

Community Building in Britain Newsletter

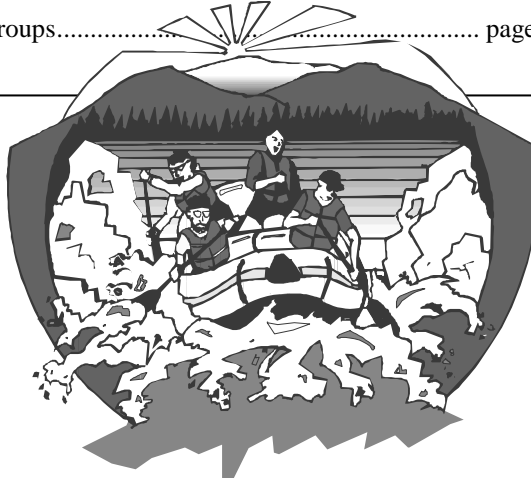
Number 56

September 1997

The newsletter is issued by a growing network of people in Britain who are committed to developing community building beyond that originally described in Dr. M. Scott Peck's book, 'The Different Drum', and as further developed by the Foundation for Community Encouragement in the USA (FCE).

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From the Editor

May I offer a special welcome to new readers? I do hope that you find plenty of articles in this and future editions that stimulate you to think and to feel. Contributions to the newsletter of all sorts and sizes are welcome, and there is no 'official line' that anyone has to adopt here.

My I also offer my thanks to those who have contributed to this edition? I am always delighted to open my post (or read my email) and find an article or poem or picture or thought that someone has felt moved to share with us in this way. An especial thanks to Regina from Germany for sharing her dream after the general meeting.

Mailing

Thanks also to those who helped with the recent mailing. It seems to have been received OK. To save money I did not mail most of you separately, so the contents of the mailing are included with this newsletter. If you would like more event leaflets to give out to acquaintances either now or in future do please let me know.

Articles

I have taken the liberty of putting in a page about Unstone Grange - a centre for 'Personal Creative Growth'. We used their buildings near Chesterfield for the general meeting, and it made for a good mix of dormitory accommodation and camping, with plenty of rooms for meetings. They host lots of events there, and have just taken the major step of purchasing the site, so want to encourage many to support them in their venture.

You may have noticed an advertisement in the last edition for purchasing a unit in Balnakeil, and I thought it would be interesting to have a little more about this craft workers community, which is one of the most northerly in mainland Britain.

Service Groups

As many of you are aware, the effects of the general meeting will only gradually be felt among us, as individuals and groups begin to

follow the passions within themselves. There are several groups meeting for the first time with new members in the next few weeks. Please remember them in your thoughts as they struggle to know what tasks to take on, and how to approach them. If you want more information about them do contact the people involved (or me if you do not know anyone else). Most meetings are reported on in the newsletter.

The groups as I understand them are: -

- the "Holding Group" (5-7 Sept) 'hold the tensions within CBiB', and so among other things they care for the network, and look after some of the practical arrangements;
- the "Facilitators Training Group" (19-21 Sept) is for those who are continuing to train to be facilitators of CBE's and CBW's, and they together 'discern' who is to facilitate each of the public events;
- the "Learning Opportunities Group" (4-5 Oct) is for people interested in exploring the community building model in various contexts in more depth.

Public Events

One of the facts that I know some are struggling with is that recent events have not attracted as many participants as had been hoped, or as had been the case in previous years. Could this be because of publicity, or expense, or are we putting people off in some way? Are we being led to concentrate more on smaller on-going groups? Is this just a temporary lull that will allow us to catch our breath? Or has the mood of the times changed, and such events are no longer attractive?

If you have thoughts about this, or anything else relating to items included in the newsletter, or indeed anything around your own experiences of community building, why not share them through the newsletter? I look forward to hearing from you.

Peter Cooper (details on back page)

Scheduled Community Building Events

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Place</u> | <u>Contact</u> | <u>Fee</u> | <u>Notes</u> |
|------------------------|----------------|--|-----------------------|--------------|
| 11/12 Oct (Sat-Sun) | Edinburgh | Margaret (Tue-Thur) 0131 447 8536 Vicky (Sat-Sun) 0131 667 9274 | £60 | CBE |
| 17/19 Oct (Fri-Sun) | Othona, Dorset | Othona 01308 897130 | £130 (Residential) | CBW |

Note: - **CBE** stands for “Community Building Experience”, which provides an opportunity to build community in a large group over two days. In a “Community Building Workshop”, or **CBW**, a third day is added so that not only can participants experience the building of community but they can also learn about the process through discussion and reflection.

Book for Sale

"The Power of Acceptance"

By Doug Shadel and Bill Thatcher, published 1997

Forward and Epilogue by M.Scott Peck, M.D.

Using in-depth interviews and scientific research this book addresses the questions: -

What happens at a community building workshop?

How does it happen?

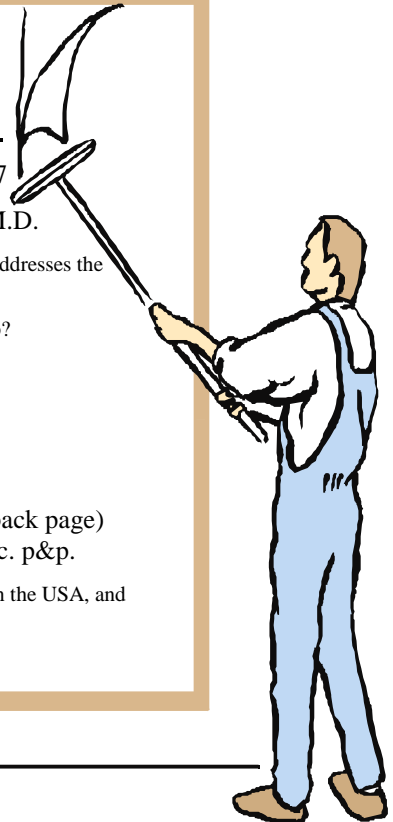
Will it result in lasting changes?

It also places the community building model within the context of the encounter group movement of the last 50 years.

Order your copies now from Peter Cooper (see back page)

The UK price is expected to be around £12 inc. p&p.

Doug and Bill have been involved with Community Building in the USA, and FCE, for many years.



A Dream about a Ship

(Regina is from Germany and joined us at the general meeting. Many of us there felt it a privilege to share with her, and wish her well with her desires to bring community building into Germany. Thank you, Regina, for being willing to share your dream with us, and for doing so well in our awkward language!)

Dear friends from CBiB

After the general meeting I spent one more night in Unstone Grange, before starting my three weeks holiday in Britain (by the way it was a great time!). That night I had a strange dream. At first I thought, it's a personal theme. But later, after talking with Ruth and others, I began to think it could be a CBiB dream. So I would like to share the dream with you - please be indulgent with my German English!!

We are working together with many people to finish up a big, beautiful sailing ship (like the ones in old films, when Britain had a strong navy).

It seems to be done and some people are pushing to hoist the sails. But someone warns us against doing so, and orders us to bring the ship into a calm bay. There it can be safe until all the necessary materials for a long sea journey have been brought on board. We are following that advice, but at the same time we are doubting, whether the sailing ship will come out of this calm bay again.....



Certainly you will have your own interpretation of this dream. But for me the picture of the strong, impressive sailing ship is important. In discussions at the general meeting some things about CBiB were often compared to a raft. But looking with the eyes of an outsider, for me CBiB is not a small raft but it is a fit sailing ship. Yes, there is still preparation necessary, but the ship is ready, even though the cargo is not all on board yet!

I am looking forward to more opportunities to be a member of CB events in Britain, and hopefully the CBiB Sailing ship will conquer Germany soon!

Regina Hass

Community Continuity Conference

4 August 1997

Ontario, Canada, July 1997

The golden orb of the setting sun, reflected in the still, warm waters of Lake Simcoe, with a paddle steamer sauntering across behind tall pines; what more *idyllic* venue could there have been? The general milieu and supporting activities were excellent; the opportunities for conversations outside the formal proceedings wonderful.

Especially useful was the opportunity to talk with people involved in a local on-going group which has been going successfully for more than five years.

Diversity

The subject of the conference was *Diversity*. This was based around part of FCE's revised Mission Statement which encourages people to "welcome and affirm diversity".

To me this was illustrated simply and clearly by my own story there: When I attended the first plenary session I sat behind a young black man with dreadlocks wearing a woolly hat. My instinctive thought was: "he's not going to be an easy person". At the end of the speech by our black keynote speaker he stood and applauded more energetically than the rest of the audience; as he did so, a feeling of fear crept through me.

Within two days he and I had hugged with affection and my, wasn't his mother a beautiful person too!!

The conference encouraged me to learn to accept and promote diversity. I noted too that I was a minority myself! Can CBiB find ways of introducing different sorts of people to our circles?

Proceedings

The formal proceedings consisted principally of circle meetings, half the participants in one circle and the rest in another in a separate room, each of forty-three persons including two facilitators; we kept to these groups for about eight sessions totalling twelve hours. Pat Callair gave the keynote speech on Diversity before we divided. At one stage we reconvened in all-female and all-male groups,

meeting separately to share and then together opposite each other to hear one from the other how each got on; there were interesting dynamics.

For one afternoon we met in different interest groups: Community in Spirituality, Business and Family, each group led by a facilitator with a presentation. I learnt: "Spirituality is not so much a way of being as it is a way of seeing" and "Spirituality is a seed-bed of paradox in our lives which we often attempt to till with the tools of logic".

Teachings

We also met as a whole group each morning for music and a small presentation and in the evening for presentations. The presentations looked at: - Taiwan, Ontario, Quebec (language differences), CBiB, "The Power of Acceptance", FCE changes, Happenings in USA.

Bill Thatcher (FCE Chief Executive) said: There is a need to provide structure (for FCE activities) in which process is paramount; without structure people get hurt. He also wanted FCE to provide for people from birth to death - they may not be at the stage when they need a CBW, they may need something else. I believe CBiB could benefit from looking at both of these suggestions.

Learnings

There were powerful learnings from the two circles meeting separately to build community simultaneously. During the early stages I felt a strong "us" and "them" developing, but as time moved on, so it grew easier to relate to members of the other circle, perhaps because we were getting conditioned to relating better to people whether they were in our circle or not.

Something within the circle went uncomfortably for me, and I need to do more work on why this was. My initial thoughts are as follows:

In the initial circle meeting our facilitators drew our attention to the Principles and

Guidelines for building community and we started with the Rabbi's Gift. This set in me the expectation of a CBW, with its attendant building of community followed by transition to discussing the keynote subject of diversity. Had I not been so obstinate in not emptying myself of that expectation I would probably have been more able to keep with the flow of the discussions.

My experience

I could have been helped if I had come to the understanding that we were not partaking in building community as is done in a CBW, but, and I hope I have concluded this correctly, that we were examining the issue of diversity, and in the course of our deliberations we were trying to use CB principles so as to improve our communication skills and build a sense of community.

As it was, I found difficulty in participating partly because I remained too keen to try to move on towards emptiness, when, in hindsight, that was not the primary aim.

I also noted my anxiety when during the second circle session one of our facilitators began to get involved in the discussions, and this recurred occasionally in later sessions.

Again the anxiety was caused by a preconceived notion within me, this time that the facilitators should avoid involvement, because of the need for them to provide safety, until the group has reached a reasonable state of community. I was also aware that a few people had never experienced a CB circle before.

Facilitating v Participating

That brings me to another point. It was suggested to me that I had tried to facilitate the group.

I think there is a difference between facilitating and participating (in an experienced way).

As a facilitator I believe I am required to keep aware of the group process and, where I feel the group is not making progress, make suitable comments to help the group move on.

As a participant I am required to keep in touch with my feelings and, if moved, speak to how what is happening is affecting my feelings.

I believe I have gained some knowledge from previous groups of what contributions promote, and what contributions do not promote, progress towards community. My hearing contributions which I believe do not promote community will give me feelings which I must express. When I express these feelings, do others interpret this as facilitating?

Looking back

In retrospect, I think what I did was to feel that certain contributions were not promoting progress and then I expressed my concern in an un-straightforward way. This I did partly through lack of courage, partly because I was in a strange culture, where my knowledge might not have been applicable, and partly because in the circle with me were two other participants who were much more experienced facilitators than me - surely, I thought, they could see what was going on? Aware of the importance of me not avoiding my responsibility, and feeling moved to say something, I spoke. But had I been more straightforward and courageous, I might have received feedback which would have put me right.

I am keen to learn from the experience, and want to hear suggestions others may have.

Finally

I got to know so many people I would like to meet again; it is sad that the memory of them fades.

I wonder if the CCC could be held in the UK one year? I am sorry I did not think of that and sound out the conference. Next year it will be in Seattle, on the Pacific Coast, and the subject will be "Leadership in Community".

Altogether it was an important, awe-inspiring experience for me, and I owe a debt of gratitude to CBiB for sponsoring me to go. Thank you.

Anthony Kirke

Holding Group (H.G.) Meeting - 3rd August 1997

This was the last meeting of the present group, Ruth Goffe, Cliff Jordan and Anthony Kirke. We gathered at Anthony's house for a brief half-day of business and closure. Here are brief notes on the business:

Future Events: Anthony has begun liaising over progress on CBW for Christians, Othona CBW and Edinburgh CBE. He will continue as Holding Group link person for these three events. Later events in progress: Agreed to request new H.G. provides link persons for (Monkton Wylde), Sutton Courtenay and Shared Earth Trust events for 1998.

Action C.J.

Community Continuity Conference (Canada). Anthony shared his experience (see separate report).

Peter Cooper's letter. He has written to the HG offering to undertake further tasks for CBiB. We have encouraged him to consider being supported in his work by participating in the HG. He has suggested working on aspects of enquiries in close communication with a telephone enquiry person (at present Anthony). We agreed that Anthony would explore these areas with Peter. His other proposals need further consideration at a future meeting.

Structure. Agreed there is a benefit in having basic structure in all CB 'Task' meetings. A structure will be proposed for the September H.G. meeting

Action R.G.

General Meeting '97. Agreed to allocate time in Sept meeting to review GM97 and invite suggestions as to how it might be done differently next time.

C.J

A comprehensive record is being assembled.

A.K.

Armando's letter, "CBiB: the Challenge of Task and Process" (in last Newsletter). We were unable to give this the time it deserved. People are encouraged to work on specific task areas ideally in small sub-groups. We believe that the gestation of such groups is in progress and their emergence will become clearer during the various meetings taking place in September and October.

We want to create a supportive framework in which groups can form as needed and which nurtures good communication between those groups from the beginning. One meeting a year for all people to come together seems unlikely to be adequate.

We hope that the proposed sub-groups begin to form at the September H.G. meeting within and from the larger H.G., deciding on separation, if appropriate, at later meetings.

All

Next Meeting date: 5-7th September 1997



0181 444 9764

August '97

Towards Community - **THE SEARCH FOR EQUALITY**

Tom Deevy

14 Crown Rd

London N10 2HY

Dear Community Builder,

This article contains my proposal for a residential community. It would have five members minimum and would be based in a large house in London North Central

History: The idea is born of my own experience as a resident landlord letting rooms in my own house. In the past two years I have tried to have a community type relationship with fellow residents (tenants).

Power Imbalance: Like me, my tenants have been middle-aged dysfunctionals. I found myself being projected into a parenting role: As my awareness of this inequality has grown I have become more and more resentful. I now fully realize that it's the lack of nurture in my own childhood that makes me incapable of nurturing other very hurt children

Limitation: This is my current limitation and one within which I wish to operate. More than ever I want to live and share with others in a satisfying and meaningful way BUT I DON'T WANT TO CARRY EMOTIONAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE OTHER

Equality: Even when 5/7 persons come together to share a residence/home based on equal financial input there will still be blame, anger and resentment bandied about. BUT I WILL HAVE EQUALITY. I'll not have to carry responsibility for the other's dissatisfaction. I'll have the freedom of being an equal

Apparent Contradiction: You may be confused reading this last paragraph. I appear to be saying that by giving up landlording and the power that goes with it I'll have more equality with those with whom I choose to reside -YES, THAT IS WHAT I AM SAYING. As landlord I have felt excluded and less than equal

Personal History: Having material possessions in the form of a house and the building / plumbing skills to maintain such, has given me material security to make up for my emotional insecurity. NOW I FEEL STRONG ENOUGH TO SEEK EQUALITY AND FAIR PLAY. If I have blame, anger and resentment projected onto me, I want to be free to relate to these in the here and now WITHOUT THAT CALLING INTO QUESTION THE OTHER'S RESIDENTIAL SECURITY and my own financial security. There is too much at stake in the landlord/ tenant relationship, in my experience, to have this equality

Criteria: For my participation, such a group would be resident in London North Central, say Islington / King's Cross area and members would have an equal financial investment

Limitation: I acknowledge that I am not proposing 'true community' - this is not open to those who do not have the cash or the ability to borrow it

Assumption: The group would first have to achieve community among themselves, such that all decisions would fully represent that group

Interested: Give me a ring or write

Flat 2, Linden Court, 6 Linden Grove, Nunhead, London SE15 3LF. Phone 0171 6350181
Dear Peter 30.7.97.

Thanks to your shaming me by your dedicated work on the Newsletter into subscribing for some more. I have actually been moved to respond again! Also I still have your cry in my ears - not sure why?

I am moved to write by what I see arising through the Newsletter. (diversity in action)
I see Mike's and Debbie's letters crystallising complementary opposite ways in CBiB.
I feel that my 'child' trying to grow into community may have a third voice or element.
She sees authentic selves delivering themselves from their own pasts and imposed scripts.
I see mature men and women with bits of wreckage from earlier life informing movement.
CBiB's sword cut me free from the demand to be 'special'; the need for someone 'special'.
I see the plight of people *made* 'special' by gifts, parents' projections, adulation of peers.
I see that even the negatives of my family, paralysis, and dyslexia, can hook into this.
I wish that Paul Gee's Quaker model with 'clerk' could work without its exclusive script.
I wish that the 'Healer Jesus' dream did not devalue 'good enough mother', Buddha, Zen.
I see my child relating with confidence to *all* people and cultures through your work.
She wishes to find a way of making her very limited offering sufficient. Any ideas?
I see reason and organising ability reaching for a simpler base for 'life before marketing'.

Yvonne M. Poulson

(Still looking for better ways to be together and better language to tell each other 'how it happens')



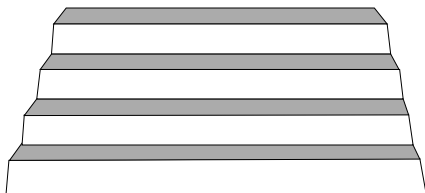
More thoughts from friends on the internet

The CBW is "peak experience".....useful as a wakeup but the results fade rapidly. To engage in genuine community building requires a time, effort, work and sustained intentionality, and continuous, long-term practice. I don't understand, let alone claim, to have mastered this process.

Concern

Another concern that I'm beginning to hold is that community-building only focuses on a few human developmental lines and leaves others untouched. An individual diligent at community building for several years ends up juggling these various lines and may end up with one large giant (CB) and a dozen pygmies.

I would like to claim original thought in the last paragraph but I need to admit that the concepts, and most of the analogies and words are pure Ken Wilber and I would like to give him complete credit for what seems to me profound insight.



12 Steps

On the 12 Step similarities I've just left a group after about six months of weekly meetings. This group was focused on dysfunctional behaviours in general and not solely on addictions but used a very defined 12 Step form and process. I joined intentionally to learn what 12 steps was all about and how it might or might not compare to a Peck CBW and learned a lot (about myself and about the process).

I sense now that each group has its own personality and this will be influenced by the problem that present themselves. The absolute

key for me are in steps 1, 2 and 3.....I would paraphrase them as:

- 1) Life is Difficult and I am not in Control
- 2) There is a power greater than myself that is
- 3) Made a decision to empty myself of my need (or ability) to control and to turn it over to my higher power

I believe most people do not understand or accept that life is difficult....secondly that many intellectually agree on the existence of a higher power but do not have an experiential relationship to base this on.....and third, again intellectually turn things over to the higher power but then make a slave of themselves trying to do the 12 steps with more vigour and precision (in other words using the 12 steps as their way of controlling their own cure!)

Michael Korgie:

.....

I quite agree. I am saddened that so many of us manage to hook into a discipline, religion, practice that purports to answer all the questions when many facing us each new day require new answers, quite beyond the scope of other's earlier codifications.

Synthesis

From Kierkegaard, I've learned that life is difficult purely because we are called upon to constantly be integrating opposing tendencies within us, if we are to grow and expand as humans. Every tendency we feel comfortable with seems to have an opposite tendency which we must uncover and ultimately grow from by synthesising the two tendencies into a more accurate and comprehensive way of dealing with the world.

What I love about this - and which scares me equally - is that it is so open ended; there is never any end to it, just continual evolution towards ...?

Michael Scott Rankin

BALNAKEIL CRAFT VILLAGE

Ronald Lansley June 1997

Many articles and reports have been written about Balnakeil Craft Village for many reasons and by many authors. Some have lived and worked here for some time and written of their interpretation and experiences, some have visited and written objectively on some aspect of interest or curiosity, some have used the concept as a subject for dissertation and some have recorded for tourist magazines. Each feature has presented an image at some stage of its progress.

This composition is produced as an experience from being part of a developing community, one of the first of its kind in Britain and knowing that Balnakeil stimulates attention from people encountering the circumstances. A varying account from every inhabitant can be relayed and to this end perhaps the complexity, intricacy and uniqueness of Balnakeil can be appreciated.

The Start

Balnakeil Craft Community was not initiated from members and not of a popular idea of community; living under one roof in a spacious house or multi-roomed building with loads of outbuildings and pooling and sharing resources, experiencing self discovery and processes of open communications. Communal living is practised rather than attainment of living to a model.

The district where the site was constructed is in itself a close association established by generations of family history with structures and Parish traditions and a population size where every person is known. People came from various walks of life and parts of the world to live and work in Balnakeil Craft Village and their thoughts and expectations were not always the same as those indigenous and native.

There are abundant reasons why Balnakeil Craft Village came about and differing views to the purpose. The sequence of events which led to the appearance of the site and the sequence of events that give the peoples history are not clear cut although

generalisations have been accepted and become established as the continuing account. From advertising in 1964 the response was enthusiastic and was known as the Far North Project.

The buildings

These were to provide working and living accommodation for craft workers and their families who through their own commitment would create a new community to pursue their own enterprise in an unrivalled environment. The buildings were bare concrete shells with no plumbing or electricity, some with no glazing and were barely habitable, architecturally recognised in their layout - flat roofs and water towers.

A range of empirical visionaries came north to form the first Craft Village in Great Britain - a village where Craftsmen and women in community drew upon the enchantment of their surroundings to create new formations, new ideas, new products.

The first 15 years were under the jurisdiction of the Highland Council and people wishing to rent buildings were interviewed for their acceptability and ability to produce for sale items of Craftwork. There were no discussions with residents after moving in regarding further elements.

Freehold

In 1980 the village was sold to the sitting tenants and the individual freehold units are all independently owned and operated. Anyone can buy their way into the village and numerous people for varied reasons have come and gone at differing stages of their lives. The lifestyle is the fantasy of many but very few are willing to sacrifice anything to experience the life.

About 12 to 15 crafts appear to be the average at any one time working at different levels with different commitments, ambitions and aspirations and crafts of every persuasion have been functioning. Not all the populate have employed themselves in crafts;

self-sufficiency, riding school, hotel, coffee shop, guest house, worm factory, boat building have all been enterprises operating in the Craft Village. Developing a business or at least working for oneself to earn an income has been almost essential for the inhabitants and has from the Highland Council stance been seen as a locality for individuals to make a business start.

Change

Generally the businesses have succeeded and moved on or failed and moved on or remained single proprietor operations. It is not difficult to earn a living from tourism as there is a large number of people who visit the craft village and are willing to buy. The contrast of commercial features, personal factors and visitor attractions are closely interlinked with the individual commitments and objectives. The preference of priorities are dependent on the agreement of the ensemble and has been contended and unresolved to any great degree.

Three people have been residing at Balnakeil for over twenty five years and although all arrived with partners now live by themselves. The longest resident is the Danish Ceramic Artist Lotte Glob and in her own right Lotte has recognition for her works far outwith Balnakeil. Approximately 200 people have lived in Balnakeil Craft Village. People have various motives for leaving and until 1994 children of secondary school age had to hostel away from home to attend school 100 miles away returning home only at weekends. This was found to be unacceptable to many young families who originally moved to the way of life to have closer family relationships.

There are presently 20 households of 28 adults, 22 children, 17 individual crafts, a boat building yard, proprietor of the Cape Wrath Coffee bar, proprietor of the Cape Wrath Ferry, a boat designer and the hostel of Aberystwyth University. Children have flourished in this setting and many safe childhoods have been experienced. For the first time there are no expectant mothers nor pre-school children. Presently there are two units for sale.

Unconventional

There is no doubt about the human interest story that can be generated from such a place attracting and offering life styles slightly different from the generally accepted as normal. A concept on the verges of conventional society bounded and restricted by the same laws, rules and regulations, but where the social norms of acceptance and expectations are conditions the individuals have imposed themselves at the various stages of evolution.

The interactions of the individuals are at various levels and individuality seems an undeclared acceptance. The relationships of the residents establishing a community development in an unknown situation is an ever changing circumstance. The community idea has led to the relationships being very much individual personal bonds with a central essence of a whole which holds together as an entire entity.

Personal

Coming from a technical background in the Veterinary and Biological Sciences and the first to purchase a property on the open market without the vetting procedure, I have been a permanent resident since 1981, brought up two children in this atmosphere of acceptance and understanding, and earned a living from hand made crafts.

At first sight Balnakeil Craft Village can look an ominous, unfriendly, formidable place. A gloomy assembly of concrete buildings that is H.M. Forces contribution to architecture. The site was commandeered for construction of an intended early warning radar station and supporting barracks. In 1954 it was obsolete before it was complete and abandoned, all but the use of two units.

Aesthetics

The ex-military structures do not lend themselves to being prettified. Each building has a plot of ground and the remainder of the land is owned in common by 22 property owners. Some of the buildings have been further divided internally and split for sale since the original sales in 1980. The dwellings

are all at various standards of refurbishment but most are weatherproof, insulated and centrally heated making comfortable homes and working environments. As the years have progressed and alterations and upgrades have transpired to the properties their value has increased and no longer can the enthusiastic craftworker with no finance use the village as a starting point. People now have to invest in a purchase and not necessarily be dependent on earning a living from craftwork. The village does lend itself to diversity and the benefit of community maturity could be attained from this.

In 1982 to provide a focal point for the village a Visitors Centre was opened, designed and furnished by the residents housing a permanent exhibition of craftwork from the village, a history of the Craft Village, a lounge and coffee shop.

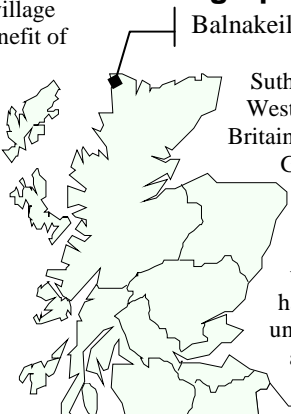
Co-operative

In 1983 Balnakeil Craft Village Community Co-operative was formed, a social development project which involved grant assistance from development agencies, to provide facilities and services to residents, craftworkers, independent business and visitors and produce employment. A coherent aspiration from a loose collection of people involved or interested in living collectively sharing views, feelings and experiences without selfish intentions; being economically reliable was the basic philosophy underlying all the discussions.

The population of the Craft Village at that time was 48 (33 adults and 15 children) in 20 households. 37 shares were issued to 26 shareholders and by October 1986 79 shares had been issued to 36 shareholders. The response to the Community Co-operative was mixed from the residents, from hostility to total commitment. The Community Co-operative was wound up in late 1986 and can be summarised as producing a clash of ideologies. Most of the people actively involved in that episode no longer reside in Balnakeil.

There are no commonly owned operations and no umbrella arrangements formally or informally, no meetings or gatherings of all the inhabitants, although small groups occasionally get together for activities of common interest or concern, people working together co-operatively on business ventures, producing co-ordinated craft-work products and shop sharing.

Geography



Balnakeil, located in the wild and beautiful area of Cape Wrath, Sutherland, is the most North Westerly point on the mainland of Britain taking its name from the Gaelic word meaning place or village of the church. Sited on the tourist route of the Highlands attracting many visitors. A wild place, rugged, a harshness with long winters, uncompromising yet possessed of a beauty and a sense of timelessness that makes it utterly compelling.

It must be the most scenic and remote area of mainland Britain, with magnificent mountains, stunning seascapes, beautiful beaches and friendly people. Life moves at a more slower and traditional pace with close connection to the conditions of the environment.

Community

The natural world may be studied in different ways and classification and categorising of ecological concepts of nature emphasise the complex interactions between man and nature. Ecologically, the term community is a tangible but very complex concept involving all the living organisms and systems of the ecosystem implying relationships. In popular use it is a term coined for human groups with a common interest; socially, sharing responsibilities making group decisions and behaving co-operatively which to achieve in most sections of our society requires opting for an alternative to familiar, customary life styles.

In the context humans have created a supraorganic culture, Balnakeil, being a conscious idea for amelioration on countless conditions, could be regarded as a modern experiment in Human Social Evolution. Human Ecology is highly specialised for significant results, but many recognised writers acknowledge the importance of instigating auto-ecological studies of our own species and syn-ecological information on urban ecosystems.

There is plenty of potential for individuals and the population to develop and improve but this is the recognising of how the individual identifies improvement and development.

Balnakeil has progressed in a natural sense and has prevailed as a succession of transitional situations with an underlying resistance, producing a definite betterment of living conditions and standards of living as the entity advanced. The relevant solitude and assemblage of like-minded people engaging in a variety of skills gives a very diffuse collective atmosphere. Balnakeil possesses an ongoing originality, a creative and varied life story and a place of different aims, interpretations and values to different people having a recognition and consideration of a safe preserved location.

Booklet for Sale
Ongoing Community
(Small Share/Support Groups)
Formation and Maintenance

Fourth edition June 1994 By Jerry L. Hampton - 48 pages

Includes
How to start an ongoing group
Model Meetings
Guidelines for meeting conduct
Ideas for group starters
Group maintenance
Ongoing groups and their characteristics
Why some groups fail
Forming groups in a workshop
What now? - After the CBW
Books on community
Study Guide - 'The Different Drum'

Copies available now from Peter Cooper (address on back page) for only £5 including post and packing. Cheques payable to 'CBiB' please.

Jerry Hampton (who has had a long association with community building in the USA) has licensed me to sell copies of his guide, which is now in its fourth edition, and I am making copies available at cost because of the importance I attach to nurturing ongoing groups.

Unstone Grange

Exploring

Celebrating Diversity

Connecting

What we stand for

The guiding principle of the Unstone Grange Trust is Unity in Diversity. We believe that interconnectedness, built on the firm foundation of mutual respect for each other and our differing choices and life paths, is the key to the future. We recognise that our diversity is our strength. We affirm the importance of learning to respect and cherish our differences, and from them build bridges of love, tolerance and understanding.

We recognise that our chance to be part of the solution rather than part of the problem will be greatly improved by each one of us consciously Taking Responsibility for our own personal, spiritual and creative development and learning. The ways in which we choose to do this will be many and varied, and up to us as autonomous individuals.

What we do

As our contribution to the collective, we are committed to sustaining and managing Unstone Grange as a beautiful place where people can come together to explore and grow in their understanding of life, themselves and others. We make no judgements about what people do here, other than asking that our guiding principles of Unity in Diversity and Taking Responsibility are respected, and that Unstone Grange is left in as beautiful a condition as they found it.

How we do it

We do this in three ways:

- By making Unstone Grange available as a venue to a wide variety of groups and organisations
- By organising our own events and courses across the spectrum of life choices
- By offering people the opportunity to join with us as volunteers in this contribution to the collective.

Come and Join us!

(01246 412344)

(The general meeting was held at Unstone Grange, and I thought the above copy of one of their leaflets would give you some indication about what they are about.)

Resources Available

All via Peter Cooper (see back page), cheques payable to CBiB

Book: "Ongoing Community" by Jerry Hampton (£5 inc. p&p)
Past copies of the CBiB newsletter, with binder and index (1-32 £10, 33-49 £10 inc. p&p)
Binder and index for newsletters (£2 inc. p&p)
World-wide web page (<http://members.aol.com/petercbib>)

Book lists and other FCE material on the internet
"mv2spk" on-line community
"NGCB" on-line discussion on Next Generation Community Building
FCE and ACE newsletters
Paper: "Adventure Education: Two Approaches" by Armando Magnino
I am also trying to see if the following can be made available in the UK VHS format:
Video: "Searching for Community"

Copies of Past Newsletters are now available

Issues 1-32 £10 including binder, index, p&p

Issues 33-49 £10 including binder, index, p&p

*"They make fascinating reading!"
"They help put the present into context"*

Why not find out what has been done and said in the past?

Single binder and index for the current issues of the
newsletter just £2 inc. p&p

UKCB Mailing list

Do you have access to email?

Do you want to be part of a discussion about community building in the UK?

I have set up an experimental online mailing list called "ukcb" for doing this.

To join "ukcb", send an email message to "**majordomo@eejit.com**" (without the quotes), containing the single line "**subscribe ukcb**" (without the quotes) in the message body. To find out more before you join send an email message to "**majordomo@eejit.com**" containing the message body "**info ukcb**", or email me at PeterCBiB@aol.com (*editor*).

Words for it

by Julia Cameron

I wish I could take language
And fold it like cool, moist rags.
I would lay words on your forehead.
I would wrap words on your wrists.
"There, there," my words would say -
Or something better.
I would ask them to murmur,
"Hush" and "Shh, shhh, its all right".
I would ask them to hold you all night.
I wish I could take language
And daub and soothe and cool
Where fever blisters and burns,
Where fever turns yourself against you.
I wish I could take language
And heal the words that were the wounds
You have no names for.

I came across this poem, and it touched me so I'd like to share it:

O yes I wish, for you, for me, for us all.

Sharon Usher.

"Angels can fly because they take themselves lightly"

The Brush Dance is a Yurok Indian healing ritual where being true to yourself means giving your best to help a person in need.

Being true to yourself is the one and only Yurok Indian law.

(taken from a delightful greetings card)

Taken from Communiqué

A publication of the Foundation for Community Encouragement in the U.S.A.

President's Corner - by Bill Thatcher

Since beginning my job with FCE this year I have spoken with dozens of people about their views and opinions concerning the mission and operation of FCE. I've found there are many in our wide circle of FCE who have passion around these topics. I am thankful for that passion. In my first meeting with the FCE Board in February I spoke of four *expectations* I felt important for us all to share. I also identified four *issues* I needed to give primary attention to over the next eighteen months.

EXPECTATIONS

- 1) ***To work together to minimize organizational trauma.*** There are significant changes ahead for FCE. My commitment is to find ways to preserve the best and build on that foundation for the future.
- 2) ***We will be working on the development of an operational value system*** based upon our mission principles that are central to how we treat ourselves and how we treat others. You will see and hear the results of that work.
- 3) ***This is a long-term commitment I have undertaken.*** I am more excited now about the future of FCE and the potential of our work than I was when I accepted this position in February!
- 4) ***The further development of the Board and CEO relationship*** will be a priority. This work has already begun with the June Board meeting and will be reported on in coming issues of the Communiqué.

ISSUES

- 1) ***Communication.*** There will be many changes in *who, how, what, where and when* we communicate. We have begun discussions on logo redesign, newsletter and brochure development, annual report production and presence on the Internet. Bill Tarter will be spearheading this area.
- 2) ***Marketing.*** We are asking the question, "What does success look like for us?" While we aren't satisfied that we have fully answered this question we know it means starting with the *people* we are called to served rather than the *products* we want to provide.
- 3) ***Association Affiliation.*** Since February we have had groups in at least three countries approach us, for the first time, about affiliation. Right here in North America we are regularly having to decide how to link up with others and who to link up with. Robert Reusing and I will be working on policy refinements for this important issue.
- 4) ***Financial Development.*** Opportunities for service far outstrip present resources. We are developing a strategy which includes identifying individuals and institutions wishing to *partner* with us financially in this community building mission.

I came across a quote this month from Teddy Roosevelt that describes what lies ahead, "The best prize that life offers is the chance to work hard at work worth doing." We've certainly got our work cut out for us - it's great that it's worth doing!

THE ROAD NOT TAKEN

By Robert Frost

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveller, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I -
I took the one less travelled by,
And that has made all the difference.

Local Ongoing Community Building Groups

Some groups are open to anyone interested in experiencing Community Building, some are open to you only if you have already attended a CB event, some are open all the time to new members, some may not be open to newcomers just now; some build community as in the CB events, some are support groups based on The Road Less Travelled... Check with the local contact person.

Leamington Spa: First Monday in the month, 8pm. New members welcome. Prior attendance at a CB event is necessary. Contact Debbie or Armando on 01926 337 409.

Central & North London: Meets on the third Sunday of the month 2-6pm. New members very welcome. Please call Fanny Calder on 0171 700 1134 if you are interested in coming along.

Sheffield: Meets monthly. Contact Alison 0114 2301739.

Other groups exist but are not currently publicised. If you are interested in joining, or forming, a group please feel free to contact Peter Cooper (address below) for information and help.



General Enquiries

... about Community Building in Britain or Community Building events:

Anthony Kirke, 125 Greenham Road, Newbury, Berks, RG14 7JE Tel/Fax: 01635 47377

Newsletter

Subscription rate [UK]: (Apr-Mar) £8; (Jul-Mar) £6; (Oct-Mar) £4; (Jan-Mar) £2.

Please make cheques payable to "Community Building in Britain" and send to the newsletter editor:-

Peter Cooper, 1 Evergreen Close, Woolmer Green, Herts SG3 6JN Tel: 01438 813765; Fax (telephone first): 01438 814986; e-mail: PeterCBIB@aol.com; Web page: <http://members.aol.com/petercbib>.

*Please send items for inclusion in the next issue to the same address by **11th October 1997**.*

For convenience of personal contact, the address and telephone number of letter-writers will normally be published, unless other instructions are given. Contributions of any sort (articles, pictures, poems, letters etc.), and of any length, are welcome from all involved in any way with the CBiB network. While every effort will be made to reproduce items in full, please realise that the editor may have to shorten or alter them for publication