are We Going To Sit It Out All Winter?' and also an in-depth fact-finding photo-interview exclusive from our Parliamentary Correspondent in Strasbourg: 'Purple Sprouting - Is He Really One Of The Greens?'

In a paroxysm of editorial guilt over this situation, I've decided to leave the penultimate page blank. Items for inclusion in the next mailing should be scribbled neatly or typed on this page; and I promise faithfully that if lots of things get written on it and sent to me, then next time I won't write anything myself.

Greens for Vitality !.

Bruce.

STOP PRESS: EVENTS

There will be a conference 'Towards a Green Suffolk' on Sept 15th at Hillcroft School, Fimborough Rd, Stowmarket from 10.30 am to 5.30 pm. Although local Eco branches are putting the conference on, theme, speakers and workshops will be directed to the broader Green movement. Enquiries to Greenacre Beyton, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk.

Next Collective meeting not yet confirmed, though we were hoping for Sept 28/29. Details with minutes; or contact Chris Walford, Cheltenham (0242) 520329.

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