

## myvillages.org newsletter April 2008

### Launch of the new www.myvillages.org website

Sat 26<sup>th</sup> April at 19.00 at Wapke's studio in Rotterdam.

The new www.myvillages.org website will be launched this April - keeping the green myvillages.org frames, but now based on a content management system, which allows us to update the content more frequently. Besides general introductions to our diverse activities, and a list of all myvillages.org projects so far, we will also have three blogs which illustrate Antje's, Kathrin's and Wapke's projects in their home villages.



Special Thanks to Ariënné Boelens and Petra Dreiskamper for the design and programming, and supporting us by keeping the price low! A huge Thank You as well to Thomas Sprenger who until now managed our website since its launch in 2003.

Visit the new website on [www.myvillages.org](http://www.myvillages.org)

### A myvillages.org proposal: Honesty Box or Village Shop or Village Kiosk

After the residency at Grizedale Arts in the Lake District (UK) Wapke and Kathrin developed a subsequent proposal, which is a new initiative to further trade and exchange between the different rural networks we are involved in. The proposal is kept within six sentences:

*Open a village shop*

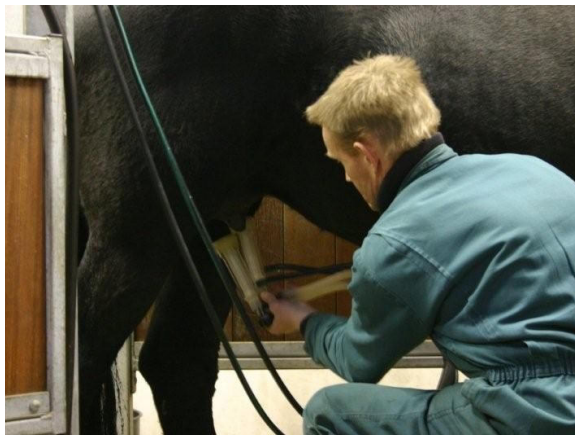
*To connect our rural links*

*And trade produce across places*

*To start a network and exchange of rural places internationally*

*As a joint initiative by myvillages, public works and Grizedale Arts*

*To use the agrifashionista TV project in 2008 to set it up and test it*



The several working titles for the proposal are currently: Honesty Box or Village Shop or Village Kiosk...

The discussion and development behind the proposal can be followed on the myvillages.org residency blog on [www.grizedale.org/blog/myvillages](http://www.grizedale.org/blog/myvillages)

## Village Shop Pilot for Grizedale's Agrifashionista project later in 2008

Where are the places and who are the people who produce things for our shop? During Dec07/Jan08 we made nine 4-6 minutes long trailer films at Lawson Park (UK), Wjelsryp (NL) and Höfen (Ger). Each film shows the background and production of such varying produce like miniature houses, horse milk powder and frogfootprint spoons. The films concentrate on the handling of tools and objects, and try to capture the story and knowledge that is particular to each object. We also filmed the products from other villages being used and tried by others in the other villages.

Both, the trailer and usage films will go online as part of the Agrifashionista project by Grizedale Arts, which creates an online tv interface to showcase around 20 film based commissions by different artists.

To watch and read more about our films visit our blog on the Agrifashionista website <http://www.agrifashionista.tv/blog/48>



Annemarie Lean-Vercoe has been the cinematographer for all films, and has done a phantastic job capturing people, stories and places. The 17 hours of footage will be edited into well paces short films!

## DE BESTE PLEK / THE BEST PLACE - The book



As the outcome of Wapke's project "DE BESTE PLEK / THE BEST PLACE" in the rural east of the Netherlands the book with the same title was published.

Last summer Wapke was travelling around the area with a solar-powered text display attached to her car, set down at spots that have been identified as the best place by locals. The display signalled "DE BESTE PLEK" and marked a temporary space for collecting stories, mappings, photographs of the view. Wapke did a cultural soil drilling at every place, with the help of the owners or users of the land. The book compiles the results of her travels and a local book launch was held on December 1st in the KNSTSPR, the municipal art space of the city of Hardenberg.

From January 2008 the book was internationally launched by Veenman Publishers,

Rotterdam (ISBN/EAN: 978-90-8690-144-9).

The book contains 75% pictures of the acts and views during the quest, has an English summary and also contains images from and information about the Dutch part of "I like being a farmer and I would like to stay one", which was included in Wapke's project.



## I like being a farmer and I would like to stay one ongoing in 2008

The project "I like being a farmer and I would like to stay one" by Antje and Thomas will continue throughout 2008. They will be bartering with a farmer cultivating asparagus in eastern Germany and with sheep farmers and a collectively owned farm in Shropshire, UK. A swiss part will take place in Fanas (Prättigau) this year - the region where Prince Charles spends his holiday to do water colour paintings.



In February the project's website [www.ichbingernebauer.eu](http://www.ichbingernebauer.eu) was launched. The project will be part of the *Village People* exhibition in the Wolfsburger Kunstverein (Ger) in summer. One of last year's films from Austria or the Netherlands will be shown as part of the exhibition, selected by a jury of Heiligendorf farmers.

Visit the website [www.ichbingernebauer.eu](http://www.ichbingernebauer.eu)

## Höfer Waren 2008

04. and 05. Oct 2008

*Höfer Goods* goes in its third year, and new produce will again be launched at the annual village fete on the first weekend in October. After focusing on frogs and porcelain in 2006, and pots/carriers and doyllees in 2007, we might look at the clay resources just outside of Höfen, which make the village somehow special, and were the reason for two brickworks factories in the past.

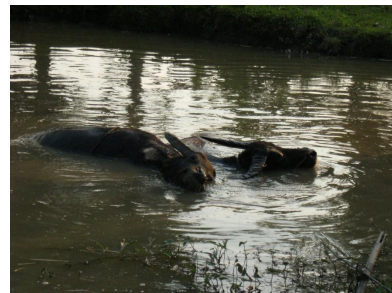
The films made for *Agrifashionista* will be running as well, and guests will be invited to handle produce from elsewhere in front of a camera.





### **The bibliobox keeps travelling**

In 2007 the box was mainly travelling in the Netherlands, the Dutch sponsored the set up of the box and needed special attention. The Bibliobox keeps on travelling this year and will go around Europe: in April it will be part of the "Cross Country" show at Wysing Art Centre's (UK) recently reopened gallery in Cambridgeshire (others in the show include public works, N55 and Jose Arnaud-Bello), it will go to the south of Poland to the private village house of Renata Mantorska and later be at the Wolfsburger Kunstverein (Ger) in July as part of the Village People exhibition in which I like to be a farmer... will also be present. The box is of course happy to leave Europe at some point, and there is an option to go to Thailand in the autumn, which would be exiting for the box. For the Thai host the travel costs are quite high, so we will see how it goes and we'll keep you posted. You can follow the trips at [www.bibliobox.org](http://www.bibliobox.org) and look at the growing archive. At the moment we have 75 different rural projects in the box, which meanwhile weights 60 kg!



### **DORP/VILLAGE/DORF - a research project on rural cultural spaces in relation to landownership and the cultural claim in farmer communities.**

In 2007 Wapke Feenstra has initiated a research initiative between myvillages.org, public works (art and architecture), Pietsie Feenstra (film history), Paul Roncken (landscape architecture) and Eric Venbrux (cultural anthropologies). The interdisciplinary and partly collective research will look into the origin of existing rural cultural spaces, and take the village Wjelsryp (NL) as a case study and site for field research. Wjelsryp is the home village of Wapke and Pietsie Feenstra. Last summer Wapke and Pietsie already started their research there with the help of schoolteacher Siebe Haven and their father Eerde Feenstra. This initial work has been further developed into a grants application to investigate and articulate concepts for new rural cultural spaces. We are now awaiting the reply of the Dutch Architecture Foundation and hope that they will keep their initial enthusiasm towards our ideas up. The project is scheduled for 2008/09.

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