

Earth First! Action Update

No.36 FEBRUARY 1997

30p

'Ruins are not relics of the past, but reminders of the future.'

FAIRMILE EVICTION - AT LONG LAST!

"Before I go, I'd like to talk to the guy that controls those incredible men in the tunnels!"

Last words of Lieutenant Colonel George Eyster, praising the bravery and determination of the Vietnamese tunnel fighters, Chuchi district, S. Vietnam 1966.

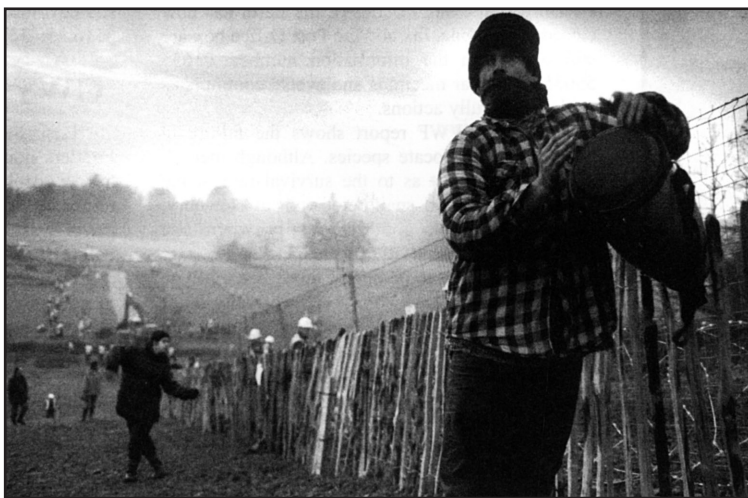
At 9.30 p.m. on Thursday 23rd January the long awaited eviction of the Fairmile camp, the longest running road protest site in the country, began with a cordon being put around the site, and climbers going up to cut the access walkways.

The Under Sheriff of Devon, Trevor Coleman, had hoped to find the camp virtually empty, but despite the surprise of the timing of the attack, there were 20-25 people in the trees and five people in the tunnels. This was not going to be a one day eviction! No work was done overnight, merely a serious cordon, including razor wire coils, placed around the site and police dogs being used. Despite this at least 15 people breached the police lines and joined their colleagues up the trees. Due to Richard Turner's

bunch worrying at the prospect of no more expensive climbing holidays funded by tree evictions, and also the fact that those in the trees kept their cool, the first people were not removed from the trees for quite a while.

During this time, five masked up pot holers and two 'safety officers' began to shore up the first ten feet of the Big Mama tunnel network. Following the request published in the last Action Update about tracking down the cavers that have been used in recent tunnel evictions, a tip off has been received that they are hired from Peter Faulding at Specialist Rescue International, 128 Station Road, Redhill, RH1 1ET. Apparently it trades from PO Box 266, Redhill, tel: 01737 244652. Check out the accuracy of this information before acting on it. It took until 1pm on Sunday 26th before climbers had removed the last of the tree defenders, (that must have funded a climbing trip to the Andes) who just happened to be someone who had been previously employed as a Newbury security guard! At this stage the underground bailiffs had failed to breach even the first door in the Labyrinth. The tunnelers decided to issue demands which, if met, would mean that they would leave of their own accord. Unfortunately early morning radio news alerted the Sheriff to a sneak preview of these demands and he responded by evicting the communications rig at 7am. Despite this the demands were issued on behalf of the tunnelers at 9am, and the media circus, that we are sure everyone witnessed, began in earnest. The demands did to some extent force the press to look at the issues relating to the building of this road and so all was not lost. Unsurprisingly Trevor Coleman the Under Sheriff turned them down.

In London, around this time, work was stopped for the day on a Balfour Beatty site when five people from London Reclaim The Streets climbed a crane and hung a banner reading 'Privatised Vandalism - stop building DBFO's. We love you Fairmile'. (Balfour Beatty are involved in the construction of the A30).



Looking from Fairmile towards what used to be Trollheim

Back in Fairmile, through a mixture of trickery on behalf of the 'safety officers' and frantic digging, the bailiffs slowly removed the residents. As each one came out they entered into the clutches of an increasingly more rabid and sensationalised media machine. They finally removed Swampy after six days and twenty-three hours, making this the longest and most closely watched eviction ever. The frightening extent of the media's monopoly on the public's consciousness has been demonstrated in their ability to put public opinion on our side! This has happened to such an extent that recuperation, as the specialist jargon goes, has become a real threat! Although all of the people that were down the tunnels have

got their heads screwed on, the intense pressure from the media for 'human interest' stories has resulted in articles like the one in The Express, (3rd February), in which they dressed Swampy up in a variety of expensive suits and then reassured their readers that underneath the scruffy exterior and veneer of anti-state ideas, there beats a respectable suburban middle-class heart! In all fairness to Swampy, he did do it with his tongue firmly in his cheek and the money went straight to paying off his £500 fine for damaging surveying equipment at Newbury last year. To further illustrate the point, Animal, on emerging from her stint in the tunnels, has been offered a column in The Mirror, entitled (you'll like this) 'Animal Writes'! Very funny... not. She has yet to make a decision, but has said that if she does do it, she will use the column to expose multinationals and to galvanise people into taking action! We have yet to see whether or not any radical ideas she may try to get across will be censored out of existence! We will not even go into the offer from a very large record company to record a song!

P.S Wasn't the Fairmile eviction just so fluffy? Don't you think that all those climbers and tunnelers were so nice and friendly? Seems like something might have changed in the past five years or so... or perhaps it had something to do with the fact that the media were allowed to witness an eviction? For an alternative viewpoint on the A30 evictions, ask people involved in the Trollheim eviction where the media were kept out. Amor Y Rabia, A30 Action!

A30 Action! has a huge phone bill after the last few months of sustained resistance to the road and the recent evictions. Any donations towards paying this off would help otherwise they may have to send Swampy out to do some more modelling. Make cheques payable to Quercus Tribe and send to: A30 Action!, PO Box 6, Ottery St. Mary, Devon, EX11 1YL. For any more information on any aspect of the construction of the road and the resistance to it contact the A30 Action! group on: 01404 815729.

RECLAIM THE COAST! TARGET THE OIL INDUSTRY! SEA EMPRESS ANNIVERSARY ACTIONS AT MILFORD HAVEN, SOUTH WEST WALES ON 14th - 16th FEBRUARY. FOR MORE DETAILS CONTACT: 01749 812665.
FOLLOWED BY RECLAIM THE VALLEYS III - THE SAGA CONTINUES! IN SOUTH WALES ON 17th - 19th FEBRUARY.
FOR MORE DETAILS CONTACT: 0385 711364.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

It has recently been reported in various mainstream media articles that mobile phones are being used by the authorities as unofficial tracking devices. It has been revealed that even when not in use a mobile phone, using triangulation with the mobile phone transceiver/receiver stations, can reveal its users position to within fifty feet! It has also been admitted by some companies that they store numbers and movement information for up to two years!

The A320 road widening scheme near Guildford will cut a new path through Stringers Common. Planning permission is currently going through and help is urgently needed. Hairy Mog camp is becoming more lively by the day but more people are needed as they are in danger of spreading themselves too thinly along the route. For more details and directions contact Stringers Common Campaign on: 01483 32167. Their website address is: <http://www.geocities.com/rainforest/4452/hairymog.html>

A new Earth First! group, Warwick EF!, has been set up. If anyone can help them getting to the Milford Haven actions from the Warwick or Leamington Spa areas contact them on: 01926 435137.

The US Earth First! Roadshow that was due to come over to the UK this spring has been delayed until July or August so that more funds for the trip can be raised. Watch the Action Update for more details or e-mail them at: earthfirst@ign.apc.org.

The entire text of volume 2 of TOXCAT, the journal that covers toxics and related issues, is now available on the internet at: <http://www.gn.apc.org/cats/tc/>

A trip is planned to go to the Aspe Valley around Easter time to help blockade and resist the imminent eviction there. It will probably be leaving on March 24th. If you would like to go on the 24th, or have transport and would like to go at a different date contact Aspe Valley Solidarity on: 01248 713604.

Fifth Estate, the longest running US anarchist paper, has just published its most recent issue. Continuing with its ongoing critique of technology and civilisation the most recent issue includes comprehensive article on a new book about the social ecology of Murray Bookchin and an interesting piece on the Unabomber. For a copy check your local radical bookshop, or failing that contact Housmans Bookshop, 5 Caledonian Road, London as they stock copies.

Minewatch is a network of people primarily concerned about the impact of mining on the environment and indigenous peoples. They produce Higher Values, a magazine covering news related to these issues. The new issue is available for £2.00 from Minewatch, Methodist Clubland, 54 Camberwell Road, London, SE5 OE.

NEWBURY REPORT

Seventy five people engaging in riotous applause and later enjoying tea and sandwiches with Arthur Scargill at Newbury's Community Centre requires how many police? Try ten riot vans, pursuit and patrol vehicles, a helicopter and TSG! Rumours of 'Police Intelligence' are clearly false, but this was 3 days after the reunion rally. This is half the number of police that attended Scargill's speech at the rally and there were none present when he spoke later that day in Reading. As Arthur said in Newbury, "All the freedoms we now take for granted have been won by people who, when conscience dictates, have been prepared to defy the law". Well said.

Costain: First crash victim at Newbury? Friday 8th February is the deadline, we hope, for Costain's sale of its US coal assets. If this fails then refinancing arrangements with Intria and other Malaysian industrialists will not occur. Bye bye Costain! Who knows... a final Costain EGM to celebrate?

The Third Battle is cost cutting, right sizing, out sourcing and teleworking. The office financed by Third Battle and Friends of the Earth has now closed. Telephone, fax and the Post Office box are still open with the information number: 01635 550552. Regular meetings and events continue, as well as hopefully actions.

A recent WWF report shows the failure in attempts to translocate species. Although there is no information yet as to the survival rate of the Desmoulin's Whorl snail relocation at Newbury, things don't look good especially when one considers the sensitivity of this extremely rare species. It's going to be one of those 'we told you so' situations isn't it? Sorry DoT we really don't appreciate your sick PR exercise - just admit it you might just have well run them over.

CAMBUS, the business group against the bypass, have launched a 3 year programme to monitor the effects on the water quality of the bypass construction, including the Lambourne and Kennet rivers, two of Britain's finest chalk rivers. The work by Surrey University is co-ordinated by Dr Neil Ward whose work on the M25 allowed wealthy landowners, the Alfieds, who own Harrods, to reach an out of court settlement of over a million pounds with the Department of Transport for pollution from vehicles carried by motorway water runoff. Local residents are establishing a monitoring network to complement the CAMBUS programme which will report and log failures by contractors as they occur.

Future events? There is a Beach Party expected this summer. Bring your bucket, spade, deckchair and radio! Let's build sand castles on the route of the Newbury Bypass! Expect hills to be cut and valleys filled during spring and summer this year.

There are quite a few people serving time at the moment for Newbury offences, call for more details and support them wherever possible. Contact Third Battle of Newbury on: 01635 45544.

DELTA UPDATE

Shell is now using armed escorts to check equipment before resuming full oil production in Ogoni despite continuing repression by Shell-backed Nigerian soldiers.

The Ogoni 19 hostages lost their recent appeal and are still held in appalling conditions. Shell has been keeping the dirt out of the press by taking journalists on pleasant 'Shell trips' but still had to drop its complaint to Channel 4 about being in cohorts with the regime. It has also now admitted paying the military. The company is being sued by the family of Ken Saro-Wiwa over the company's

'knowledge, consent and/or support' of the executions, and their part in a conspiracy to violently and ruthlessly suppress any opposition to [Shell's] conduct in Ogoni and the Niger Delta. Powerful oil workers' unions note that Shell 'could easily become the target of very serious political action' in the future.

In the UK over thirty pickets of Shell garages happened at the end of last year, including a 29 hour lock on to a Shell tanker in Newcastle. As well as this most of Slovakia's Shell garages were hit and other actions and rallies of up to 400 people happened around the world.

In Ogoni thousands of troops flooded the area, and there were random arrests, torture and killings. On Ogoni Day, 80,000 people demonstrated but the army raided 19 communities, tortured over 20 people, and opened fire into crowds. Acting President of MOSOP Ledum Mitee called on activists to step up the pressure on Shell. Winning the Ogoni issue is key for all activists fighting for environmental rights. Issue two of DELTA has been distributed internationally, including in the Niger Delta itself. If you have ideas for future issues or if you are interested in a national Ogoni strategy meeting in March contact DELTA on: 0116 255 3223.

GWYNEDD & MON EF!

Last Saturday Gwynedd and Mon Earth First! ers stormed one of the local Shell garages. A banner depicting a coffin and the slogan 'the ultimate Shell suit' was hung from the roof. The petrol was switched off for about half an hour before the attendant realised. Meanwhile all the angry customers were leafleted and many decided to go and fuel up elsewhere. While some people just stood around with banners and others leafleted, the symbolic hanging was staged, a list of Shell's crimes was read out and people 'died', among puddles of blood. When the police finally arrived in a riot van they ended up sympathising and protecting activists from a totally nutty garage owner who had very much lost his cool. He accused them of causing the loss of local jobs - but didn't seem sure quite how they were doing this. The blockade lasted two hours and they left after writing Shell in blood on the forecourt.

ANGLESEY

Last month a school on Anglesey 'adopted' a Hawk jet from Anglesey Valley RAF base. The name of the school was painted on the fuselage and the children were taken to admire it. Sgt Ted Constable explained the role of the Hawk at RAF Valley and its use with the Red Arrows Display Team. No mention was made of what it is used for in East Timor nor that the Indonesian pilots are trained there. After a look around the main Hawk hangar, the kids went off to the station's Golf Club for lunch and a special gift package.

Please write polite, pissed off letters to: Head Teacher, Ysgol Gynradd Bodedem, Bodedem, Ynys Mon, Gwynedd and send copies to: Richard Parry-Jones, Education Department, Parc Mount, Ynys Mon County Council, Llangefni, Ynys Mon, Gwynedd.

DOCKERS SUPPORT

Monday 21st January was an international day of action in support of the sacked Liverpool dockers who have been fighting for their jobs and against casualisation since September 1995. Sixteen countries saw solidarity actions, from Japan to the US to Scandinavia to Cyprus, including 24 hour work stoppages in many places. At 6am that day, a convoy of six cars entered

How to Contact the Earth First! Action Update

By Post: Earth First! Action Update, PO Box 9656, London N4 4JY. By Phone: 0171 561 9146. By E-Mail: actionupdate@gn.apc.org.

Please enclose a SAE for replies, and to subscribe to the free e-mail server send us your details.

Earth First! Website address: <http://www.hrc.wmin.ac.uk/campaigns/earthfirst.html>

Liverpool docks, despite jeering and abuse from the coincidentally large picket that morning. The police, desperate to get the 'scab cars' past the crowd, didn't look too carefully at their passengers and unwittingly let in a group of sacked Liverpool dockers and several of their supporters (who thought they'd also protest about importing genetically engineered food as well while they were about it).

The cars drove straight to the bottom of the gantries used to unload cereals and soya and the occupants quickly found their way to the top, with just enough time to settle in before a beautiful sunrise. A large and vocal picket, a taxi drive past and an all night candlelit vigil helped the protesters occupy the gantries for over 26 hours, before coming down and getting arrested. Twelve people were charged with aggravated trespass and breach of the peace. For more information contact the dockers on: 0151 207 3388.

GREEN THE SKIES!

In the light of the Secretary of State's decision to give the go-ahead to the construction of Manchester Airport's second runway people recently set up camp on the site of the proposed construction. The construction of this runway will involve the destruction of 42 ponds, 15km of hedgerow, farmland and seven hectares of mature woodland.

On top of this there will be a significant contribution to global warming from the increased air travel. (It has been estimated that current projections for air travel mean that any easing up of the destruction of the ozone layer from CFC bans will be completely negated.) If this isn't enough the chief economic advisor to the Department of Transport has estimated that aircraft emit 35-65% more CO2 than cars per passenger kilometre travelled. Combined with the pollution that will result from the proposed roads developments to service the airport it can be called nothing less than an ecological disaster.

As roads campaigns have had a significant effect on the roads programme, residents at the runway camp hope that aviation and airport developments, including Manchester, Heathrow and Newcastle will all come under close scrutiny.

In the meantime the Manchester people have heard little from the airport itself. Initially denying that they owned the land the airport have nevertheless sent 'agents' each day to visit the campers and inform them that they are trespassing. Whilst legal moves beyond this have been slow in coming, the campaigners have begun tunnelling and have set up a second camp. As ever more people are needed to establish other camps. The airport have claimed that they want to start construction work in April so are expected to start efforts to evict people at any time. For directions to the camp and more information on the campaign contact Coalition Against Runway 2 on: 0161 834 8221 or telephone the camp directly on: 0958 451525.

NEWCASTLE TO NEWBURY

Early in the morning on Friday 10th January a group of local people arrived at the offices of Mott MacDonald in Newcastle. Pretending to be delivery people they gained entry and decorated the office with ten strategically placed Christmas trees. As well as this they then proceeded to help them with their badly organised filing system, rearranging the files in a more appropriate way. Some people held in depth discussions with the managers whilst others locked on in the office. Two police turned up but seemed uninterested and left without arresting anyone. After two hours they were asked to leave but people preferred to stay for

a while longer having more of a look through files and talking with employees. For more details contact Newcastle Earth First! on: 0191 273 4997.

MONEY DEFACEMENT LEAGUE

The Money Defacement League that was born at the Big Green Gathering has been catching peoples imaginations throughout the country. For anyone that is new to this revolutionary group their idea is to write subversive messages on all bank notes that make their way, however briefly, through our grubby little hands. According to a letter that the Action Update has received Cambridge in particular has become a hotbed for this kind of activity and, if the information we have received is correct, it now looks like Norwich may will be next, with somebody having graffitied so many notes there they are starting to be handed them back in shops they have never been in before! Messages seen on notes floating around the country include 'Abolish wage labour!', 'If time itself is the agent of our captivity we really do have to kill time to be free don't we?', and 'I resent a world in which beauty is a reminder of what we're losing rather than a celebration of what we have'. We have also heard of a merchant banker regularly indulging in this fun pastime. We have not heard of any improved notes being rejected as of yet, so let your imagination and pens run wild!

GO GORLEBEN!

In the beginning of March, probably 3rd - 7th, six CASTOR nuclear waste flasks from the French reprocessing plant at La Hague and some from German nuclear power stations are supposed to arrive at the German nuclear waste site at Gorleben near Hamburg, Germany.

In the last two years massive contingents of police, armed with water-cannons, forced through two CASTOR transports with around 5-10,000 people resisting them. There was due to be a shipment in November 1996 but this had to be cancelled due to the financial cost (the last shipment cost £25 million) and the growing number of people that are prepared to take direct action to halt it.

With this shipment the German nuclear state plans to crush the resistance with mass police presence in a last effort to frustrate any opposition. A waste train of six Castor flasks stretches over half a mile and is difficult to secure and it seems that the convoy can be prevented this time because the capacity of the state to safeguard it is reaching limits.

A new tactic has been to be developed to disperse all protesters along the transport route in resistance camps, because otherwise there will be too many people to gather in one place. Each particular camp will have different tactics to try and halt the shipment including sit-downs, blockades, tunnels and digging up the road.

If you want to help fight this nuclear insanity try to be in the city of Dannenberg in the Gorleben area in the beginning of March. Near the city centre there is a camp opposite a petrol station which provides all the information. If you can't find it, ask. There are tents, but if possible take along your own. To get there take a ferry from Harwich to Hamburg, then take a train from Hamburg to Uelzen and from there a bus to Dannenberg. Try to look 'average' as the police may arrest or send back people entering the Gorleben area who look like protesters. Bring waterproof gear to protect you against water-cannons, and heavy clothes to protect you against the police.

The contact is telephone 0049 5841 4684 or fax 0049 5841 3197. They will call you when the transport starts and you have then got two or three days left to reach the site.

EVENTS

FEBRUARY

- 14-16** Reclaim The Coast! Target The Oil Industry! Sea Empress disaster anniversary actions. Arrive from midday on Friday 14th for workshops, briefings, affinity group training etc. Massive action on Saturday 15th followed by de-brief and party on Sunday 16th. For campsite details and other information contact 01749 812665 after 12th February. Followed by ...
- 17-19** Reclaim The Valleys III - The Saga Continues! Actions against opencast mining in Wales. Contact Reclaim The Valleys on: 0385 711364.
- 17-20** Green Screen Environmental Film Festival at University of Oxford. As well as screenings there will be discussion periods with relevant panellists. For more details call: 0171 379 7390.
- 21** No M66 Action to mark the anniversary of the first battle of Daisy Nook. Reclaim the valley from the forces of progress. Meet 11 am at Daisy Nook visitors centre, Oldham, near Manchester. Contact: 0161 344 0225.
- 21-23** Gathering at Menwith Hill Women's Peace Camp to learn more about the spy base there. Contact: 01943 468593.
- 22** A one day conference to plan the 1997 campaign of action against COPEX and the trade in torture weapons. Meets at Caxton House Community Centre, 129 St. John's Way, London N19 3RQ. For more details contact Campaign Against the Arms Trade on: 0171 281 0297.
- 23-24** Mahogany Action in London. Workshops on 23rd followed by an action on 24th. Contact: 01248 713 604.
- 26-2** Green Party Conference, Scarborough. Includes debates, workshops on organic farming and loads more. Open to everyone. For more details on cheap prices and other information contact: 0121 453 5838

MARCH

- 1** Possible start of the anti-CASTOR activities in Germany. (Nuclear waste shipments - remember Gorleben?) Demos, blockades and sabotage planned. For more details contact: BI-Luchow-Dannenberg, Drahwehner Str.3, 29439 Luchow, Germany. Telephone: 0049 5841 4684 to get on the telephone tree or fax 0049 5841 3197.
- 14-17** Faslane Peace Camp Women's Actions. Bring tents, sleeping bags, boltcutters etc.. Contact: 01706 812663.
- 21-25** Sea Action Groups Training Day with workshops on waterborne direct action, inflatable boat driving, safety and general tactics. At Gareloch in Scotland near Faslane Peace Camp. Followed by an action. Contact: 01436 820901.

APRIL

- 1-7** International Earth Nights. Bite Back Against The Fur Industry.
- 4-6** Gathering Visions, Gathering Strength. A weekend of meetings, workshops and speakers on the history of non-violent action and a time to explore new directions for action in the future. For more details contact: 0113 262 9365.
- 5** 'The Social Ecology of Murray Bookchin: an assessment.' Anarchist Research Group meeting, 2.30pm at International Relations Room, Institute of Historical Research, Senate House, Malet Street, London WC1.
- 5-6** The Land is Ours Gathering. Location to be announced. Contact: 01865 722016.
- 6** 'Technology/anti-technology' debate. Starts 3pm at the 121 Centre, 121 Raiton Road, Brixton, London.
- 19** Mass Action against Consort Beagle breeders in Ross-on-Wye. Contact: 0171 278 3068.
- 26** World Day for Laboratory Animals. For more details contact: 0171 278 3068.

MAY

- 3** National Anarchist Bookfair, Bradford. Part of a week of events to reclaim May Day from decades of left-wing and trade union dogma. For more details contact: 1 in 12 Library, c/o 1 in 12 Club, Albion Street, Bradford BD1.

LEGAL DISCLAIMER: The editors of the Earth First! Action Update do not intend to encourage people to carry out any illegal action. The Action Update is for information purposes only.

FOREST ACTION NETWORK

On Wednesday 15th January, twenty people from the newly formed UK Forest Action Network occupied the Canadian Tourist Office in Trafalgar Square, London to protest against the trashing of British Columbia's 'Great Coastal Rainforest'.

Direct action has 'saved' the few remaining fragments of the wild forest of Clayoquot Sound on Vancouver Island, so the rapacious timber companies have headed up north to the untouched forests of Mid-Coast B.C. Remote pristine forests are still being destroyed for toilet paper on the shelves of our local shops.

Seven activists from Britain and Canada entered the office, chained the doors and rearranged a window display to show clearcuts and, in the words of current television adverts, to encourage people to 'Discover Canada's True Nature'. Climbers scaled the outside of the building with a banner demanding 'CANADA: SAVE YOUR RAINFOREST'. Outside, the pavement was scattered with woodchips fresh from BC, placards were waved and a curious crowd were leafleted. After an hour, police cut the chains and turfed everyone out. There was nationwide television and press coverage in Canada, a country nervous of its overseas image, unexpectedly prompting the B.C. Minister of the Environment to tell Canadian greens to "lay off the European campaign". "No way" says FAN!

This was only the first action of the Forest Action Network (UK) who have pledged to use direct action to save the world's forests, be that by protecting Scandinavian old-growth remnants or stopping the trade in stolen Brazilian mahogany. To find out more about Forest Action Network (UK) contact: 0171 602 5889.

RECLAIM LEE BANK

Lee Bank is part of the Birmingham Convention Centre Quarter. While the International Convention Centre, The National Indoor Arena and the Brindley Place development have had £100,000's spent on them, Lee Bank has seen little change over the last few years. Three bids for Estate Action money plus endless meetings have resulted in little gain for the residents. The number of people attending meetings had fallen and the council seemed to have forgotten about the area altogether. Following one such meeting recently a few residents got together and decided to do something positive and 'Reclaim Lee Bank' was formed. Firstly a huge poster was put up on a billboard on the main road nearby, reading 'WELCOME TO LEE BANK - BIRMINGHAM'S SLUM QUARTER'. The following day an invasion of the local

neighbourhood office took place and then another, this time of the main housing offices. A rooftop protest at the home of a local Tory leader topped it all off, with events being well covered by all the local press. In the last few weeks, work that had been left undone for months has now been completed and three families that had been living in appalling conditions have since been rehoused. Several councillors have approached the group and meetings are taking place that are now about how the groups aims can be achieved rather than just the same old waffle that was the order of the day, before the actions. For the first time in years the residents are feeling optimistic about what they can achieve. The campaign is continuing. The contact address is: Reclaim Lee Bank, PO Box 5818, Birmingham, B15 2BA.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLE UNDER THREAT

The Tarahumara and Tepehuan, Mexico's most isolated indigenous peoples who number around 100,000 and 120,000 respectively, are under threat from a deadly combination of drug traffickers and loggers. These two tribes live mainly in the western Sierra Madre in the area of Chihuahua in Northern Mexico, and until now have avoided contact with the destructive forces of civilisation and have maintained an agricultural way of life supplemented by gathering and hunting. Logging is seriously depleting the forest where the Tarahumara and Tepehuan live and many of them see little option but to move to the cities, where they end up in squalid shanty towns. Many of the loggers, who are working illegally, are co-operating with drug traffickers. The two large Mexican Cartels who control the trade in drugs have tried to seize control of the Indians land, and people who have tried to resist this have been imprisoned, tortured and murdered. For more details on this and other indigenous people's struggles, and what you can do to help, contact Survival International on: 0171 242 1441.

ANIMAL RIGHTS ACTIONS

On Saturday 1st February, during a march through the centre of Dover, to mark the second anniversary of Jill Phipp's death, crushed under a lorry while protesting against the export of live animals from the UK, the front of the local McDonald's store was completely wrecked by people. As well as this, the port was completely blockaded for around 2 hours by 400-500 people.

Elsewhere, Barry Home, an animal rights campaigner currently in HMP Bristol, has been on hunger strike since 5th January calling on the

government to ban all vivisection within five years.

Barry was arrested last July whilst placing incendiary devices in shops linked to the vivisection industry and is still awaiting trial. His action has led to support demos/actions from as far afield as New Zealand, Holland and the USA, and the other 13 animal rights campaigners currently held in UK prisons refused food for 48 hours last week as a gesture of support.

In the UK, the Research Defence Society and various fur shops have been blockaded by animal rights campaigners. On 18th January, following a support picket, various people visited a nearby vivisection breeders establishment and liberated seven kittens which would otherwise have been sold for experimentation. Four other cats were recovered by police using infra-red detectors and promptly killed by the breeder (who claimed they were now 'contaminated'). About seven people were arrested.

Various other actions are planned to highlight Barry's cause and the urgent issues it raises. To express your support for Barry write to him at: Barry Home VC2141, HMP Bristol, Horfield, Bristol BS7 8PS. For an update on Barry's condition telephone: 01203 632873.

FASLANE NEWS

Spring was welcomed at Faslane Peace Camp with a mad punk party that brought loads of Glasgow folk back whom had not been to visit in years. Due to the nature of what they do and who they hang about with everything went completely mad and for a while looked like it was not going to happen, but ended up as a brilliant stomp in the mud! "We are feeling hail and hardy and looking forward to a very busy Spring", says one of the camp's residents.

They are starting with a women's action from 14-17th March. Camping will be at a beautiful site close to Faslane itself, thanks to a local landowner. Next up will be WaterWorld between 21-25th March with workshops on NVDA in the water, boat driving, safety and general tactics. There will be loads of different sea action groups converging on the banks of Gareloch to share experiences and expertise in these five fun filled days. The last day will include a selection of actions of your choice, remember it is Scotland and they have everything from nuclear submarines to genetically modified salmon at the farms!

Last but not least is the unforgettable Chernobyl day actions over April 25-28th. People are calling for international days of action, (basically they want people to sab their local nuclear whatever!) This will be their first big action for 1997 and they are hoping for loads of folk to hit every site in Scotland. There will be workshops focusing on the broad issues of nuclear accidents, waste etc as opposed to just the weapons issue. Contact Faslane on: 01436 820901.

SUBSCRIBE TO THE EF! ACTION UPDATE

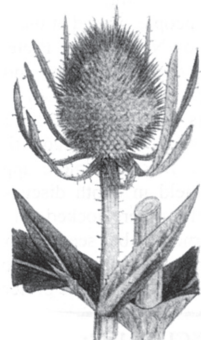
Subscriptions cost a minimum contribution of £5 (£6 International subscriptions) for the next twelve issues. Send more if you can afford it to keep the Action Update going and to enable us to reply to enquiries and give free subscriptions to prisoners, libraries, community groups etc. Make cheques and postal orders payable to Earth First! Remember security, false names and a collect or care of address are best.

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(Dipsacus
Sylvestris).

Earth First! Gathering

Tuesday 8th to Sunday 13th of July, 1997 - National Action 14th-15th

Last Summer saw the biggest Earth First! Gathering in the UK to date. 400 people from all over Britain, as well as Europe and the rest of the world, spent 5 days in a beautiful, remote part of North Wales. The aim of the gathering was to learn, share ideas and debate about actions in defence of the earth. The gathering was an introduction for newcomers and a place for old timers to be re-inspired. There were talks and workshops ranging from actions to save the Australian rainforests to self defence classes, blockading nuclear convoys to setting up solar panels. There was also plenty of football, tai chi, acoustic music, swimming in the lake and all round having a good time with old and new friends.

Overall last years event was a major success. Therefore the '97 gathering will be very similar, but there is always room for improvement. For the last few months we've been collecting peoples opinions on the last gathering and asking what they would like from this one. The main criticisms over last years event were that the action was rather unclear, there was no large organised talking circles for people to raise issues, and there were too many things going on. Reducing the number of events going on may prove difficult, but we will be giving higher priority to certain debates that directly affect our movement. These include organising national actions, gatherings and regional networks.

So far about 15 people have offered to be involved in organising the event. As always there are no paid workers, offices or big bank accounts, just ordinary people getting together to put the event on, while leading normal, slightly hectic lives like everybody else.

The Site

We have a couple of potential sites at the moment but none are ideal so we are still open to offers. We need a site at least the size of a football pitch, with a friendly land owner, running water, disabled access and land that is suitable for camping. The site needs to be in a fairly remote part of the country, but near to public transport links. If you think you might know of such a site then please let us know. We would fully discuss conditions with the land owner before they had to make any decisions.

The exact location of the site will not be announced until the day before the gathering although the rough area will be publicised in May. This is to stop police hassling the land owner. This year we are going to ensure it is easy to get to the site by public transport, so there's no excuse to bring a vehicle, unless you live in it or you're bringing a minibus full of people.

Rainbow Circle Camps are offering to help set up the site. If anyone can get hold of any marquees or other large structures then that would be very useful. Composting toilets, showers and sweat lodges will need to be built and we need people with 1st aid knowledge and fire safety equipment.

Rampenplan from the Netherlands have offered to provide cheap vegan organic food throughout the gathering. They catered at the last gathering and if you were there you'll remember how good the food was.

A creche will be available for people bringing kids. Toys, games and art materials will be needed. The kids area will be in the centre of the camp, not tucked away on the edges.

Campaign Workshops

We want presentations by most eco-direct action campaigns in Britain and abroad. If you are involved in a campaign that you'd like to publicise, please get in touch. We also want offers from anyone who knows about an issue that would interest campaigners, such as the history of previous UK movements, how to run a successful campaign or gender issues.

Training

The gathering is an opportunity for people to learn new skills and techniques that are of use to direct action campaigns. We need training workshops on such things as: building lock ons; producing press releases; self defence; first aid; putting up tripods, legal support ... you name it, we need it. If you've got the skills we need YOU!

International Speakers

Radical eco activists from across the world will be coming to give talks on struggles in their countries. The gathering is a great place to build international cooperation. If you're an activist outside the UK, get in touch.

Debating Forums

A space will be provided to allow discussions on sometimes controversial issues within the direct action movement. What are the hot issues of the moment? If there is something you feel needs to be sorted out then tell us.

Entertainment

Acoustic bands, musicians, performers, story tellers, comedians ... would all be great. We can have a rerun of last year's chaotic football matches or maybe you know of some other games we could all play. There will not be any sound systems or loud amplified music on site.

Campaigning and Staying Sane

There will be an area for sessions on such things as alternative medicine, yoga, permaculture and meditation. As with the other events, the sessions available will depend on the skills offered. The Buddhafeld Festival organisers have already offered yoga, tai chi and meditation workshops.

Stalls

Please bring information and stalls about campaigns you are involved in. However, commercial stalls are not welcome. The gathering is not a place to make money from each other, but to share knowledge and resources. There will be a trading board on which to advertise any goods people have, and where they are camped. You are welcome to sell things that will be of interest to campaigners such as cost price D-locks, rope and books. These goods will be on display for an hour each evening, around dinner time.

An Action

At the last gathering we disrupted an RAF training base and a British Aerospace Engineering (BAe) factory, involved in the supply of Hawk aircraft, and the training of their pilots, for the Indonesian military. These were two very successful actions, but there were some complaints about the BAe action. These were that the action was not well organised for large numbers of people and it was too far away from the gathering site. These problems were due to having to cancel the original planned action at the last minute. A bit more forward thinking could prevent this happening again, but to organise such a large action is perhaps too much work for the people already organising the gathering. There was also a problem with the police hassling the owner of the gathering site. Therefore we are suggesting that there is a national action as a separate event within 50 miles of the gathering site, the day after the gathering. This would be organised and publicised as a separate event, with a safe camp, full, clear briefings and legal support. Obviously having 500 people just up the road would be a coincidence, but it could not be blamed on the land owner of the gathering site. As always we need your comments and help.

Coordinating Transport

We need people to coordinate transport from their area. This means we would publish your telephone number so that people in your area could meet up and travel together. Any offers please contact us.

Cash

We'll need money to make this all happen. Although people are doing this for free, there will still be a lot of expenses - printing fliers, phone bills, possible marquee hire, money to get the catering teams set up, bond for the land owner... This will be over a thousand pounds. Anyone up for a benefit gig, or got some cash? Send cheques to 'Earth First!' at the address below.

Depending on how much cash we raise before the event, we'll be asking for a donation from people coming - around ten pounds for the week.

Advertising

A flier for the gathering will be coming out in May. If you'd like a copy or can offer to distribute them, please send a stamped, self addressed envelope to us. Also if you've got any suggestions about magazines that we could put articles in or places where we can distribute fliers, let us know.

The exact location will be available the day before the gathering. It will be on several phone lines and mailed out if you send a 1st class SAE

So, if you'd like to be involved or have any suggestions/criticisms write them down and send them to the address below. Offers or suggestions for workshops will probably outnumber the amount of sessions available. We'll try and be flexible but please contact us as soon as possible.

EF! Gathering, c/o 16 Sholebroke Avenue, Chapeltown, Leeds. LS7 3HB

You can also email 'cornerstone@gn.apc.org' or tel/fax (phone 1st) 0113 262 9365.

If you just wish to be kept informed, send 2 stamped addressed envelopes (one with a 1st class stamp). You will receive a flier in May, then full details of the location and a programme, on July 7th.

EF! CONTACTS FEBRUARY '97

A30 Action
PO BOX 6
Ottery St. Mary
Devon. EX11 1YL
01404 815729
Mobile 0385 278156/7
<http://www.fury361.demon.co.uk/a30/index.htm>

Avon Gorge EF!
Box 51
Greenleaf Bookshop
82 Colston Street
Bristol BS1 5BB
01225 448556

Beal Valley Rescue
33 Valley Rise
Rushcroft
Oldham, Lancashire
OL2 7QF

Blackburn EF!
12 Balmoral Road
Darwen
Lancs, BB3 2EW
01254 777079.

Cambridge EF!
Box E
12 Mill Road
Cambridge.

Cardiff EF!
PO Box 7
Cardiff, CF2 4XX

Cardigan Bay EF!
Temperance House Taliesin
Powys
Mid Wales

Falsane Peace Camp
Shandon
Helensburgh
Dunbartonshire
Scotland. G84 8HT
01436 820901

Glasgow EF!
PO Box 180,
Glasgow, G4 9AB.
0141 226 5066

Gwynedd & Mon EF!
Isfryn
Llon Gannol
Llandegfan Ynys
Mon LL59 5YA

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Box Z,
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Leicester LE2 1BH
0116 255 3223
Fax: as phone

Hereford Earth Action
c/o Crestfield Cottage
Sutton Lakes
Sutton St. Nicholas
Hereford
HR1 3NS
Tel: 01432 880468

Hillfort EF!
9 Hordens Close
Chippenham
Wilts
SN15 3AA
01249 650078

Leeds EF!
16 Sholebrock Ave
Chapelton
Leeds LS7 3HB
0113 262 9365
cornerstone@gn.apc.org

Lune EF!
78a Penny Street
Lancaster
01524 849313

Manchester EF!
Dept 29, 1 Newton St
Manchester M1 1HW
0161 224 4846
coniberr@cs.man.ac.uk

Mid-Somerset EF!
PO Box 23
5 High St
Glastonbury
Somerset BA6 9PU

Mid-Sussex EF!
Box A
Public House Bookshop
Little Preston Street
Brighton, East Sussex
BN1 2HQ

Newcastle EF!
4, The Cloth Market
Newcastle-Upon-Tyne
NE1 1EA
0191 273 4997

No M66
14 Eaton Ave.
Oldham. OL8 4HR
0161 628 4727

Norfolk EF!
c/o U.E.A Union of
Students
Norwich
Norfolk NR4 7TJ
01603 502 796

Oxford EF!
Box E
111 Magdalen Rd
Oxford, OX4 1RQ

Penwith EF!
c/o Mid-Sussex EF!

Reclaim the Streets
PO BOX 9656
London N4 4JY
0171 281 4621
rts@gn.apc.org
<http://www.hrc.wmin.ac.uk/campaigns/rts.html>

Reclaim the Valleys
c/o Swansea
Environment Center
Pier Street
Swansea, SA1 1RY
0385 711364

Sheffield EF!
c/o Shefin
201 Crookes Valley Rd
Sheffield S10 1BA
0114 2671200
bjgoss@pine.shu.ac.uk

South Downs EF!
c/o Prior House
6 Tilbury Place
Brighton BN2 2GY
savage@easynet.co.uk
<http://www.hrc.wmin.ac.uk/campaigns/arthfirst.html>

South Somerset EF!
31 Hamdon Close
Stoke-Sub-Hamdon
Somerset TA14 6QN
01935 825074

Stringers Common
2 Oak Cottages
Stringers Common
Guildford
Surrey GU4 7PS
01483 32167
<http://www.geocities.com/rainforest/4452/hariymog.html>

The Flat Oak Society
c/o 3 St Alphege Lane
Canterbury
Kent. CT1 2EB
01227 463368

Upper Nene EF!
Box E,
24 St. Michaels Avenue,
Northampton NN1

Warwick EF!
c/o Green Society
Students Union
University of Warwick
Coventry
CV4 7AL
01926 435137
suad@csv.warwick.ac.uk

Wolves EF!
c/o Wolves Hunt Sabs
Box H Wolverhampton
University Student Union
Wulfruna Street
Wolverhampton

York EF!
c/o York LEAF,
Peace Centre,
Clifford Street,
York
01904 410185

SUPPORT GROUPS

Corporate Watch
Box E
111, Magdalen Rd
Oxford, OX4 1RQ
01865 791391

Dead Trees EF!/Do or Die
c/o South Downs EF!

DELTA
Box Z
13, Biddulph Street
Leicester LE2 1BH
Tel: 0116 255 3223

Direct Action Direct!
c/o Mid-Sussex EF!

Earth First! Action Update
PO Box 9656
London N4 4JY.
0171 561 9146
actionupdate@gn.apc.org

Earth Liberation Prisoners
c/o Mid-Somerset EF!
P.M.Blackmore@ncl.ac.uk

Mendip Hills not Holes
PO Box 2113
Shepton Mallet, BA4

Road Alert!
PO Box 5544
Newbury
Berkshire RG14 5FB
roadalert@gn.apc.org

Toxic Alert EF!
PO Box 2600
Brighton BN2 2DY

INTERNATIONAL

Australia EF!
Canopy
POB 1738Q GPO
Melbourne 3001
Victoria. Australia
(0061) 3 3547972

Ballyhoura Talamh Glas
(Greech Earth)
Cois Abhann
Killeen
Garyspillane
Co. Limerick
00 353 62 46868

Earth First! Journal
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00 1503 7419191
earthfirst@igc.apc.org

Finland EF!
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Germany EF!
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Kerala,
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(0091) 484 25435

Volunteers for Earth Defence
189 San Antonio Ext.SFDM
1105 Quezon City
Philippines

Workshop for all Beings
ul. Modrzewskiego 29/3
43-300 Bielsko Biala
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Fax: (0048) 30 29496

Rainbow Keepers
POB 14
Nizhny Novgorod 603082
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A.Hlinku 11
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15703 Santiago
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Morgan Larsson
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46 37 Vanersborg
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Rainbow Keepers
c/o Nadia Shevchenko
Glushkova 17-22
Kiev. 252187
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(007) 044 2669310
nadia@glas.apc.org

Young Lions EF!
South Africa
101356.2535
@compuserve.com

OTHER CONTACTS

Advisory Service for
Squatters
2, St Pauls Road
London N1 2QN
Tel: 0171 359 8814

ALF Supporters Group
BCM Box 1160
London WC1N 3XX

Anarchist Black Cross
c/o 121 Raitlon Rd
London. SE24 0LR

Anarcho-Primitivist
Network
PO Box 252
Rickmansworth, Herts
WD3 3AY

Anti-Fascist Action
BM Box 1734
London WC1N 3XX
Tel: 0161 232 0813

Conscious Cinema
PO BOX 2679
Brighton. BN2 2EF
01273 278018

Contraflow
56A Info Shop
56 Crampton St
London.
SE17
Fax: 0171 326 0353

Counter Information
c/o Transmission
28 King St
Glasgow.
G1 5QP

The Ecologist
Agriculture House
Bath Road
Sturminster Newton
Dorset.
DT10 1DU
01258 73476
ecologist@gn.apc.org

Freedom Network
PO BOX 9384
London.
SW9 7ZB
0171 582 3474
Actions: 0171 793 7343

Green Anarchist Network
BCM 1715
London.
WC1N 3XX

Hunt Saboteurs Assoc.
PO BOX 2786
Brighton
BN2 2AX
01273 622827
hsa@gn.apc.org
<http://envirolink.org/arrs/HSA/hsa.html>

Industrial Workers
of the World
BM Box 4529
London
WC1N 3XX

Justice?/Cothrom
c/o Larkfield Centre
39, Inglefield Street
Glasgow G42
Tel: 0141 226 5066/
424 1797

Justice?/Schnews
PO Box 2600
Brighton
E. Sussex
BN2 2DX
01273 685913
<http://www.cbuzz.co.uk/SchNEWS/index.html>

LAMB
Dpet 29, 1 Newton St
Manchester M1 1HW
0161 274 4665

Legal Defence &
Monitoring Group
BM Haven
London.
WC1N 3XX
0171 837 6687

McLibel Support Campaign
5 Caledonian Rd
Kings Cross
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N1 9DX
0171 713 1269

Menwith Womens
Peace Camp
A59 Lay-By
Nr. Menwith Hill Spybase
Nr. Harrogate
N. Yorks
01943 468593

Squall
PO Box 8959
London
N12 5HW
0171 561 1204
Fax: 0171 272 9243

Third Battle of Newbury
PO BOX 5520
Newbury.
RG14 7YW
01635 45544
Fax: 01635 45545
<http://www.gn.apc.org/newbury/>

The Land is Ours
Box E
111 Magdalen Road
Oxford
OX4 1RQ
01865 722016

Undercurrents
16b Cherwell St
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OX4 1BJ
01865 203661
Fax: 01865 243562
underc@gn.apc.org

The Wilderness
c/o Mid-Sussex EF!

WHAT IS EARTH FIRST!?

Earth First! is not so much a cohesive group or a campaign as a convenient banner for people who share similar philosophies to work under. The general principles behind the name are non-hierarchical organisation and direct action to confront, stop, and eventually reverse the forces that are responsible for the destruction of the Earth and it's inhabitants. The contacts are autonomous groups that consider themselves to share the above principles. International contacts are entry points into that country's own network of groups. Other contacts are ones whose aims and principles are ones that we agree with fully or in part, or groups that we think may be of use or interest to people. New additions or alterations are shown in bold.