

The Othona Community Reaches Eighty!

Jan Marshall, daughter of our founder Norman Motley, opened the week of memories of our earliest days. Jan recalled life in the Old Field, with primitive conditions for sleeping, collecting water on the way back from worship in the Chapel, and the real and lasting friendships made between people of all ages, faiths, nations and backgrounds. Other leaders of our reflections included Colin Hodgetts, resident warden in the '70s, who brought music to The Psalms, an orchard beside our newer buildings, and a year-round presence and staff team supporting the increasing number of people visiting from around the world.

Many familiar faces joined in with newer arrivals, including lots of children, for a wonderfully sunny fortnight ideal for outdoor games and community swimming! After a lively Saturday night party with music, fun, and delicious food from our volunteer cooks, the Othona Community led the Sunday Evening Service in St Peter's Chapel, as part of the diocesan series of summer services in the Chapel, with much joyful singing.

Looking to the future, the second week, drew a large number of resident and day visitors to discuss, draw, write, and consider Othona's place in a changing and challenging world. Andrea Mislér, part of the Community from Germany, launched her PHD thesis book, "The Othona Community: a strange phenomenon," now available from Othona at a special price of £12, money to the Community's funds. A showing of the widely distributed film "National Emergency Briefing" set out clearly the cause and effects of climate change, and the political, personal and community actions we can all take, to protect our planet and it's future generations. Othona has long embraced climate resilience in our policies of optimising the power of wind and sun, growing fruit and vegetables, and creating sustainable habitats for wildlife. We plan to do build on this, relying on local and international volunteers, and working alongside like-minded groups and individuals in practical action, and in sharing the word. Thinking locally, and working together, is more fun and gives us hope for the world our grandchildren will inherit from us: if you share this vision, you are welcome to contact Othona or follow developments in our Website.

An open Bradwell Centre Committee Meeting completed the fortnight of reflections and hopes, led by trustee/Bradwell Chair Steve Barnes. Led in prayer, and in the spirit of Christian Community, participants heard of the achievements of the last year, from the number of people who have come with "outside" groups and become included in community, to the almost completed complex drainage works, thanks to amazing donations of money, time and skills. This year has seen a turnover of staff, so we will soon be seeking new people to manage, cook and support Othona Bradwell alongside our small, dedicated ongoing team of paid people and volunteers. Othona's Charitable structure, including the Bradwell Essex and the West Dorset centres, has been simplified this year. Membership was discussed, and finances were reviewed, noting higher expenses but a good number of paying visitors, and a number of building and maintenance projects needing income to sustain our site for the future. Donations and legacies are always appreciated, ask the office or see the website for ways of giving.

August continued with our ever popular Astronomy Week and Family Week. Take a look at our future programme, including Film Week providing Bradwell's own Cinema, (take your seats, ladies and gentlemen!) We have acting warden/managers over the winter, so you will see some familiar faces returning. The programme is subject to change, please contact us for more information or to book an event or a meal. All are welcome.

Please see the Othona Essex website, www.othona.org, bookings bradwell@othona.org, tel: 01621 776564. East Hall Farm, East End Road, down the track, you may need a free exit token to leave via the wind-powered gate.