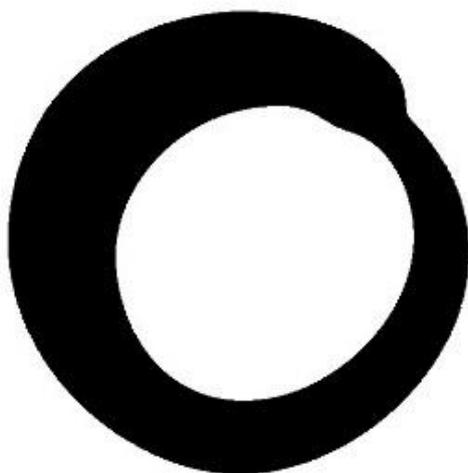


**Birmingham Friends of the Earth
and the Warehouse
Then and Now**

EDUCATION & PUBLICATIONS

**Researched and Compiled
by Carol Howarth**



LOTTERY FUNDED

Thanks

To all past and present BFoE volunteers and workers who have contributed to this project.
To the Wolfson Centre for Archival Research, Library of Birmingham.
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Contact details

Birmingham FoE

If you'd like to get involved with or keep up-to-date with BFoE's current activities, please get in touch.

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Facebook: [facebook.com/inthewarehouse](https://www.facebook.com/inthewarehouse)
<http://facebook.com/birminghamfoe>

BFoE Heritage project

Please contact us if you have any amendments to this booklet or want to get more involved in the heritage project – it will continue beyond the life of the HLF funding. In particular, we're looking for memories and/or memorabilia from the 1970s-1990s.

Email: heritage@birminghamfoe.org.uk

Web: <http://www.birminghamfoe.org.uk/bfoe-heritage/>

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Introduction

The first Friends of the Earth group in Birmingham operated from private houses in the early 1970s. By the late seventies they ran a paper recycling project that rapidly outgrew a house in Passey Rd, Sparkhill. In 1977 the group took the momentous decision that, in addition to campaigning for a better world, they would demonstrate in practical ways a better way of living. A derelict building in Allison St., known as The Warehouse, was acquired as a base for this and for many more work projects and campaigns. The building itself soon was seen as a model to demonstrate what could be done with a more efficient use of an older building. All those in the building worked together to demonstrate that a more cooperative way of organising could be successful.

Birmingham Friends of the Earth (BFoE) has now been at the Warehouse for 40 years and as part of the Heritage Lottery Fund Project celebrating this achievement a group of volunteers have spent time in the Library of Birmingham going through the archived material of BFoE. This largely covers the 1970's, 1980's and 1990's. The archive mostly consists of newsletters from this period, but there are also photographs and minutes. Topics for research were allocated to each individual researcher covering: Campaigns, Projects, Admin & Governance, and Education & Publications.

The results of that work is shown in a series of pamphlets, of which this is one. Together they constitute a record of the early years of BFoE and the Warehouse. We are however aware that the archives don't record everything. If you see any omissions or errors, please let us know and we can amend. We see these as 'living' documents.

Information taken from Newsletters: May 1976 – January 1983, July 1983-October 1988.

Birmingham Friends of the Earth educated people through its publications, courses, exhibitions, talks, protests, posters and badges.

1. Food/Nutrition/Health

Lyn Roberts, as a former occupational therapist was convinced that poor diet and lifestyle contributed to poor health. She wrote about the nutritional benefits of wholemeal flour, and the scourge of sugar in food. In *Sweet and Low – in sugar*, she writes, “Recent research links the increase in consumption of sweet food (and refined flour) with heart disease, bowel cancer, haemorrhoids, varicose veins, peptic ulcers, diabetes, dental decay, gallstones, cystitis and obesity.”

<p><i>March 77:</i> Lyn Roberts, Food Action Group, first produced leaflets: recipes for a “High roughage” diet, and where to get wholemeal bread and flour in the King’s Heath area, in “Wholewheat Baking”</p>
<p><i>1978:</i> Sweet and Low in Sugar cookbook by Lyn Roberts Second edition .25 p+.9p SAE</p>
<p><i>1978:</i> Education: Lyn Roberts planned courses on Health and Alternative healthier lifestyle.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Organic gardening course:</i> Tutor: Geoffrey Ayre (Foe member). Starts 4 April at Allison St. £2.50 for 6 weeks. • <i>Natural Health therapies</i> – 8 week introductory course on Tuesdays given by natural health practitioners. Starts 30 May £2.50 Topics: medical herbalism and naturopathy, spiritual healing, osteopathy and massage, preventative dental care, childbirth, reflex therapy, natural family planning, homeopathy. • <i>Changing food habits</i> Day school – attended by 60 people Workshops on sugar, bread, meat and fats
<p><i>1980:</i> Wholefood cookery course: Tutor – Helen Jellicoe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To show people the basics of wholefood cookery with grains, beans, nuts and seeds, alternatives to dairy foods, flour and bread, vegetables and salads, naturally sweet dishes, drinks.
<p><i>1980:</i> Sweet and Low cookbook, Third revised edition</p>
<p><i>1980:</i> Series of little booklets on environmental matters for 8-12 year olds.</p>
<p><i>1980:</i> Wholefood School of Nutrition – Wholefood (bi monthly magazine)</p>
<p><i>1981:</i> Wholefood School of Nutrition. Grain book, and Bread Book cookbooks</p>
<p><i>1981:</i> Wholefood cookery course – 8 sessions at Carrs Lane Church Centre, B4. Nutrition, cooking instructions and recipe ideas, where to get wholefoods from and other practical hints to help people wanting to change their diet.</p>
<p><i>1983:</i> The Down to Earth Vegetarian Cookbook by Roger McFadden. Birmingham Foe, Sept 83 .85p</p>

2. Conservation – Whales and Endangered Species

This was an important BFoE campaign in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

<p><i>1976:</i> Group planning protest vs House of Fraser of selling products made from rare/endangered animals including whales.</p>
<p><i>Nov 76:- Whales</i> – exhibition for Central Library</p>
<p><i>Dec 76:</i> For the Dec 11th-12th protest to mark beginning of the Antarctic whaling</p>

season, Birmingham FoE constructed a 12 foot sperm whale, to be carried along Grosvenor St, London, UK, followed by mourners dressed in black.
<i>Jun 78: Film: Save the Whale</i> , Greenpeace film on whales and whaling.
<i>Nov 78: 'Cuddly Whale' sewing kit</i> . Contains felt pattern, easy sewing instruction, to make a soft whale. 50 cm long. Plus colourful whale poster, info about whales and how you can help them, save the whale badge, re-usable folder. £2.50 + .20p p and p. Produced by FoE(Brum) Ragwork involved in designing the Kit.
<i>Nov 78: An article in the Young Observer brought over 4, 000 enquiries</i> , resulting in 50 orders per day for T-shirts, posters, cuddly whale kits and badges.
<i>Nov 78: Funding has finished for Environmental Information</i> . As a result, Pete Raine stops co-ordinating "whale and endangered species" from beginning of December 78
<i>July 79: 'Great Whale Train'</i> to London Sunday 8 th July. Birmingham FoE chartered the train which started from Wolverhampton.
<i>1980: Posters</i> . 1. Save the Whales 2. Here is the Earth, don't spend it all at once.
<i>May/June 80: Badges: Whale badges 10 p each</i> . Have 5,000 of them. (In connection with campaign to influence MP's)
<i>1981: Birmingham FoE. Saving the Whale, an environmental information pack</i> . By Nigel Dudley, Mel West and Pat Borer Booklets, posters, charts, games and activities about whales. £1.00

3. Conservation - Resources and Energy

<i>Apr 79: Course: 'Conservation - Why bother?'</i> At Naseby Centre. Starts 24 th April for 5 weeks - Pete Raine is contact. Introduction to conservation and Ecology. Lectures on resources, wildlife, energy and pollution.
<i>Jun 79: What on Earth are we doing at home?</i> Book on the environmental impact of domestic life.
<i>Aug 79: Pete Raine is going to London for a year's post graduate course in conservation</i>
<i>Sept 79: Course - Conservation: Uses and abuses of resources, energy and the environment</i> . 11 week course at the Naseby Centre, starting 20 th Sept. £1.50 registration, £3.00 tuition. Lesley Bradnam/John Newing contacts
<i>Jan/Feb 81: Urban Wildlife Group:</i> Staff: Alison, Ellen, Lorna and Julie are surveying sites of wildlife importance in the West Midlands. <i>Greensites:</i> Staff: Ian Bailey - Greensite accounts and volunteers. Dogs- Bryn and Woof. Greensites cleared up Aston Church yard. Greensites leaflet distributed to home helps in the inner city area, to plant trees and shrubs in gardens, to help elderly people cope with their garden.
<i>July 83: Birmingham FoE. Environmental Information Project. (BEEP) Premiere of our video, 'Wildlife in Cities'</i> plus Ian Collis of West Midlands County Council speaking on their Nature Conservation Strategy.
<i>1984: Birmingham FoE. Environmental Information Project. (BEEP) now in its tenth month of a one year MSC project to produce educational materials on pollution for schools.</i>
<i>1986: Birmingham FoE. Environmental Information Project. 'Teaching about Tropical Rain forest'</i> - A new teaching pack with video.

4. Recycling

Mar 78: Birmingham FoE. Environmental Information Project. Materials and Recycling Pack Some demonstration-scale alternative technology things are being built to show teachers what can be done in schools

Jul 78: Birmingham Foe. Environmental Information Project. Resources, Reclamation and Recycling; an education pack by Foe (Birmingham) with information on resources, consumption, waste, waste processing, recycling and design. £2.50
Contents: Each section contains activities suitable for use in schools.
Sections: 1. Growth 2. What we use 3. Waste 4. Recycling 5. Design 6. Options. Also Posters, Useful addresses

Feb 79: Birmingham Foe. Environmental Information Project. Birmingham Waste Directory. – a guide to what to do with things you can no longer use. How to dispose of household waste usefully and without harming the environment.

Nov 80: Series of little booklets on environmental matters for 8-12 year olds.

1980 Posters Set of 4 posters from Resources, Recycling and Reclamation – education pack.

Products : recycled writing pads, recycled envelopes and envelope labels

5. Nuclear

Dec 79: Educational Work BANG (Birmingham Anti-Nuclear Group) are getting many requests to give talks to schools, unions and other groups. Also we need an exhibition, informative posters and leaflets. At present only Nigel and Val(Stevens) can give talks. The demand is going to increase even more once Margaret Thatcher announces her expansion of the nuclear programme. So we need to expand our educational work and resources. BANGERS should try to get to one of Val or Nigel's talks to learn techniques.

Dec 79: Birmingham Foe. Nuclear source book A booklet containing annotated book list, films and addresses concerned with nuclear power, has been revised and updated. 20p.

Mar 80: Nuclear information file by some members of the warehouse team.
Detailed briefing document on nuclear power
Map of nuclear sites Nuclear waste leaflet
Alternative Energy sources leaflet
4 colour information poster and other leaflets

Oct 80: Nuclear source book A booklet containing annotated book list, films and addresses concerned with nuclear power, has been revised and updated. 20p.

6. Exhibitions

October 80: Birmingham FoE Exhibitions available for hire with £15 deposit, £5 hire charge.

- Lead Pollution
- Resources
- Home Energy
- Wildlife
- General
- Solar Energy

7. Talks

As well as a programme of talks at the Warehouse and advertisement of relevant talks in Birmingham, Val Stevens gave 3-5 talks per week out to schools, societies, WI groups and clubs on the issues pertaining to Friends of the Earth.

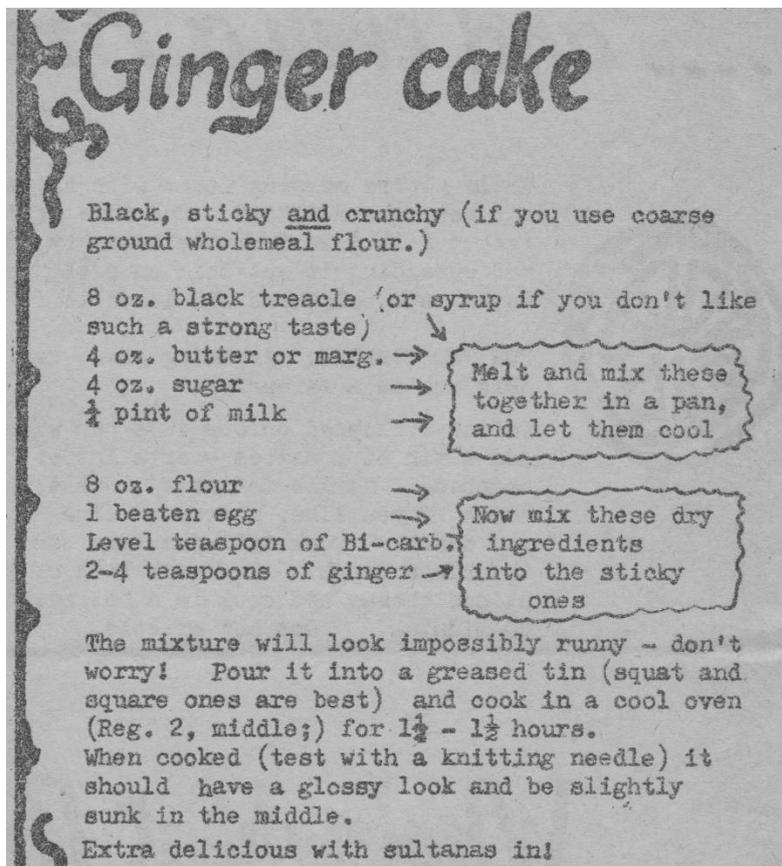
Examples include:

78: 11 th Nov for Food International Day. St Martin's Hall, 9am-3:30pm Topics: Effects on the environment of agriculture methods in developed nations e.g. loss of hedgerows, pollution by pesticides, and problems in developing nations, such as land erosion by overgrazing by the Masai cattle in East Africa.
78: Keith Francis on Ecological Planning
78: Tom Burke, Director of Foe on the limitations of Foe as a pressure group.
81: Nuclear power for beginners
81: 24 Feb Nuclear Waste Transport - to inform people of the major threat posed by the transport of nuclear waste through Birmingham. Given by Dr Len Moore of Wolverhampton Polytechnic and Val Stevens of the ANC, at Old Bull's Head, next to Digbeth Civic Hall.

8. Recipes

Times have changed, and it's now possible to buy low-sugar and high -roughage cookbooks in mainstream bookshops, and the cookbooks produced by BFoE are no longer in print. But we thought it would be fun to include a couple of the recipes. None of us involved in the heritage project have first-hand experience of making either of these cakes, so we can't personally vouch for them, but the Ginger Cake comes highly recommended by Val Stevens, one of our most long-standing volunteers from those times.

If you do make either of them please let us know what you think!



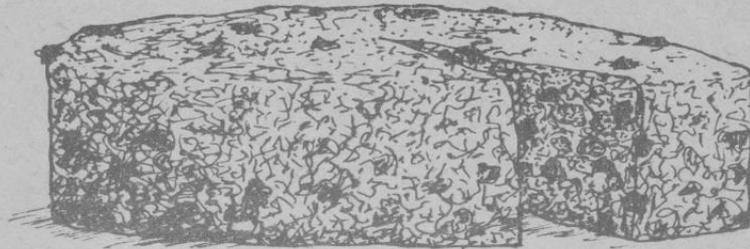
From *Wholewheat Baking* by Lyn Roberts. Birmingham Friends of the Earth 77.

Recipe recommended by Val Stevens, who sometimes adds crystallised ginger.

Christmas cake

From Sweet and Low - in sugar by Lyn Roberts. Third edition. Birmingham Friends of the Earth. 1980

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christmas cake

INGREDIENTS: 227 gms (8oz) sultanas
113 gms (4oz) currants
227 gms (8oz) raisins
227 gms (8oz) margarine
113 gms (4oz) brown sugar
284 gms (10oz) wholemeal flour
2 eggs
113 gms (4oz) honey
1 tbsp. marmalade
grated lemon rind
vanilla essence
mixed spice and nutmeg
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. baking powder

WHAT YOU DO:

1. Prepare a 20 cm (8") cake tin.
2. Cream margarine, sugar. Add eggs, marmalade, lemon rind, essences and stir well.
3. Add fruits, then flour and spices, and baking powder dissolved in a little milk. The mixture should be a soft dropping consistency.
4. Mix thoroughly, put in tin and bake at 300°F or Gas no 1 for 4 hours.

This recipe can be used for wedding, birthday, Christening or for any kind of special occasion. It is delicious, easy to make and a guaranteed success every time.