

South West Biodynamic Group

Summer Newsletter July 2024



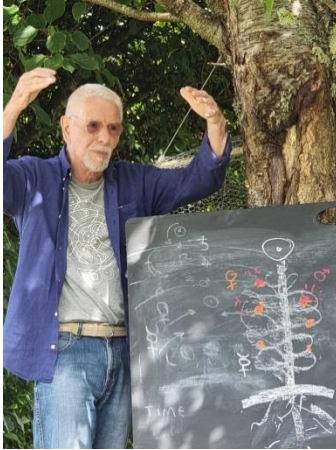
‘Hence we can say: In summer man is bound up with Nature, but, if he has the right feeling and perception for it, objective spirituality comes towards him from out of Nature's interweaving life. And so, to find the essential human being during the St. John's time, at midsummer, we must turn to the objective spirituality in the outer world, and this is present everywhere in Nature. Only in outward appearance is Nature the sprouting, budding—one might say the sleeping—being which calls forth from the powers of sleep the forces of vegetative growth, in which a kind of sleeping Nature-life is given form. But in this sleeping Nature, if only man has the perception for it, the spiritual which animates and weaves through everything in Nature is revealed.’

Rudolf Steiner – excerpt from lecture ‘The St John Imagination’ from The Four Seasons and the Archangels series {GA 229} Dornach Oct 1923.
Painting by Joan Eardley

From Whites Farm

Whites Farm Education Trust has just completed its second year of the popular Step-by-Step biodynamic gardening course. This year's 9 participants have come from Lyme Regis, Exeter, Axminster & Kingsbridge as well as local areas. There were a few drop-in participants as well.

Franky Van der Stok continues to share his invaluable wealth of experience & some of this year's participants are already experienced gardeners seeking to deepen their work with biodynamic practice.



In late June we welcomed Ian Bailey to Whites Farm to hold a workshop on the cosmic influences behind the biodynamic calendar. This was a richly rewarding day, with Ian covering topics that he usually teaches over the course of a week. He will return again next year (if not before).



Our sheep that keep the orchard grass down, have been shorn

Other events at Whites Farm include on-going green woodwork courses, volunteer mornings and the local Anthroposophical Community Meetings. Please contact Alasdair at Whites Farm Education Trust for more details. – alasdairgordon@yahoo.co.uk Whites Farm, Lower Dean, Buckfastleigh TQ11 0LS

From Teign Greens Lower Ashton, Exeter EX6 7QW

Summer has snuck up on us; even though it feels like we've only just left winter and leapfrogged spring altogether! Spring is always a tough time for veg growers, the time we call Hungry Gap, when there's the least available to harvest. But this year has been ESPECIALLY challenging due to the incredibly wet and cold weather. Dartmoor received its total average annual rainfall by the end of April, and our clay soils were a no-go waterlogged zone until May. But with the help of lots of hands, we've managed to get crops in the soil and ensure things are not toooo far behind... It was such a joy to see the packing shed full of stacks of crates our produce this week for the first time in months! Broad beans, bunched carrots, crunchy radish, baby chard, fresh green onions and our delicious summer salad mix are all plopping their way onto our veg bags right now. And the tomatoes flowering in the tunnels tell us it won't be long before hungry gap is a distant memory and our members are inundated with summer veg galore!



As well as welcoming our new season produce, we're also **welcoming Leonie Flug our wonderful new grower to the team** (see above posing with radish!) The search to replace our fantastic founding grower Tim has been long and hard, but finally we've found someone absolutely perfect for the role. Leonie brings bags of experience and enthusiasm for community veg growing, joining us from Fresh and Green, a similar sized veg box scheme based in Ottery.

Summer Volunteering on the farm

- with jobs including weeding, harvesting delicious summer crops like tomatoes, watering, weeding, planting... oh and did we mention weeding!? Yep, there's a lot of weeding. But whatever the job, it's always a joy to come on down to the farm and get stuck in with some lovely folk to chat with in the sunshine! Make sure to bring sun hats, sun cream and a bottle of water.

Here's when you can come and join us:

Every Tuesday 9am-4pm and Monthly Saturday Morning 9:30-1pm, (2nd Sat)

Corporate volunteering: Is a business you know looking for fun and rewarding volunteering opportunities? We'd love to book in a few day or half day corporate volunteer days at the farm over the coming season, and, and we can't think of many more team building activities than compost turning or weeding or planting a whole bed of squash together! Please put them in touch with us at teingreens@gmail.com.

For details of volunteering and/or veg boxes from Teign Greens go to their website teingreens.co.uk Edited from news sent by Holly Budgen.

Whit Sunday Gathering at Lower Sharpham Barton



On 19th May some of the SW BD 'old guard' met at Lower Sharpham Barton Farm. It was partly to mark Whitsun, but also to mark 100 years since Rudolf Steiner gave the Agricultural course in Koberwitz (now Kobierzyce, Poland). He did this on the request of farmers disillusioned with the damaging results of chemical fertilizers and set about developing a method of farming more deeply integrated with the natural world and cosmos, the universe.

Lower Sharpham Barton Farm overlooking the River Dart, West of Totnes, used to be a day service for the Robert Owen Foundation and run Bio dynamically by Bou and Joy Roodenberg. It is now run by the Ambios as a nature conservation training centre. Bou was able to join us as well as some of the younger generation doing the conservation training at Ambios and courses at The Apricot Centre.



It was very moving to watch the original farmer and the current one talking about the land they loved. We could all get a sense of how deeply a farmer relates to the land that they have responsibility for. We sat in a circle around a candle, a bowl of water and masses of frothy white flowers. We shared what Lower Sharpham and Biodynamics meant to us. After sharing our memories of events at the farm – barn dances, singing carols to the cows in advent. Afterwards, everyone was given a little of the water, now potentised by our thoughts and love, to spray and bless the land.



The Two farmers



We then enjoyed catching up with people we hadn't seen for a long time over tea and cakes.

Selby (who organised the event) and crew had put ordinance survey maps together to cover the South West and put a gold mark where there were Biodynamic farms or gardens. This map will again be on display at the 100 years anniversary of Rudolf Steiner's visit to Torquay in 1924, which is to be held at Totnes Civic Hall on August (More details below) Come and

see if you can add extra gold spots of places we have missed!

Biodynamic Stall at Civic Hall Saturday August 17th 2024 . 10am -5pm

To mark the centenary of Rudolf Steiner's visit to Torquay in August 1924 The local Anthroposophical Group is holding an event at Totnes Civic Hall with stands and stall of the fruits of his work in Education, Agriculture, Medicine, Economics, Art , Therapeutic Education, Religion and Euryhmy. There will also be a second hand book stall There will be stand for Biodynamics. The Biodynamic Association UK is lending some display boards. What we also need

- 1) information about what is produced locally
- 2) People to help set up and clear up.

If you want to have details of your produce and/or can help, please contact me

(dianawhite35@hotmail.com) .

There will also be a related art and crafts exhibition at Birdwood House next door.

From The Apricot Centre Official Opening of our Wellbeing Garden.

Saturday, July 27, 2024

2:00 PM 5:00 PM

Apricot Centre CIC, Huxhams Cross Farm, Rattery Lane, Dartington TQ9 6AAUK

Join us for the official opening of the Microbiome Garden at the Apricot Centre, a unique event celebrating the relocation of the RHS Chelsea Flower Show's Microbiome Garden. This garden, designed by the talented duo Chris Hull and Sid Hill, explores the fascinating link between a healthy landscape, a healthy gut, and a healthy mind.

The Journey to the Apricot Centre. In November, Sid Hill approached the Apricot Centre with the generous offer to relocate the garden after its debut at the Chelsea Flower Show in May. We were thrilled to accept, unaware of just how special this garden would be. By the end of May, the garden was skilfully relocated with the Chelsea team working alongside our dedicated volunteer asylum seekers from Devon and Cornwall Refugee Support. These volunteers have been tirelessly landscaping the well-being garden since January 2024 to accommodate the Microbiome Garden.

The Microbiome Garden: A Fusion of Health and Nature The Bowel Research UK Microbiome Garden, designed by Sid Hill and Chris Hull, is a pioneering project that highlights the connection between ecological health and human well-being. The garden features an edible meadow inspired by wild meadows, combining ornamental grasses and edible perennials to create a rich tapestry of colours and textures.

For more information on this and other events and courses at the Apricot Centre see their website – www.apricotcentre.co.uk

Apricot Centre. Supper Club -

Using the incredible biodynamic and organic produce grown at the Apricot Centre. They take place on the third Thursdays of the month in July, August and September.

To book for the July or August event go to www.eventbrite.com/e/supper-club-tickets-611128901997

South West Biodynamic Group

The aim of the SWBD Group is to inform those interested in BD methods of gardening and farming of what is happening in the area. As a member you receive

- A quarterly newsletters
- seasonal gatherings where we make the biodynamic preparations. These are then made available to members free of charge.

We charge an annual subscription of £15 per person and £20 for a couple. We offer a concession of £10 a year if needed. Sort Code 20-60-88 Acc. No. 13509680 South West Biodynamic Group

If you wish to join, please contact Diana White (Treasurer) at dianawhite35@hotmail.com or write to 12 Apple Wharf, The Plains, Totnes, TQ9 5QL 07747398839

Tumbet, from Majorca

Serves 6



This is something like French Ratatouille. It is interesting to see how each of the Solanaceae foods are cooked separately with salt and oil, which balances out their tendency to be too yin (expanded, airy, acidic)

Requiresd – an ovenproof dish

Oven 180°C/gas mark 4

Ingredients:

1lb/450g red peppers, de-seeded and sliced into strips
1lb/450g potatoes, peeled and sliced in ovals
1lb/450g aubergines, sliced into rounds
1 ½ lb/700g ripe tomatoes, skinned and chopped or 400g can
1 onion finely chopped
6 cloves of garlic, peeled and chopped fairly roughly
2 bay leaves
A little thyme
½ pt/275ml good olive oil
Salt and pepper

Method

Sprinkle the aubergine rounds with salt and stack in a colander, cover with a plate to weight them down. Leave for ½ hour .

Rinse them under cold water and pat dry with a kitchen towel.

Heat a ¼ of the oil in a sauté or large frying pan and fry the potatoes with a little salt and pepper. When they start to go golden, turn them on to a plate. Add some more oil to the pan and fry the red peppers. Season lightly and stir until they are soft. Try to retain the juices and golden bits on the bottom of the pan, by stirring with a wooden spatula. Turn them on to another plate.

Add some more oil, reserving a little for the last stage and fry the aubergines with some of the roughly chopped garlic. Don't add salt to them, as they will have retained some from the salting process. Turn them out when golden on to a plate.

Pour the last of the oil into the pan and fry the onion and the rest of the garlic. Add tomatoes, bay leaves and thyme and cook down until you have a thick sauce.

For assembly oil the dish and layer in the aubergines, potatoes and lastly peppers. Pour over the tomato sauce. Cover and bake for a further 15 minutes in the oven. This is a rich dish which oozes delicious red oil.

Serve with rice to balance the acidity and a crisp green salad with radishes.

Dates for Your Diary

Thursday 18th July and August 15th 2024 Apricot Centre Supper Club
See newsletter for details.

Saturday 27th July 2024 The official opening of the Microbiome Garden
at the Apricot Centre See inside newsletter for details

Monday August 12th –Saturday August 17th 2024 Art and Craft
Exhibition in Birdwood House, 44 High Street Totnes TQ9 5SG

Saturday August 2024 10am - 5pm 100th anniversary of Rudolf's
Steiner's visit to Torquay – exhibition in The Civic Hall, Market Square,
Totnes TQ9 5SF with a stand about Biodynamics - come and visit or
volunteer to help set up or dismantle. See inside newsletter for details

Autumn Gathering – Date to be decided. Look out for an email when a
date has been decided. This occasion will also include an AGM.

BIODYNAMIC PRODUCE FOR SALE

BIODYNAMIC BEEF Please contact Tristan Bertie 07836 591 847

Lordswood Churchstow Kingsbridge

Or e-mail at lordswood.biodynamics@btinternet.co

GREENLIFE SHOP, TOTNES. 01803 866738. Some Demeter products, Biodynamically grown
vegetables in season .

TEIGN GREENS, OXEN PARK FARM, Lower Ashton, EXETER, EX6 7QW – in conversion to BD.
Contact www.teingreens.co.uk email teingreens@gmail.com

VEGETABLES FROM APRICOT CENTRE/ HUXHAMS CROSS FARM: We deliver weekly
vegetable bags or boxes. The boxes contain Huxhams Cross Farm own produce as well as
several small BD and organic growers who will be providing vegetables at certain times of the year
. We can add eggs, flour fruit and water. You can order online at www.apricotcentre.co.uk

BD FRUIT JUICE CORDIALS for SALE - All with organic apple juice
Contact Derek Lapworth on 01364 644010

Hemp and other Tinctures (all homemade)

The CBD tincture is made by Nick Read from hemp grown at Dartington and is the only UK
organically grown CBD.

Please see website for costs and purchasing information. <http://www.englishhemp.co.uk>

If you are a member of the South West Biodynamic Group –

Preparations are available from

Whites Farm, Lower Dean, Buckfastleigh. TQ11 OLS. .Contact Denise
deniselaurenj@icloud.com Please bring your own container