



Welcome to Bio Dynamight - the first edition of this newsletter series of the BioDynamic Agricultural Association of Southern Africa (BDAASA).

The purpose of this newsletter is to help us get to know our members better, keep in touch and inspire each other as we share the learnings and results of our practice.

We invite your contributions, comments and ideas. Please send these to Karen Mack at kpc@icon.co.za

EPIPHANY: THREE KINGS PREPARATION - A BLESSING ON THE LAND

On 6 January, a number of our members, encouraged and supported by Avice Hindmarch, joined farmers across the globe, by spraying the Three Kings Preparation on their farm perimeters as an offering to the elemental world, a blessing and ring of protection on the land.

Developed by practitioner, Hugo Erbe (1885-1965) - a German biodynamic farmer, this preparation made from gold, frankincense and myrrh (the gifts of the three kings) is sprayed on 6 January - the day the three kings paid their respects to the new-born Jesus (the epiphany)

The gold, frankincense and myrrh are mixed, potentiated and stirred in water for an hour like the biodynamic preps and this is then sprayed outward around the perimeter of the farm.

Avice made the preparation, which was applied by Ishaan from Reyneke, Duncan from Camphill, Gerard from Houmoed, Alix Clarck from Sweet Farm and Karen from Tourgar.

“I had been meaning to do this for many years. With the troubles in KZN, it seemed more important than ever to invite the spirits to return to the land and protect all that grows and lives here,” said Karen.

“I felt excited to be part of the global initiative. Avice’s prompting, the enthusiasm of our group, and reading about the experiences shared by biodynamic practitioners all over the world on various platforms, gave me a real sense of purpose.

“It was very connecting stirring the Three Kings Preparation with my team, enjoying the spirit and energy of Sunshine, my Induna and Nthatisi, our BD apprentice.



▲ *Ishaan at work at Reyneke*



▲ *Karen, Sunshine and Nthatisi at Tourgarr*

“While spraying the preparation I experienced a deep connection with the energies that reside on our farm, and an appreciation of the sacredness of life on earth. It was wonderful to share this experience with other members in our group and to know that this was taking place globally. There is something special about working as a collective. Together, we not only proactively contribute to the betterment of our own farm

organisms but create pockets of energy that radiate their energy into the world.

Board member, Rob Small, said: “I believe that frankincense, as smoke and fine substance (droplets) rising to the sun, also represent our best love and sacrificial lifting up of our imperfect efforts and aspirations. These are blessed and transformed into ‘food for the Angels’ that they

can work deeply back into matter, through us.”

For those of us in the Southern hemisphere, there is another opportunity to spray the Three Kings Preparation on 6 July 2022.



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

An interview with Avice Hindmarch



Meet honorary member since 1983, Avice Hindmarch, who amongst other activities still consults, designs and installs integrated chicken / herb / vegetable gardens and so doing, trains staff to manage them. Wherever she works, she teaches the art of design, how to make biodynamic compost heaps and spray the biodynamic preparations according to the Planetary Calendar.

Trained as a nurse, today this very active retiree lives in Plettenberg Bay where she still works in the local community and grows medicinal herbs on her son's nearby farm, from which she makes a fermented probiotic for horses and distills essential oils for soaps, balms and aromatherapy products that she produces at home.

In addition to her involvement in biodynamic farming, Avice continues to facilitate 12-day Permaculture Design Courses. She believes this course gives the practical ecological science that results in forming what

Steiner calls an 'Individuality'. This is what is required to carry Biodynamic practices and influences.

There is a growing network of homestead farmers along the Garden Route who challenge the status quo and ask 'burning questions' about the changing times and explore innovative natural farming methods, sharing information and products that reflect the perceived transformative process that has escalated since Lock Down in 2020.

Avice points out that it is interesting to review the 2020 calendar and to note that in February 2020 there were 15 cosmic challenge days and only 12 normal working days. March followed with the onset of a World LockDown/Corona Virus and in Garden Route, a severe outbreak/plague of Bragada Bugs that devoured all green leafy plants in her area.

In the Plettenberg Bay environs, there is a growing sense that the economy is changing from being needs-driven to contribution-driven; evidenced by 'gifting' of excess, swapping and seeking creative ways to opt out of the current money system. This is bringing the community together as people explore their talents and interests to make local resources available, rather than drawing on products from afar. A small group has formed to explore Biodynamics and the effects of working with the preps.

In this interview, Avice shares how she became interested in biodynamic farming. She also discusses biodynamic farming in relation to

regenerative agricultural methods, including permaculture, and expresses her views on how we could make BD more comprehensible in today's terms.

How did you become involved with biodynamic farming and BDAASA?

In the early eighties, I stumbled into a lecture at the Bryanston Waldorf School Market delivered by Dr Manfred Klett, one of the founders of a biodynamic community in Germany. He had a horned cow's head freshly slaughtered on the desk and said a lot of things that made no sense to me, but something rang true. Others in the group were totally captivated, asking questions. Curious, I started attending their meetings to learn more.

My mentor, at that stage, was Elizabeth Wertheim Aymes, who ran a Dairy farm in the Skeerpoort area. I could neither do or say anything right, so I often left her farm in tears, but still I persisted and became a member of the then very active society in the Johannesburg/Pretoria area. There were two Camphill Farms and the large Mooiplaas Farm in Pretoria East. Meetings were in the form of farm visits/walks and Goethian observations. Dr Hogaziel played an insightful role. I was completely out of my depth, as I was in the physical dimension and they were in the esoteric/process dimension, which at that time I could not perceive. I only saw physical worlds.



▲
Jean Malherbe and Avice



▲
*Etheric forces -
complementary
colours*



▲
New born calf

This period was followed by sanctions inhibiting overseas visitors coming to South Africa to lecture. I had missed the visits of Peter Proctor, Alex Podolinsky and other leaders in the field. When widowed and moving to the Cape in 2004, I connected with the Cape membership, based around Jean Malherbe in Wellington and the two strong Camphill Farms (Alpha and Hermanus). Isolated from the world, we realised we had to start learning from each other and would meet at the first Stellenbosch Waldorf School market on Saturday mornings, get together to make the preps at Bloublommetjieskloof and attend a four-day annual Winter Conference. Every person was required to prepare a presentation and a performance for the concert. The conference was the highlight of the BD year. Piet Gernaat especially learnt to play the piano accordion one year, such was the motivation. We loved getting together and had so much fun. The venue would rotate to the different farms, including Windhoek where we all slept in tents.

Those were good days. We were a volunteer group with a small membership contribution that covered the production costs of the quarterly newsletters containing insightful lectures, farm news and a list of members. All participation was seen in the light of being a 'spiritual deed'.

With the death of Jeanne Malherbe, the sale of the Bloublommetjieskloof farm and the establishment of BAESA and BDAASA, the dynamic changed to the more formal legal organisation, constituted as it is now, with its particular impact on farmers aiming for Demeter Certification and the Accredited Training program, etc. Alas, the interaction of members is different, but the whatsapp group is working to bring us together again.

Where do you see the synergy between biodynamic farming and permaculture?

Permaculture and Biodynamics both involve connecting of the three philosophical life principles, the three different energies that when working together transform substance and bring it to life.

1. Giving (up and out, Silica),
2. Receiving (down and in, Calcium) and
3. Interpenetrating between both/balance Clay) or the alchemical terms of Sulf, Sal and Merc.

These three gestures are also a foundation of Anthroposophy, as seen in Thinking, Feeling and Willing, that also correspond to our body's constitution, i.e. nervous system (Head), Metabolic, reproductive system (Limb) and Rhythmic system (heart and lungs) that links the two = LIFE.

The observation of the beneficial effects of applied Permaculture design is almost immediately noticed. When creating a system, one gets to feel the eco-intelligence kick in at a certain point. Then the system self organizes and what is needed comes in surprising ways. The system is energetically alive and becomes a Being. This has different will force, which I compare to the Calcium gesture (sucks in) and convinces me that Permaculture and BD need to work together and could inform each other.

Phenomenology teaches us to see the invisible energies at work in Biodynamic Practice, but this can take time and practice; originally I did not know where to look or what to look for? However, what Biodynamics holds over and above other eco-agricultural practices is the engaging of the creative etheric formative forces that are emitted from the Cosmos, using particular preparations in time with and in line with planetary positions and influences.

So you can understand why I design firstly using the practical Permaculture principles to bring the garden/farm to life and then progress into Biodynamics to guide the health, fertility and nutritional aspects further.

Looking into the future, Biodynamics practice will become increasingly essential to counteract the satellite and EMF pollution between our planet Earth and the rest of the planetary family in the Heavens. There will be a greater need for healthy plants grown in this way for nutrition in food and efficacy in medicinal plants to maintain physical, social and cultural health required to be develop our consciousness and so become Truly Human.

Through the rhythmic use of the preparations one develops a heart resonance with all the life forms on the farm. And when you least expect it, your organ of perceptions reveals itself. And you know *what to look for* and *where to look*, including looking at the social and cultural behaviour of the people on the farm.

What shifts are you seeing in farming in South Africa?

The big shift is a mood of inclusiveness, the embracing and valuing of diversity and polarity and

acceptance of all Eco practices that play into the 'Light' of nature and humanity, such as the participatory input and honouring of the employees and even partnerships in the business side of the farm. I recognize in many a deep longing for community, for living collaboratively on the land, and forming associative economies. Eco-villages and intentional communities are emerging. School and restaurant gardens appear. Money is used as a current of energy to promote others. That in turn forms healthy social circles and opportunities to fulfill one's needs emerge.

What are your hopes and dreams for BDAASA?

Personally:-
- to re-introduce the four-day BD away conference/workshop rather than one- day zoom sessions, at winter solstice with an overseas guest, e.g. J Code or Dennis Klocek from US,
- to offer a Star badge of recognition to be worn by farm workers who actually do the biodynamic work, spraying, using the calendar etc.,

that acknowledges their know-how. I would be happy to formulate this with others who have trained such farm workers.
- to introduce a 12-day intensive residential course on Biodynamics philosophy and practice open to any graduate/practicing farmer who is drawn to this esoteric practice and wants to do the inner work to understand it and issue an attendance certificate from BDAASA. The training would need to include the basics of the three-fold social order and Economics and Study of Man by R Steiner. This is the way BD is promoted in India.
- to be part of a research arm with those who want to pursue a particular question. Chromatographs, Sensitive Crystallisation etc. to share at the conference.

To keep Biodynamics alive, it takes enthusiasm, communication, circulation and motivation to work in the World.

