

Editorial

Facing the First World War with its escalation of mankind's power to destroy, Wilfred Trotter maintained that humanity would have no future unless two opposing types of people (comprising humanity) learned how to resolve their differences. In 1950, with the increasing threat of a yet more powerful weapon, the hydrogen bomb, Braziers Park School of Integrative Social Research was set up, with courage and determined optimism, to explore how people in a residential setting with plenty of work at hand, and ideas to discuss, could learn mutually how to overcome the problems that Trotter outlined. The two types are now called Resistives and Sensitives, and Braziers has a Sensory Executive Process to further their mutual understanding. We are still learning. What crisis or fear, we wonder, will convince society that learning to accommodate and use differences is the only way to achieve better integration.

A recent change in emphasis has been to achieve a better relationship with the land, which is seen in two contributions to this issue, **Research Communications 23**. Anna Kendall reports on the structured plan to replace hedgerows and plant new trees on the estate. Jessie Marcham, a former volunteer involved in this activity, gives a sensitive personal response to the good care of the soil that Braziers aims for and the visible contrast with practices found elsewhere. Concern with holistic thinking, in addition to the Resistive/Sensory balance, featured in another vital programme, led by Andy Langford, to widen the individual volunteers' learning while participating fully in the life of the community: see Jessie's "Report on the Internship Programme 2002/03".

Further items, in different modes, relate to Braziers' immediate concerns. Conclusions from the Sensory Committee's Report to the 2006 Annual General Meeting stress the need to strengthen communication between the two governing bodies to ensure that Braziers maintains its unique quality while meeting the increasing demands made of institutions in today's world. The other presents an overview of Braziers in terms of residential personnel in the house and on the estate, length of residence and contribution by work. Celebration of a long-standing contact with students and artists is offered in a lighter vein in Anna Stohanslova's philosophical "Stone". The front cover is a photograph taken at the January 2006 course 'Playing with Fire'.

The 21st Century's threats, on a vaster scale than ever, must also affect current thinking. Dr. Steven Head and Sue Seymour highlight humanity's responsibility in destroying the variety, amenity and reliability of the planet itself. The consequences of the over-expectations of the affluent West that the natural world should meet all its needs is set out first by Sue Seymour in her report on the world's diminishing oil reserves, with the subsequent need to transform our life-styles. Dr. Head, in celebrating the need for biodiversity, reveals patterns in the decline of species and makes fascinating comments on the various attempts to conserve endangered wild life.

In fact, it is opportune that we can include Dr. Head's [2005] realistic analysis of what is needed, on a global scale, to reduce the rate of global warming. This is because George Mombiot's recent book **Heat** [Allen Lane 2006] analyses what is needed to reduce the UK's greenhouse gas emissions by **90%**. In it he concludes that it is possible but requires very prompt and extremely tough political decisions; and indeed a rather tough life for the coming

generation. Recent work by John Murrell and several other people have discovered that Norman Glaister's unpublished book, **Greater Things** [1950, p235] records his very relevant reflections even then.

“As coal and oil represent the physical energy of biochemical life...available for our use today... we use them up without any noticeable sense of our responsibility for their preservation to serve future generations [?] of humanity. We can only expect our people to [cooperate if] we can soon reverse the direction of our conscious social effort.”

All three, Glaister, Head and Mombiot, press for social or political action to deal with the problem on its global scale. Current interest in the UK in the politics of global warming might indicate that action will at last be taken. Perhaps we could recognize that we, and our progenitors, have been busily ignoring it for the 200 years since T.R. Malthus identified it in 1798 [**Essay on the Principle of Population**]. Glaister's text at least points to an approach to dealing with that social and political problem. To teach whole populations to accept, consider globally, and then act drastically and locally on the terrifying information on climate change which is now emerging is a major task indeed.