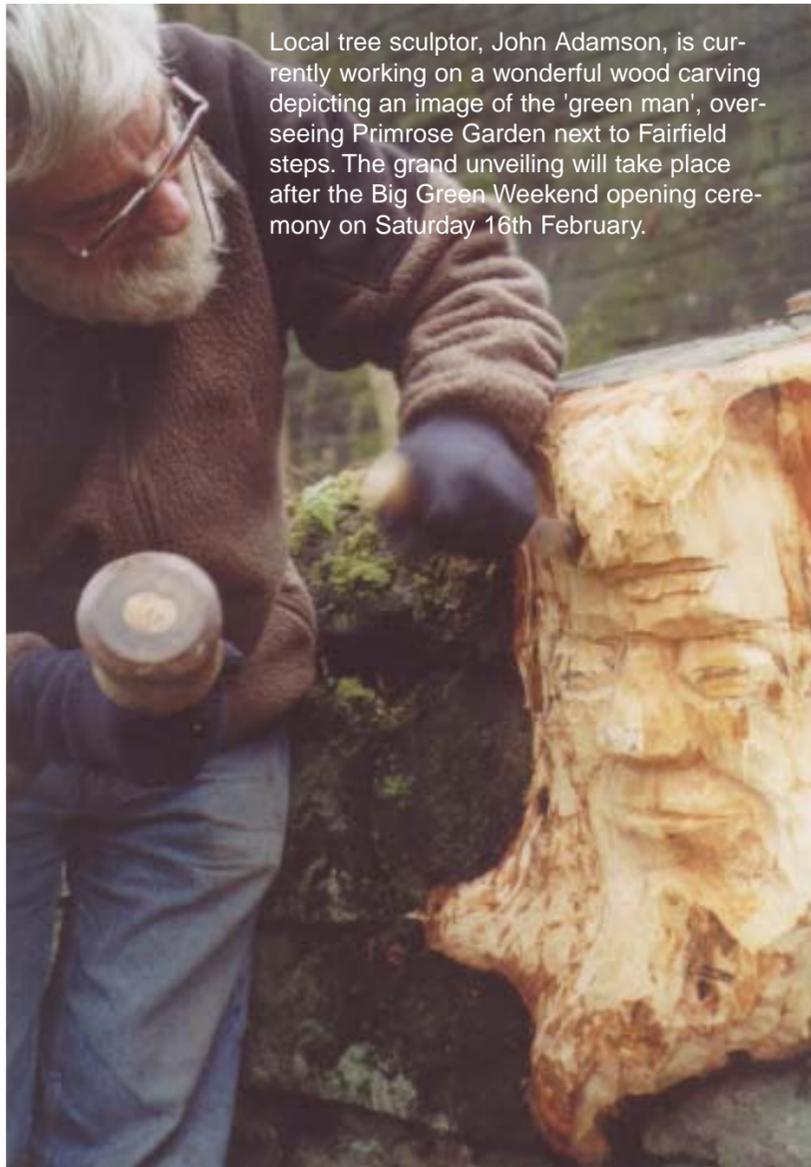


the green page

News and information from the Hebden Bridge Alternative Technology Centre

Green Man cometh



Local tree sculptor, John Adamson, is currently working on a wonderful wood carving depicting an image of the 'green man', overseeing Primrose Garden next to Fairfield steps. The grand unveiling will take place after the Big Green Weekend opening ceremony on Saturday 16th February.

Green Avenger by Mike Bryson



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The views expressed by individuals on the Green Page do not necessarily represent the views of the ATC.

Get Sussed!

SUSCHOOLS IS THE ALTERNATIVE TECHNOLOGY CENTRE'S SCHOOLS SERVICE. It aims to provide support, resources, workshops and tours to help parents, teachers and pupils take responsibility for their own environment.

The Centre is currently awaiting funding for a full pilot project but, in the interim, tours, workshops and consultation are available. Presently, we offer workshops in plastics recycling and wind power along with tours of the ATC, including a full demonstration of the Energy Room. All of these are fully linked to the National Curriculum. Further workshops are in the pipeline, and we are keen to liaise with schools in order to develop further projects that meet their particular requirements.

We also offer consultation services to help schools maximise the environmental and educational potential in the development of their grounds.

There are several 'teacher' days scheduled during the half-term and Easter holidays, when it is possible to visit us and see what we have to offer. Or better still, come to visit the SUSchools co-ordinator, Dave Brooks, who will be available at Riverside Junior School during the Big Green Weekend - come to say hello and find out what we can offer.



A Sideways Look

John Morrison

Signal Failure

It's an uncomfortable time for every company and individual with responsibility for our ailing railway network. Stephen Byers, for one, may have cause to regret his hasty invitation to the electorate: to vote the government out at the next election if there isn't a tangible improvement to the system. Genuine improvements - as opposed to cosmetic, vote-winning gimmicks - will probably take a generation to implement, not merely the remainder of this parliament.

From the start I had no confidence in rail privatisation. It seemed to be designed to benefit shareholders more than passengers. And now, with terrible irony, Railtrack shareholders are every bit as aggrieved as the passengers who are waiting for their dirty and overcrowd-

ed trains to turn up. The fact that pundits are harking back to a golden age of British Rail indicates just how far the service has degenerated.

The founding of our railway system, a century and a half ago, owed little to government and much to entrepreneurial energy. During the 'railway mania' of the 1840s, investors ploughed their money into what they believed to be the transport system of the future. By 1867 the lines were being run by no fewer than 476 rail companies, a number that gradually declined as the smaller companies merged. By 1923 our railway was in the hands of just four companies, which combined in 1948 to form British Railways. Instead of the alphabet soup

of tiny companies - competing, inefficiently, against each other - we had one nationalised body to run the show.

And that, I reckon, was about the last sensible decision to be taken over our railway infrastructure. In 1963 Dr Beeching wielded his infamous axe - closing half our lines and two thousand stations. He recommended that the remaining rail lines should be upgraded, though the government of the day was keener on saving money than spending it. We waved goodbye to our branch-lines and, embarrassingly, the Advanced Passenger Train. Designed to lean into corners at high speeds, it just made passengers sick. By the time British Rail was broken up, and sold off to the highest bidders, a once great transport system had been reduced to a skeleton service.

While this government looks no further than the next election, our railway system will continue to atrophy. There was never any need for privatisation. Then, as now, what was needed was a properly funded British Rail. I would love to believe that 2001 represents a real turning point. I sincerely hope that the Strategic Rail Authority's master plan will have the desired effect. And I'd like to believe in Father Christmas and the tooth fairy too.

THIS YEAR'S BIG GREEN WEEKEND will kick off with an evening of raucous entertainment at the Hebden Bridge Trades Club on Friday 15th February. The Valentine's Ball will feature the big brassy Bassa Bassa, all the way from the Leeds, as well as Hebden Bridge's very own samba band, Rhythmbridge. A wild night of dancing is guaranteed!

On the Saturday and Sunday, events will include: wind and solar powered DJ workshops, displays of alternative building techniques, oodles of stalls and information stands, a farmers market, the opportunity to test drive an electric car and the chance to have a solar powered hair cut!

There will also be some excellent workshops on offer over the weekend and during the following weekend:

15th - 17th February
all over Hebden Bridge



- 'Willow weaving' with Helen Blackwell and 'Stone wall building' with Bill Rofe - both on Saturday 16th February at 10am.
- 'Junk percussion' workshop for children

aged 6 and upwards to make musical instruments from 'junk' and to learn how to play them. Saturday 16th, 2-5pm. Ends with a musical procession. Limited places available.

• 'Hedge laying' with Peter Holmes, Saturday 23rd - Sunday 24th February, 9am to 5pm

For more details, prices and booking information, contact the ATC.

• There will also be a Tree Planting Day in Knott Wood run by Treesponsibility on Sunday 17th February, 10am to 4pm, and a Green Wood Working Day in Knott Wood (making besom, mallets, tent pegs, wood turning) also on Sunday 17th, 10am to 4pm. More information will be published nearer the time about the whole Big Green Weekend or check out the ATC website at: www.alternativetechnology.org.uk

A to Z of recycling

THIS MONTH WE BEGIN A NEW FEATURE ON THE GREEN PAGE - AN A TO Z OF RECYCLING IN CALDERDALE FOR YOU TO CUT OUT AND KEEP. Each month we will print a selection from a larger list of recycling facilities and tips which will soon be available on our website. We hope to expand and update it all the time, so if you have any additions, suggestions or alterations, please send them to Sharon at the ATC (sharon@alternativetechnology.org.uk or tel. 842121)

Just to be conventional, we start our A to Z with (no prizes for guessing) 'A' and

Aardvarks - All A to Z's start with aardvarks, but unfortunately there are currently no recycling facilities for aardvarks in Calderdale. Watch this space...!

Abandoned Vehicles - Environmental Health will remove abandoned vehicles - contact (01422) 392319.

Advice - For advice about recycling and a

guide to Calderdale's 50 bring sites, phone Calderdale Council's Recycling Officer, Lisa Wainright-McKie, on 01422 392385 (e-mail: lisa.wainright@calderdale.gov.uk) or look on the web at www.calderdale.gov.uk.

Try Waste Watch for general information on 0870 243 0136 or at www.wastewatch.org.uk or the Recycling Helpline on 0800 435576. Or see 'Recycling Information' on page 8 of your Yellow Pages.

Aluminium cans and foil - Wash, flatten and take to a recycling point. To find out where your nearest recycling point is phone Calderdale's Recycling Officer or log onto Calderdale Councils Website (see Advice above). Alcan do a 'buy back' scheme on Tuesdays 11.00am - 3.00pm Broad Street Car Park, Halifax. Alternatively, contact the Aluminium Packaging Recycling Organisation 0845 722 7722. For further information on how to organise the collection of aluminium

cans to raise funds for your school or other organisation, contact Environmental Health Services (01422) 392336.

Appliances (repairs) - Don't dump that old video - get it fixed! Try Lord Dales in Hebden Bridge (844148) or Valley Electronics in Mytholmroyd (885088).

For washing machine repairs, try Dakfix on 241666.

Architectural Salvage - Try Andy Thornton Architectural Antiques Ltd in Elland (01422) 376000 or log onto www.salvo.co.uk.

Art materials - Pennine Magpie in Halifax collects scrap material from small businesses and factories and supplies children's groups, schools and art projects. For further information, phone 344566 or alternatively try the Rochdale Play Resource Centre on 01706 640823.

Asbestos Waste/Removal - For information and advice phone the Environment Agency 0113 244 0191

BEYOND THE VALLEY...

Positive green news snippets from outside of the Calder Valley...

• Woking recreational centre in Surrey has recently acquired a fuel cell power system, the first commercial fuel cell to operate in the UK. It should produce less than one ounce of pollutants per 1000 kWh of electricity, compared with as much as 25 pounds for a traditional generator. The fuel cell unit will provide light, heat (or cooling) and dehumidification for the Pool in the Park recreational centre.

• Hampshire Constabulary is testing out the new Toyota Prius with a view to purchasing several for their new fleet. 300 of these new path-breaking petrol /electric hybrid cars have been bought recently by New York City and State.

Quote of the month

Jonathon Porritt, comparing the destructive potential of nuclear power and renewable sources of energy:

'No terrorist is going to make governments tremble by threatening to bomb a wind turbine.....'