

DIARY DATES

WPJF Planning Meeting

Wednesday 12th July, 6pm.

The Basement, Peace & Justice Centre,
35 Kingsmills Rd, Hightown, Wrexham.
(or in the garden if the weather's good).

Chester Hiroshima and Nagasaki Flower Memorial

Sunday August 6th, 8pm.

Meet at the bandstand on The Groves, Chester.
Readings, the dropping of white flowers on the
river and a short period of silence;
final reading at the memorial tree.
Bring white flowers if you wish.

Earth First! Summer Gathering

Wednesday 16 - Sunday 20 August.

5 day camp in West Wales to share skills and
ideas on direct action for people and planet.

www.earthfirstgathering.org.uk
0845 223 5254

Nuclear Power?

WPJF public meeting

Monday 11 September, 6.30pm.

Room AO2, NEWI, Mold Road, Wrexham.
See page 8 for more details.

Time to Go Demo

Troops out of Iraq. Don't attack Iran

Saturday 23rd September, 1pm.

Manchester.

Protest at the Labour Party Annual Conference.
www.stopwar.org.uk. Tel: 020 7278 6694

WPJF Film Evening

Film about Palestine, to be confirmed

Thursday 28th September, 7pm.

Trinity Church, King St, Wrexham.

Plus...

More action to save the Amazon

See page 6.

Action for Palestine

See page 7.

Support Brian Haw

See page 11.

**WPJF always needs help and support to
write letters, run stalls in town, plan
actions, make banners and placards,
produce the newsletter, organise public
meetings, films etc.**

**Please let us know if you can help in any
way. Contact details are on the back
page. Thanks!**

FASLANE 365

Campaigners from Wales will be blockading Faslane for at least two (overlapping) 48-hour periods from 13-15 November as part of the Faslane 365 campaign. In addition to the existing Ddraig Goch (Red Dragon) group, a North Wales group is hoping to recruit 100 blockaders and a similar number of non-arrestable supporters.

Faslane 365 will be a rolling act of civil disobedience, starting in October this year and aiming to change government policy by applying continuous pressure at the base where Britain's nuclear weapons are sited. If successful, Britain's nuclear weapons will be scrapped and any plans to replace Trident abandoned. The sustained nature of the campaign and the diversity of groups involved will make it very difficult to ignore. If you disagree with Britain having nuclear weapons, this is your chance to take part in a campaign which has real potential to bring about change.

Each group can decide how they want to blockade the base during the 48 hours with their 100 blockaders: how long to blockade for, at which gate(s), all together or in relays, for as long as possible or in short bursts, what props to use, which aspects of Britain's nuclear disgrace to highlight, and so on. Joining the blockade does not mean that you must lie on the cold, wet ground for 48 hours! - the police are unlikely to entertain this anyway.

Among the groups which have already signed up to blockade are: church ministers, Quakers, the Scottish Nationalist Party, the Scottish Socialist Party, cyclists, actors, CND, Stop the War Coalition, along with many groups based on geographical location.

If you would like to be involved in Faslane 365, as a blockader, as a non-arrestable supporter at the blockade, or as a supporter back here in North Wales, please let us know (contact details on back page) and we'll keep you informed of meetings, non-violent direct action (nvda) training, etc. Not everyone will need to come to every meeting, but every person who plans to go to Faslane should do at least one nvda training session.

For this campaign to be successful, it needs to engage with more than the usual suspects. Please tell others about it - faith groups, social groups, trades unions, political parties, other campaigns. Make connections between the huge sums wasted on nuclear weapons and shortage of funding for adequate health, welfare benefits and education services etc.

For more information about the campaign, downloadable resources and so on, see : www.faslane365.org.





SOCIAL FORUM CYMRU



Photo by Angus Eickhoff

Timed to coincide with and challenge the capitalist elite's World Economic Forums, World Social Forums have taken place every year since 2001 under the banner "*Another World is Possible*". At these Forums, people from across the globe come together to coordinate worldwide campaigns, discuss organising strategies, and share information about social movements and issues in their home countries, cities, towns and villages. In the last five years, many national, regional and local Social Forums have sprung up, where people can meet to debate, exchange ideas, plan and organise. One of the latest of these is Social Forum Cymru, the first meeting of which took place over Mayday weekend in Aberystwyth.

Myriad groups were represented at the Forum, including community groups, peace groups, environmental activists, local councils, non-governmental organisations, faith groups, political parties and many more. The weekend programme was jam-packed with talks and lectures, films, meetings and seminars, workshops, evening entertainment, with a carnival march and evening lantern parade on Bank Holiday Monday. There isn't room here to talk about every event I went along to, so I'll limit myself to two, the Peace Networks meeting and a talk by ex-Guantánamo detainee Moazzam Begg.

After the first Peace Networks meeting (I was unable to stay for the second), I came away feeling that there was a resolve for peace groups across Wales to pool information, ideas and resources, and to find new ways of working together on campaigns. A working group was set up to investigate the most effective ways of achieving this. I hope that the result will be a stronger and more effective peace movement in Wales.

I also attended a lecture by former Guantánamo detainee Moazzam Begg, pictured right, who spoke eloquently and movingly about his capture and illegal detention, which ended in January after nearly three years. He talked of the appalling conditions at Guantánamo, but drew attention to still greater human rights abuses at camps even further from public scrutiny, such as Kandahar and Bagram, where he witnessed prisoners being tortured to death. However, he also spoke of the humanity of some of his guards, in his words "*some of the most humane, decent and praiseworthy people I have ever met*". Outlining how the process of dehumanisation affects captors as well as captives, he described even the most vicious guards as victims within an oppressive regime which is controlled from the highest levels. Although the guards at Guantánamo were under strict orders not to "fraternise with the enemy", some of them did, including one disillusioned Republican redneck Vietnam war veteran who was thrown out of the camp for the offence.

In answer to a question from the floor, Moazzam talked of the devastating and worrying effect that continued detentions at Guantánamo are having on the young children of the detainees, which often leads to a hatred of America and all things American. He said that, although he would love to put the whole Guantánamo episode behind him, he feels that it is his responsibility to campaign until the camp is closed down and all its inmates are returned to their families.

Another Social Forum Cymru is planned for next year. My hope is that more people from Wrexham will see the value in this event and take part next time.

DIY SCREEN PRINTING FOR BEGINNERS

On 21-22 May, a weekend printing workshop gave us an exciting opportunity to design and print some placards.

We began by designing a cut-out to be used as a block colour image. It had to be a fairly simple image as it was to be used as a single colour relief stencil (although multiple colours are possible, with enough time). Once cut out, the image was reversed and ready for the printing stage. The range of images can be very bold and varied, creating stark imagery which has impact from quite some distance, reminiscent of woodblock prints. Using a stiff mixture of wallpaper paste and acrylic paint, the 'ink' is pushed through a screen made from a wooden frame with a net curtain stretched tightly over it. John, our teacher, patiently demonstrated the technique of dragging the ink in fluid, firm movements, trying to avoid pauses and ink build up!

The thrill of raising the screen and watching the image slowly pull away from the net was hugely satisfying and the speed with which the image can be replicated means the process is a reliable way of creating a string of images in a very short space of time. The images were hung on a homemade, simple wooden frame with household pegs; this allowed space between the prints whilst drying. Seeing the rows of images drying and being removed ready for the next batch really demonstrated



The magic moment when the print appears

the benefits of setting up a process like this. The weekend produced loads of effective banners which have since been used for demonstrations (see front page).

Seeing the results of the workshop actually being put to good campaigning use was proof that a printing workshop of this kind has real validity; the process is relatively low cost and easy to set up. We are very grateful to John for sharing the knowledge and techniques with us and we hope to set up our own print room to make placards for future demos and events.