

THE GRANGE

Newsletter No.4

January, 2015



Happy New Year! Welcome to the fourth newsletter from The Grange which comes shortly after we have celebrated three years living here. In these three years we have welcomed well over 200 people to stay at The Grange - many of whom have survived torture and war - on a wide range of courses,

retreats and holidays. The Grange is now a thriving and ever-changing community of people from all over the world. This newsletter offers a brief overview of 2014. Thank you for reading it and as ever we would encourage you to get in touch any time with us at thegrangenorfolk@gmail.com

One Minute

I wish I had one minute of total acceptance
One minute of absolute happiness
One minute of proper laughter
One minute of absolute joy

One minute of amnesia
One minute of being someone else
One minute of pretence
One minute of not being me

I would enjoy that minute
I would cherish that minute
I will treasure that minute
Like a precious gem

That one minute would be
the happiest, simplest, serene minute
I would have experienced in a long
time
One minute is all I want and ask
And I got it at the GRANGE

Thank You

[Poem written in our visitor book by a member of Room to Heal]

Some quotes from visitors this year

'This trip has made me feel better and now I feel good'

'I love this place because I feel trusted, loved and cared for.'

'Thank you for the gift of love and warmth which is hard to find these days,'

'This retreat has taught me about trust and gave me more confidence to get back to life.'

'Wonderful experience...improved my physical and mental strength.'

'When can I come back again?!'



A wonderful year at The Grange

This year we have had 10 groups of asylum seekers and refugees bringing over 100 people from more than 30 countries to The Grange.

Room to Heal brought four groups of adult survivors of torture. Many Room to Heal members have now come several times. It is wonderful to see members of the group feeling more and more at home with each visit, showing people around who haven't before, and settling straight into being part of our extended family. Two of Room to Heal's visits were based around therapeutic work whilst the other two were focused on learning skills including gardening and carpentry. The great structure shown above was made by a couple of members on one such trip, giving the fire-pit a more 'held' feel for therapeutic work.

The Baobab Centre for Young Survivors in Exile came for the third year running, bringing sixteen people for a mixture of therapeutic work, story-telling, trips out and the most amazing global banquets. They also further embellished the lovely cob oven we created together the previous year.

The Klevis Kola foundation brought two groups of young refugees and asylum seekers aged from 11 – 18 who filled the house with energy and laughter. We had a great music evening for which we made some of our own instruments, celebrated Eid under the moonlight and had a pizza feast using the cob-oven. A couple of the young people helped us to choose some

guinea-pigs and we have them to thank for their names.

The Norwich International Youth Project also visited for the first time bringing a group for an action-packed few days. They were joined by Amy, a medical student from UEA, interested in learning more about our work.

It has been wonderful to have had two visits from Freedom From Torture. In April, Mary Attard ran a women's-weaving retreat. In October we had a memorable few days gardening with four men as well as a trip to Gressenhall's Apple Day. We must thank Caroline Roemelle for organising both of these trips. Caroline has now left Freedom From Torture but we are delighted that we are going to keep working with her as an Elder (see below).

In addition to these groups we have hosted two permaculture weekends, a Tai Chi retreat, a Garden Organic workshop, a food and land gathering, the annual village duck race and The Elders gathering. All together this has involved well over 250 people.

We continue to make changes in response to feedback from visitors and one of the most significant this year has been the introduction of two Shetland ponies, Minto and Pebbles; a Shetland sheep, Hawthorn; and three guinea pigs, Bereket, Lula and Nani. Along with six hens, a cockerel and a hive of bees we have quite a menagerie growing at The Grange!

We have continued to do a lot of work on the house including creating an extra bedroom and installing another woodburner so we can host larger groups in the winter.

To round off the year we have recently been recognised as one of the first permaculture demonstration sites in Norfolk.

There are already some exciting plans in place for 2015 including visits from some or all of the groups who came in 2014, plus some new partners. There will also be a variety of courses including permaculture, Active Hope, Zen writing and others. Contact us for more details.

Thank you to so many people...

We cannot begin to thank everyone who has made this year so special – there are just too many people. Every visitor who shares their food, their music, their tears and their laughter makes the Grange an incredibly special home and we thank each one of you. There are a few people, however, who we would particularly like to thank for their contribution.

We have been fortunate to receive some substantial funding this year, which has enabled us to support groups to come here and to do a lot of work on the house and land at The Grange. Thank you to the people who helped secure this funding and for their ongoing support.

We would also like to thank everyone who has offered their time and skills to our visitors this year including Camilla and Mike who ran a number of yoga workshops, Jon and Dano for their foraging days, Mary for her weaving and textiles and John and Carol for a great night of music.

Emma and her family, and others in the village, have offered us continuous support with everything from bed-making to fence-building to looking after the animals so we can have a break. It has been wonderful to hear people in the village talk about how much they have enjoyed seeing our visitors learning (or re-learning) to ride bikes on the village street and to have so many donations to our 'free shop' from the local community.

Rachel Bodle has continued to support us in many ways for which we are truly grateful. Thank you also to everyone else whose help has ranged from donating sofas to donating money to giving us a boost when we are finding everything a bit much.

Last, and definitely not least, thank you to our families whose ongoing support, offered in so many ways, is a vital part of The Grange.

Introducing The Elders

Inspired by cultures around the world, and by The Council at Embercombe, this year we invited several people to form a group of Elders for The Grange. The group met for the first time here in late November and we had a really positive weekend developing a vision for The Grange – and, as importantly, thinking about how to make the project resilient in the long-term and how we can sustain ourselves as a family living here.

The Elders will meet twice a year at The Grange and will play a vital role in ensuring The Grange remains true to its founding values and that we are meeting the permaculture ethics of Earth Care, People Care and Fair Shares in all we do.



Some of The Elders: [l to r] Mary Raphaely, Ben Margolis, Elly Brown, Mike Love, Mark Fish, Sophie North, Gervais Kouloungou Mambs, Katy Fullilove. Not pictured are Rachel Bodle, Chris Erskine and Caroline Roemelle

Challenges and lessons learned

It has been an extraordinary three years for us with many highlights. There are also plenty of challenges and we are learning a huge amount as we travel this journey together.

We have recognised that for the project to be sustainable in the long-term we need to work out a way of creating some privacy and space for our family and that will be part of our focus in 2015. We have also recognised the need for us to have regular supervision, something which we have recently started.

We decided to take some time out in the Autumn to visit several projects in the South West of England to learn from them and to create a network of mutual support. We were particularly inspired by Toby and Francesca Jones and their family who run [Windsor Hill](#)

[Wood](#) in Shepton Mallet in Somerset where they host guests for anything from a couple of months to years. It was fascinating to hear their experiences of bringing up children in such a rich environment and we took away some valuable lessons. We also visited the [Pilsdon Community, Embercombe](#) and [Monkton Wyld](#).

We learn a huge amount from every visitor to The Grange. Sophie is particularly excited this year by all the recipes she has been shown from around the world and by some of the amazing art people have created and hung in our new art gallery. Orianna has developed a taste for spicy food - in particular Eritrean chilli pasta, whilst Ben has increased his repertoire of Iranian guitar music and learned to become a good loser at chess.



A wonderful screen print on fabric from one of the young people at Klevis Kola



Cooking bread sticks round the fire

How you can get involved...

People often ask how they can help and get involved with The Grange. We are hoping to develop more opportunities for volunteers this year but in the meantime here are a few ways you can help:

Volunteer: If you are interested to come and volunteer for everything from a day to a few weeks do get in touch. We mainly need help with jobs in the garden as well as with house maintenance.

Groups: If you know any groups who might like to use The Grange for retreats, workshops, courses or other events do put them in touch with us.

Donate: The Grange does cost a lot of money to run and maintain. We have been fortunate to receive some funding which runs until May 2015 but we are looking for ways to raise money in the future. If you have ideas or would like to make a donation, please get in touch.

Create: If you have ideas for The Grange we would love to hear them. As an example to inspire, our friend Ian has dreamed up a pottery studio and we are currently putting his plan into action. What is your 2015 idea for The Grange?

Have a wonderful year! We hope to see you here at some point in 2015.

With love and peace from Ben, Sophie and Orianna