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Our Woodworking Course Starts Soon!

Later this Spring, Root & Branch will be running a 11 week woodworking course, funded by the Oxfordshire Community Foundation. During this course, participants will learn how to use hand and power tools, how to design and make an item of their choice, and will visit a sawmill and cabinet maker.

This course is aimed at people who would like to develop basic or more advanced woodworking skills to use in their own homes, and for those who wish to work on larger projects at Root & Branch or elsewhere. It is also aimed at people who are interested in woodworking as a future career. We hope to run this course annually, or more frequently if it proves really popular!

Week 1 & 2 (30 June & 7 July)

Use of hand tools

Week 3 & 4 (14 & 21 July)

Use hand tools to construct a small item

Week 5, 6 & 7 (28 July , 4 & 11 August)

Use of Power Tools

Week 8, 9 & 10 (18 & 25 August & 1 September)

Design and construct an item of your choice using hand and power tools

Week 11 (8 September)

Guided Tour of Eynsham Park Sawmill and local Bespoke Cabinet Makers

The Root & Branch home-page - <http://rootandbranch.info>

Have a Corporate 'Challenge Day' at Root & Branch



The Zurich challenge team with their project, a pergola.

Over the past few years, a number of businesses, including Zurich and Intel, have held 'Challenge Days' at Root & Branch. These Challenge Days consist of a team of people undertaking and completing an activity in one day. Usually the activity is labour intensive and a little technical (for example making compost bins and constructing paths) and it requires the co-operation of the whole team to achieve the final goal. Most organisations that have used us have thoroughly enjoyed their Challenge Days, and Intel is returning for another day! Later this year, we are also offering a couple of days to Thames Water and Motorola. If your company would like to undertake a Challenge Day, or find out more about Challenges, please contact Liz Clarke at Root & Branch on **01793 780380**.

Visit rootandbranch.info today!

Do you have a site we could link to - with a reciprocal link back?

Portrait On Canvas Day, by Emma

A cold, bleak winter's day was transformed for us by Dorothy, an artist friend of Patsy's. She arrived with top quality paper, pencils, canvasses, paint and paintbrushes and treated us to a day of self observation and portraiture. We warmed up with drawing exercises of ourselves and a partner and then spent the rest of the morning trying to draw ourselves, with frequent visits to the mirror in the loo to look carefully at our faces before going back to the canvas to draw them.

After lunch we began to paint

over our drawings. The results were amazing. Each painting was



unique and totally different. The colours were bold and striking, the faces looked out fearfully from the canvasses, the likenesses were true. In the morning we had been tentative and shy, now we had

become confident, we were absorbed and quiet, there was little chatting, we were fully involved. Dorothy was a happy and inspiring teacher who had laughed with us, encouraged us and had painted alongside us.

I have been lucky to be able to take part in workshops such as this – others have been felt-making, candle making, basket-weaving and mosaics – whilst also spending time working in the garden and feeling that as a volunteer at Root & Branch I am helping other people.

Why I Came To Root & Branch, by Jamie

After over 20 years of substance abuse which started before I reached my teenage years I finally felt the time was right, after yet another heroin overdose, to come off the drugs. This was not the first time I had tried to change my life and I feel a big part of the reason it seems to be working is the help and support I'm receiving from the staff and volunteers at Root & Branch.

Set in beautiful surroundings, Root & Branch has become a safe haven for me and gives structure to my week and something to look forward to when time is going slow and I am feeling down. I feel no pressure to do anything I don't want to do but I find that working hard seems to help me relax and focus my mind whilst tiring out my body.



Jamie planting potatoes

Letter of Thanks, from Dave



I am writing to thank you for the computer. I'm new to them but am looking forward to working with it. Once connected to the internet I hope to be able to keep in touch more with my 10 year old daughter Jenna.

I am enjoying the pinball game and have installed a chess program. I have also installed a music studio program, with

which I hope to make some music.

In three days a computer man is going to install a CD/DVD writer onto the computer. I will enjoy the word processing facilities after years of a typewriter so once again thanks – I am very grateful.

(Thanks to Intel; Swindon, for the kind donation of four computers)

Being A Volunteer With Root & Branch, by Mary

I started to help out in the garden at Root & Branch last summer. It was a beautiful time of the year with much to be done. I was thrilled to be there when the bees arrived - we had a few giggles while dressing up in our gear to see the bees into their new home.

During the cold days of winter, kept warm and snug by the lovely wood burning stove, I have been busy with indoor activities such as mosaic tile

making and seed cleaning. Also it has been a pleasure to watch our beautiful well fed birds – one day, amongst other species, we must have counted over a dozen goldfinches.

Having well passed my allotted span of three score years and ten I love to be part of the ideas and discussions flying around – its good to feel 'in touch'. Now I am waiting for the summer to begin all again.



Rudbeckia, Summer 2005

Sponsored Walk, Tammy-Jane Sweeting

As the sun neared its height in a clear blue sky, I set off with the intrepid band of 'ramblers' to take part in the 2005 Root and Branch Sponsored walk.

Challenges were faced with styles, gates and electric fences clambered over, hills were climbed and nettles were overcome (well nearly there was just one slight detour). Through green fields we wandered with streams gurgling, birds singing

and a distant tannoy at a village fete for company.

Good company all round and lots of encouragement from everyone we passed the time enjoying the scenery and the thought of the barbecue on our return putting the tiredness in our legs at the back of our mind for a while.

Finally the farm is seen and we are nearly home and with a

spring in my step I jump out of my helper's arms and start running. Feeling fresh I cross the finishing line ready for more – my secret have a nap half way round and get someone to carry you – after all I am only small (18 months).

If you would like to participate in the 2006 Summer Sponsored Walk, please phone Root & Branch.

'Gardening, Mental Health and Well-Being' Conference



Cardoon, Summer 2005

Root & Branch, in association with Bridewell Organic Gardens and RESTORE, has organised a half day conference on 'Gardening, Mental Health and Well-Being' on Thursday 6 July 2006 from 1.00pm to 4.30pm at the Michael Young Building at RESTORE.

Speakers include Dr. Joe Sempik from Loughborough University who will give a presentation titled 'From Asylum Farms to Therapeutic Gardens: the Benefits of Working on the Land'.

Gardeners from the three gardening projects will give a presentation on

their experiences of attending a gardening project.

Lizzie Cambray from Swindon Community Mental Health Team and Liz Clarke from Root & Branch will give a presentation on how gardening meets the current social and mental health agenda., and

Cath Richuss from THRIVE will give a presentation about Quality Assurance and Professionalism in gardening projects.

Tickets cost £20 (waged) and £5 (unwaged). Call Root & Branch for more information.

SPRING EDITION



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Many Thanks in this issue to:

- Zurich for a donation of £5,000 towards the core costs of Root & Branch, and £750 towards a 'Team Challenge Day'.
- Mary Webb Trust for £250 for equipment for the Garden and for Craft activities.
- Intel for £300 towards a 'Team Challenge Day', and for a donation of four computers.
- Uffington Parish Council for £10 towards our new Blacksmith Forge.
- Thames Water for £250 towards a 'Team Challenge Day'

We are funded by numerous organisations, including:

- Woodward Charitable Trust
- Big Lottery Fund
- Zurich
- Allen Lane Foundation
- Awards for All
- CHK Charities
- Woodroffe Benton Foundation
- Garfield Weston Foundation

Become a Volunteer with Root & Branch

Are you looking to do something interesting, challenging and rewarding ?

Then become a volunteer for Root & Branch!!

We can offer you the chance to get involved (administration, fund-raising, gardening, crafts, as a trustee, etc.) with a friendly, supportive organisation..

Call 01793 780380 for more information!

Future Plans and Events with R & B

- 5 week Song Writing course
- Chinese Head and Neck Massage Workshop
- Visit Mattocks Roses
- Regular cookery activities
- Visit to TWIGS
- 11 week Woodworking Course
- Visit Winchester Chilli Festival
- Visit Blenheim Palace
- Art Workshop
- Summer Fête

Do you have:

- Blacksmithing tools
- Woodworking tools
- A sewing machine
- Spare plants

....that you would like to donate to Root & Branch?



Robert harvesting lettuce in the polytunnel