

AFAN WOODLAND
A Project to Recover Biodiversity
of Japanese Forest.

森を守る

生物多様性を取り戻すアファンの森での試み



THE C. W. NICOL
AFAN WOODLAND TRUST

introduction

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AFAN OF HISTORY

森、再生のはじまり



Mr. Matsuki tackling choked brush



C.W. Nicol trimming spindly trees



Yayoi pond : we dug, nature enlivened



Snow have tracks



Afan Argoed Forest Park, Wales

AFAN, AT HOME

With the recognition of our woodland as a pre-fectural trust, I feel as if I have merged into an identity that had always been waiting for me.

Many years ago, when I was walking through a magnificent forest of Japanese beeches, I became overwhelmed with an emotion that I could neither understand nor explain. I stood rooted, unbidden tears trickling down my cheeks. Had I found again the Garden of Eden? Was this the way Celtic Britain had looked, long, long ago?

In the 1980's I really began to despair for the future of Japan. So many old forests cut down, rivers crippled with concrete, wetlands filled with garbage, and people heedlessly chasing the money god above all else. It was at the peak of despair that I returned to my native Wales and saw the heroic efforts people were making to restore forest. I decided to stop simply complaining, and to do the same in Japan, the coun-try I had come to love so much. I took the name Afan from Wales, from the Afan

Argoed Forest Park, which so much inspired me.

We began buying up connected parcels of land here in Kurohime, Nagano, most of which had been cleared of trees, converted to farmland, and then abandoned. In some places there were spindly, untended plantations of conifers, and ther areas were completely choked with under- growth and tangled vines.



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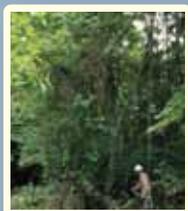
'Ghost Forest'



Mr. Matsuki cutting crowded woods



taken from the same spot a few years after



Cutting crowded brush



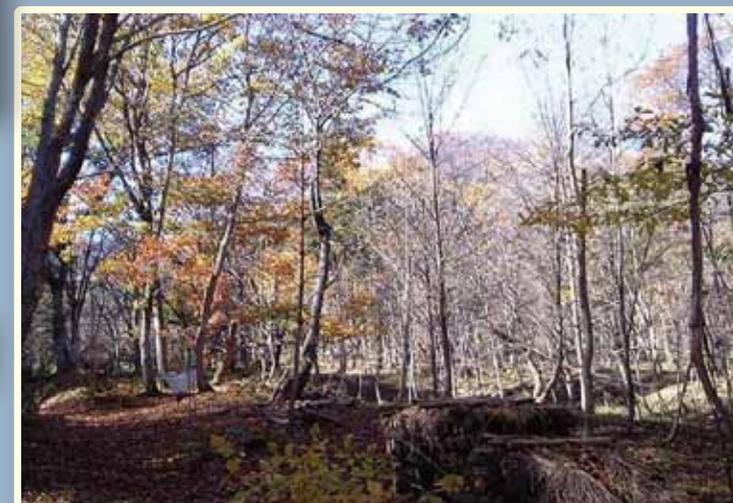
Clearing sick or twisted trees



replanting



Sickly woods cleaning and clearing



vigorous new woods

The area was originally covered with ancient forest. Huge old submerged deciduous tree stumps have been dug up, with very close tree rings, showing hundreds of years of growth.

This was cut down over the ages and the area was either converted to coppiced woodland used for charcoal and firewood, or was replanted with cedars.

At the end of World War Two, people returning to Japan from former settlements in Manchuria were ceded formerly

National Forest Land to convert to farmland. With primitive equipment, very few resources and long, hard, snowy winters this was a tough time for the people. Much of the new farmland failed and was deserted, returning to scrubby brush with a lot of small, hard-shelled walnut trees that suppress other growths.

With the coppiced woods also deserted this area became locally known as 'ghost forest' .



our activity

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DIVERSITY OF LIFE RETURNS

命の多様性は、戻ります

As love and effort are given to the woods, diversity of life returns.

From these woods we can take charcoal, natural creosote for organic farming, firewood, logs for sporing wood mushrooms, shiitake etc., wild mushrooms, wild mountain vegetables and eventually, this year, quality wood for furniture.



When we first started this work there were 7 species of wild mountain vegetable in our woods. In 2008, there were 137 species of wild mountain vegetables.

Research and study : To know the forest

All of our forest activities take place within our woodland. It is vital for us that all creatures of the forest judge the quality of the forest just as visitors judge how good the forest is for them. Continual research and study of the flora and fauna tells us how comfortable the forest is for them.



Owls first departure from their tree hollow in 2008



Winter mushrooms on logs Shiitake mushrooms on logs



Wild forest vegetables as tempura

Shiitake logs



Charcoal



Endangered Species



Turdus sibiricus

Cephalanthera erecta

Rana rugosa

Calanthe discolor

Glirulus japonicus



our activity

POLICIES OF CREATING THE FOREST

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永遠の森へー森作りのポリシー

Afan Woodland

3 fundamental directives for the creation of the forest

Diversity

To create a forest rich in biodiversity.

A forest that provides lots of different habitats. Previous policies for planting forest were mono purpose, primarily planted for timber. The creation of a diverse forest rich in flora and fauna invites greater use and habitat of which the trust endorses.

Balance

To grow a well balanced forest it is desirable to create a harmony between human activity and throughout the forest.

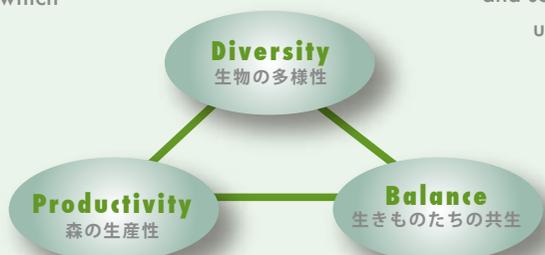
We must not forget past failures which considered the forest in isolation and solely as an economic unit. An open mind is required, combined with the wider possibilities that forests can provide. The Trust aims for flexible forest management with a combination of nature, (unlimited and unpredictable) and of human beings (limited but knowledgeable).

Blending these two can provide a flexible and sensible management for e.g., endangered species in the forest. Our trust is a world first for sister forests. Afan Japan is sistered with Afan Forest Park in Wales.

Productivity

To create a self sufficient, sustainable use of the forest.

Not only for products such as charcoal, honey, mushrooms and wild vegetables but also an environment beneficial for humans.



*One is unlimited and unpredictable
One is limited but knowledgeable.*



our activity

“LINKING WITH OTHER FORESTS OVERSEAS.”

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世界の森をつなげる



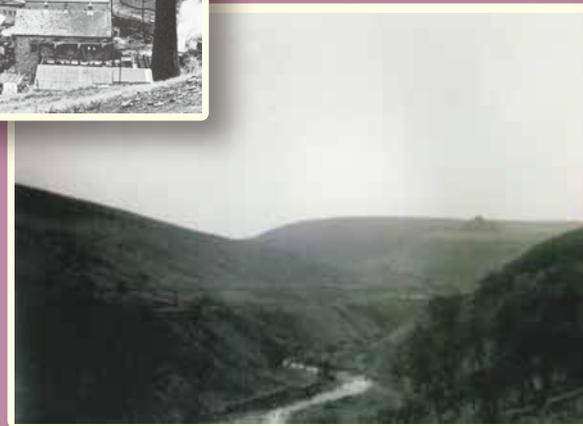
Chief Ranges Richard Wagstaff and C.W.Nicol at the 'Sisters Woods' ceremony



Environmental havoc and coal mining



and now



Afan Valley as it was



Newly planted trees and a revived stream in the Afan Valley

International Relations (Sistering Forests)

Our trust is a world first to become a 'sister forest' ; with the Afan Argoed Forest Park in Wales, U.K.

Our afan woodland gained inspiration from Afan Argoed.

The Afan Valley, about 15miles long, is in South Wales. This region, famous for high quality coal, saw mining as a major industry through to the 20th century. Forests were cleared, waste was dumped. When coal mining declined it left slag tips. In the



U.K. map

1960' s South Wales experienced a terrible tragedy. A slag tip subsided, wiping out an elementary school during class time. School teachers, children and ordinary folk joined in the work of tree planting, complementing the work of the Forestry Commission, begun in the late 1930' s and 1950' s. This became a major program of afforestation. The Afan Valley woodlands have long been used for educational purposes, and was the first school woodland plot in Britain.

Sistering of woods opens a window to encourage study and understanding of forest, and also to become a way to learn about other cultures. Our two forest management exchange valuable ideas and information and interact with local people and cross-cultural activities. This benefits and enriches all.



our activity

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FIVE SENSES PROJECT

森の再生から心の再生へ



Woodland happy-talk!

“From regeneration of the forest
to regeneration of the human heart.”

This project was carried out in the belief that the regeneration of the forest can also regenerate the human heart. Cared for and loved forests also transmit love to human beings.

All the creatures that habitate the Afan Woodland play an essential role in the forest's ecology. The Afan Woodland Trust believes that the forest plays an essential role in the well-being of humans, too—an ideal it seeks to demonstrate through the

Afan Woodland Project, which it operates under the motto “from resurrecting the woodlands to resurrecting hearts and minds.” Children who must endure either physiological or psychological disabilities have far too few opportunities to interact with the great outdoors, but with the support of the One by One Children's Fund, children from facilities that care for those with disabilities are given the chance to experience nature at the Afan Woodland

and thereby open their hearts and minds. The woodland remembers and is there to remind all of us of the importance of bio-diversity and the essential role we all play in the Earth's ecology.

... Our Afan-woodland's mission is “to restore the woods all over Japan for children, to be filled with laughter and the varieties of species.”





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