

# CAMPHILL

# PAGES



VOLUME 30  
SPRING/SUMMER  
2020

## 80 YEARS OF CAMPHILL

### Welcome to Pages!

Camphill 80 - from 1940 to 2020 - two separate years of very different times of crisis..

From the 2020 Dialogue that didn't happen but did, in South Africa to The Mount Camphill 50th Birthday Gathering in Sussex that didn't happen but will next year!

And from the Virtual Celebrations of Camphill 80 years a warm welcome to Pages and hope you enjoy reading some remarkable lock down stories..!



**CAMPHILL**  
CELEBRATING  
**80 years**

### Thank you

To all of the residents, Co-workers, staff, volunteers, managers, trustees, families and friends who have supported the Camphill Communities through this exceptionally difficult period and especially to those who have chosen to remain in the UK a heartfelt thank you.



"A New Day Has Begun" Covid 19 and the Lantern Community. Pg 8



50 Years of The Mount and Looking to the Future. Pg 6



Camphill Milton Keynes - Keeping Connected with Friends and Family. Pg 13



Camphill Schools Early Years. Pg 11

# WELCOME

## Contents

- 01 Welcome
- 02/03 Reflections on Camphill Dialogue
- 04 The Alliance / Newton Dee
- 05 A Long Way Up / Our New Day-to-day
- 06/07 The Mount
- 08/09 The Lantern Community /  
The New Normal
- 10/11 80 Years Ago
- 12 Chardon's Story
- 13 Maggi's Story / Zoom Room
- 14 New Lanark / Loch Arthur
- 15 80th Year / The Message
- 16 Larger than Life Cheque / Life in  
Camphill on Film
- 17 A Rare Breed / Coronavirus:  
Contingency, Care, Community
- 18 Clanabagan Keep on, Keeping on /  
Time for reflection
- 19 The Boy who Lived / Camphill  
Budapest
- 20 A Message from the Chairman

We are marking 80 years of Camphill Communities with this issue of Pages, we can't celebrate it outwardly prevented by the Coronavirus pandemic, sadly The New Lanark Camphill 80 Event for example on June 1st cancelled for the time being, but there is much to ponder and much to celebrate inwardly as well as a pause to think about the significance of the building of communities with children, students and adults over the last 80 years, a time of great social and economic prosperity in many countries where Camphill grew and developed.

Historians are beginning to comment that this virus dominated year 2020 is the final ending of that 'social and economic post war contract' which began in the 1940s with the rebuilding of shattered societies and continued to develop over all our lifetimes in higher standards of living and attempted eradication of poverty. It has now come to an end point where we realise that this contract has had despite great advantages in so many fields some dangerous side effect consequences on the environment with for example industrial farming practices and in countries supporting this prosperity with social justice issues and oil wars.

It is a phenomena that Camphill Communities always tried to judiciously use their resources from the beginning including car sharing to income sharing, from sustainable land practices like Biodynamic farming and gardening to a Threefold Social Order practice which created an equality in the working, social and cultural life where all could participate. A kind of cautious

integration. Although many things have changed in the communities and sometimes out of all recognition, this is still a hallmark that Camphill aspires to and in gathering a set of Camphill Values that the Association of Camphill Communities has worked on tirelessly to express for our time (see the last two Pages Issues) as we mark this 80th year.

Another marking as can be seen in this issue is The Mount in Sussex celebrating its special 50th birthday, the first Camphill College for students with special needs in the UK. It is an interesting fact that Camphill began with a School in Aberdeen in 1940 and went on to establish a Village Community for adults in Yorkshire, Botton in 1955 rather than create a college for its growing children. History notes that Newton Dee couldn't become such a college because of the insistence of the Scottish Power Board to cross this Camphill property with power cables in 1960, thus badly affecting vulnerable people which was pointed out in the national press in a campaign to remove these cables by Dr Thomas Weihs one of Camphill's founders, gravely concerned with the effect of these cables on epileptic people for example.

A Camphill first as subsequent research has shown the detrimental effect of high power electric cables on certain conditions of epilepsy.

There is another element that we could explore and that is the resilience of a Camphill place in times of difficulty.

The extended Camphill household can lock itself down and care and support given to all its members.

And as a footnote, it is also the 80th birthday of the first use of the term 'Organic Farming' described in a book "Look to the Land" by Lord Robert Northbourne taking his inspiration from the self sufficient farm organism unit producing a healthy surplus and pictured in Rudolf Steiner's 1924 Agricultural Course which gave birth to Biodynamic Farming and Gardening practice. Camphill been a cornerstone in BD land work with residents and co-workers alike since the beginning.

Tom and I hope you enjoy this special edition of Pages - it might have come to you online as printing copies are severely curtailed "for the duration". Pages can be accessed on the Issuu publishing website. Keep safe in these challenging moments where thinking of each other across great distances sometimes is the order of the day!

**Best Wishes,**  
**Vivian Griffiths**



The residential community is slowly changing too. As government funding only covers 15% of the costs of running the school, constant fundraising is required to keep going.

Day by day, our group dwindled in number as delegates rescheduled their flights and departed. As numbers reduced, the remaining diehards bonded together into a closeknit group and made the most of the time spent together with long and wideranging discussions about the problems all Camphill communities face wherever they are in the world.

Between the delegates that remained there were wide ranging conversations that returned repeatedly to the common themes of maintaining and building social cohesion, succession planning and growing a shared vision of what it means to be Camphill today. These themes were common across the regions.

On my last day, Friday, we had a final session after breakfast with Tim, CEO Milton Keynes, giving us a summary of the presentation he had planned to give at the conference. We crossed the road to the clifftop park in front of the hotel where there was a long curved bench exactly the right length for the ten of us, looking out to sea. Sam and Jeanne-Marie, CEO and Principal of Hermanus School and Farm, joined us too.

A wonderful setting for Tim's talk which described the many challenges they have faced in his community which they are overcoming by building on shared values and vision, communication between the different groups, inclusive strategic planning, developing the cultural sphere and working on what is now actually meant by, and what is experienced in, 'community'. A lively discussion followed against the background of rolling waves and a passing dolphin.



This Dialogue had a very distinctive quality, compared to the last one I attended in Newton Dee three years. It was a very special time with a unique sense of companionship among those of us who stayed on to the end. The stunning location, the wonderful African welcome and the warm sun cast a glow over us all.

I am glad to say that everyone made it safely home again at the end of the week, despite cancelled flights, closing borders and empty airports.

It was a memorable week.

### By Peter Bateson

The Camphill Dialogue 2020 programme was cut short almost as soon as it began due to the Covid-19 emergency. While many of the participants choose not to travel to South Africa others returned home as soon as they could. Approximately thirty people chose to stay comprising a cross section of Co-workers, managers and external board members. The following days felt like a retreat, with conversations developing organically. In order to protect the Camphill Community at Hermanus we remained at the hotel in the small town of Hermanus nearby. There was a carefully managed visit to Camphill Hermanus and trips to see African penguins at Betty's Bay along the spectacular coast road and the town of Stellenbosch. In various interchangeable groupings during the day we shared regular meals, walks, swimming, an evening barbecue and a gala dinner in a beautiful mountain-top restaurant. All of these activities were accompanied by

continuous conversation, sharing, learning and reflecting, both in relation to our own personal lives and our involvement with the Camphill community worldwide. Friendships were renewed or made new and through our prolonged and in-depth exchanges one could experience that the constituent parts of Camphill were speaking to and learning from each other through the window of the individual. With the enforced isolation I have been able to reflect widely. I became increasingly aware of the challenge for myself to be extremely cautious and scrupulous in trying to see things as clearly, coolly, objectively and openly as possible, especially as I am now retired and involved at a slight distance to the daily life. Socio-economic developments in the past decades have increased the sense of urgency for most people to have clear financial security and independence, which for those of us who joined Camphill in earlier times was not a priority, or even a concern. This has led to the most notable shift in the make up of Camphill Communities in the past few years in the UK with the majority now operating with a predominantly employee led model. But this raises the fundamental question, how can the culture of living according to the Fundamental Social Law survive and be resurrected, or must we consign it to history? As a matter of choice, free will and conscience I believe it is still possible for people to commit themselves to a non-salaried co-worker economic circle and where it is wanted to continue to operate this as a sub-system within the overall financial structure of a Camphill centre. I have heard fellow Camphillers say the Fundamental Social Law is something for the future. I would dearly love to understand how this might be possible. For many the challenge is and has been to maintain the momentum of the spiritual, cultural, social and economic principles of Camphill within the prevailing

organisational structures. While embracing a multiplicity of relationships that committed people can have to Camphill in wanting to share its ideals and aims. It was clearly articulated by everyone present that Camphill has an urgent task to continue to promote the value of meaningful, creative and productive work in the lives of supported people and to help wider society to understand how essential this is for individual and community wellbeing. This urgency also applies to Camphill's fundamental mission to maintain its stewardship of the land and caring for the environment, a task in which supported people are equal partners. Hearing Tim Davies' presentation on the final day I was heartened to discover that a new sense of shared responsibility can actively be created and cultivated by renewing the vision of what the individual can bring in their commitment to community regardless of their role.

# IALOGUE

## Reflections on Camphill Dialogue 2020

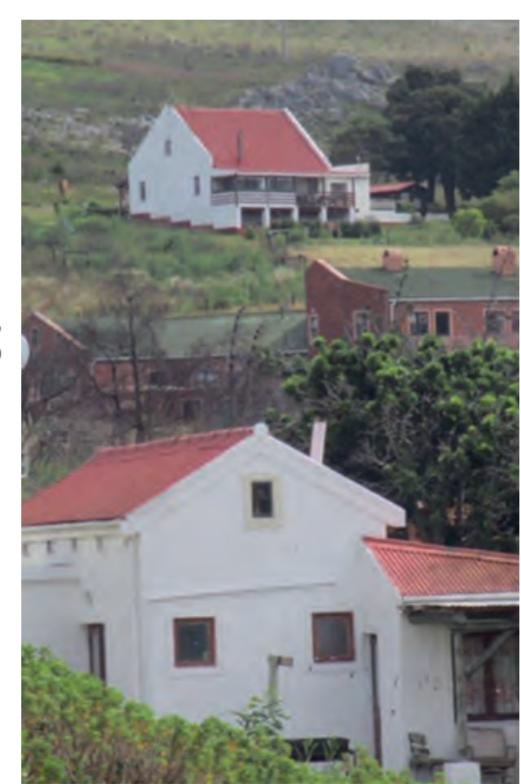
By Aideen O'Malley

*Hermanus is a pretty coastal town about 120 km east of Capetown, with a stunning seafront with glorious views along the coast and a reputation as the best place in the world for land-based whale-watching.*

But even Hermanus has its dark side in the shabby shanty towns around its perimeter. The contrast was stark between the beautiful homes of the comfortable middle classes in Hermanus and the rickety tin shacks with minimal amenities where the bulk of the population lives. Relations between the races seemed relaxed and friendly but economic segregation seems to have replaced the racial segregation of older times.

Our first day of Dialogue was also our last. As the morning progressed, with delegates actively reconfiguring their travel plans, it rapidly became clear that continuing with the conference was simply not possible and it was unanimously decided to declare the Dialogue over at the end of the first session. Not, however, before the keynote speaker, Christo Brand, had the opportunity to deliver his address 'Mandela, my prisoner, my friend'. Christo began his long friendship with Mandela when he started work as a prison guard on Robben Island at the age of 19. Behind the many anecdotes of prison life lay a strong theme of the power of mutual respect in laying the foundations for the future of the country.

With Geoffrey Wear of the AoCC at the wheel of a minibus we had the opportunity to visit Camphill Hermanus once the school had closed for the holidays. To reduce the possibility of inadvertently transmitting the CV19, we toured the Community by



minibus, keeping our distance from staff and residents.

We could see the remarkable recovery from the bushfire that roared through the campus last year and the results of the huge effort made to prepare for the arrival of the Dialogue conference. It is a beautiful site, with attractive buildings dotted across a wooded hillside, now surrounded by a high fence and electrified gates in response to the need for increased security.

Camphill Hermanus was founded in 1952. During the apartheid years, the community was not permitted to take in black or coloured residents and any black or coloured staff had to leave the premises every evening. Now the school educates 100 black pupils every day from the shanty towns around Hermanus, collecting them from their homes by minibus and providing meals that might otherwise be missed.

# 80 YEARS OF CAMPHILL

## New Horizons for the Alliance

By The Alliance for Camphill Camphill

### Outreach

From the outset we recognised the need to engage in a conversation. We have done this by developing a strong social media presence which we use to stimulate debate on social care issues. We also try to engage in dialogue with a wide range of individuals and organisations. We do this in order to listen to the experience of others and to promote the work of Camphill.

### Our next step

At the Alliance members' meeting in 2017, we decided to pursue a new line of work, community development, with a view to founding a new Camphill Community. We felt that the Alliance had the freedom and position to register a new charity - called Alliance for Camphill Community Development - to pursue this purpose. We visited a range of Camphill centres to discover their distinctive features and what worked and what didn't work. We also tried to learn from places with similar aims and principles to Camphill such as Pericles and Ruskin Mill. The two things we identified were the importance of evidence based staff training and the need to have suitable legal separation of the land holding and community.

### New (legal) structures

We wanted to explore what a new Camphill might look like. To do this we spoke to a range of organisations including Je Ahn of Studio Weave (an architecture firm), people involved in Shared Lives (where all the paperwork and administration is done by Shared Lives rather than the people providing the direct support, others involved in co-housing projects, Ruskin Mill, and perhaps of greatest interest to us someone involved in Community Land Trust Schemes.

*Community land trusts are one form of community-led housing. Projects that are genuinely community-led all share common principles:*

1. *The community is integrally involved throughout the process in key decisions like what is provided, where, and for whom.*

2. *There is a presumption that the community group will take a long-term formal role in the ownership, stewardship or management of the homes.*

3. *The benefits of the scheme to the local area and/or specified community group are clearly defined and legally protected in perpetuity.*

This structure would seem to reflect the original intention of many of the Camphill land holding entities. There are many decisions to be made, but choosing the right legal structure will provide the best foundations on which to build.

## Corona Times and Social Distancing

By Simeon Newbatt, Newton Dee

Newton Dee has closed a lot of its workshops leaving only the necessary (food production and distribution) ones open, this means that the majority of people are being asked to stay in their houses. The positive side of this is never have our houses been so clean and our gardens so pretty. Given the different dynamics in each house, each household is encouraged to create a routine that suits them best.

Newton Dee is normally a very busy place with a lot of different social and cultural activities going on. These are sorely missed at the moment. To keep spirits up, communication flowing and common activities going we have started doing many different things.

We have an ongoing competition. Every few days we set a challenge for each household. These have included tasks such as draw your house parent(s) or a funny dress competition using only things from in or around your house.

Finally we have been centrally collecting photos and videos sent in by all the houses, collating them and then putting them back out to the community through our diary sheet, an outside photo wall and our weekly video news blog.

As I write I am also preparing to make a huge wooden 200 piece puzzle where each piece has been painted by a different



# LOOKING TO A COMMON FUTURE

## A Long Way Up

By Tom Marx, Tigh a'Chomainn

Vivian asked me to write something for this edition of Pages. A summary of our journey putting this edition together whose original theme was "Dialogue and Celebration".

We had planned to produce an edition of Pages and preparations were under way when Covid 19 hit. The reassurance of the familiar was quickly removed and we had to decide whether to produce Pages or not.

From the outset our intention has been to bring Camphill together so that we can share our stories even while apart. Right now that seems more important than ever. We also wanted to reflect the reality that current events are really very unsettling and at times in the recent past seemed insurmountable.

This is true whoever you are, an individual being supported, a co-worker, manager, trustee. It also became clear that within Camphill there was a story of a strength and resilience that has enabled the Communities to respond with great dignity to each person as an individual.

A personal parallel has been the world of cycling. Cyclists think only of the next peddle stroke, the next mile. But not that there are 100 more miles to go.

Early on a July morning in 2019 the cyclists of the Tour de France were preparing for a

mountain top finish on the Tourmalet; I too was preparing to climb the Tourmalet.

With the mist rising from the trees lining the road that takes you out of St Luz I started. There are no climbs like this in the UK, and so nothing to prepare on. When the longest climb you have done is 5km up then 20km feels like a very big ask.

There were lots of people, on bikes; in campers and tents at the side of the road; police cars rush by with the sirens screaming leaving you no room for a wobble. As you get higher the parties start with music and people shouting their encouragement. I didn't really expect to make it to the top. At a certain point though you can't stop, you keep turning over the pedals, you reach the next corner, and the next. And all of a sudden you're there.

As I look out at the sun and dream of riding my bike in the Pyrenees, this story seemed one way I could share how dealing with Covid 19 has felt to me. At times ill prepared, at others stuck in an alarming situation, we have kept going and going with no respite. In the end we have all found that something, that extra peddle turn, that will get us to the top.



## Our New Day-to-day

By Tom Marx, Tigh a'Chomainn

On the 18th of March Tigh a'Chomainn changed. We stopped going to work. Everybody stayed at home. And if we are being truthful some of us were very worried; even afraid. We started planning; we got creative. Seven weeks later we remain concerned. But we are getting on with life, living from one day to the next, adapting the routines that help to keep us feeling safe and well. Doing new things, discovering corners of Peterculter (our little bit of Aberdeen) that we never really knew, playing pool, watching movies and enjoying the sun.

As with many people around the world our gardens have become a focus of our attention.

Some of us are managing to do the Joe Wicks workout, while others prefer to go for a walk.

We know that having control is important, so we have encouraged people to get

involved and to take control of what they can. From the outset we knew that most of us would not be able to go the shops so we have been running our own small shop twice a week. We also have a cafe once a week with a new menu each time.

Margaret's hair cutting skills have been in demand.

From a governance and management perspective events have felt overwhelming at times, insoluble at others. In Scotland managers from all of the Camphills have been meeting twice weekly by video to talk through problems and offer support and advice to one another. This has made things a great deal easier and at Tigh a'Chomainn we do not feel that we are alone as a board or management group. Our local partners at the Health Protection team and local authority have also been very supportive.

There is one amazing group of people I must pay tribute to. They are the

Co-workers who make up the bedrock of our life at Tigh a'Chomainn.

Many were asked by their families and even governments to return to their home countries. This was very understandable in the circumstances. It speaks volumes that all choose to stay despite this considerable pressure and our Community is indebted to their commitment.

Thank you.



# 80 YEARS OF CAMPHILL

## 50 Years of The Mount and Looking to the Future

By Peter Bateson, Chair of Trustees

*Warmest congratulations to The Mount Camphill Community on reaching its fiftieth anniversary - its Golden Jubilee!*

To think of it in terms of half a century really highlights the great achievement in terms of sustainability and continuous renewal and development. It is also 5/8 of the entire lifespan of the Camphill Movement so far.

I first got to know The Mount in 1976 as a newly appointed teacher at the Sheiling School Thornbury. The Camphill schools and colleges in England and Wales had regular Regional Teachers' Meetings, circulating round the different places. A lot of serious study was carried out and also valuable sharing and learning from each other's experiences. From the beginning a great effort was made to sustain the highest standard of education and training.

Those high standards and deep commitment to the College Impulse have remained undiminished ever since, through many changes of personnel, policy frameworks and inspection regimes. The demands and expectations from regulatory bodies have increased relentlessly over the years and it is testament to the commitment, faithfulness and sheer hard work of the education and care teams that The Mount has consistently scored highly in all inspections by Ofsted and CQC.

Since its founding in 1970, The Mount Camphill Community has devoted all its efforts to supporting and encouraging young people with a wide range of learning disabilities in their learning, growing, emotional and social development, and acquiring independence, first as a school and later as a specialist independent college.

In common with other Camphill schools it started out as a boarding school and like all boarding schools it inevitably had a certain character of self-containment, mainly because the students were not in their home area with their families nearby. It was really only truly home to the resident long-term co-workers. What a contrast to the present situation fifty years later! Now, with much greater numbers of non-resident employed co-workers coming in from the locality, there is now also a new settled group of Cohousing community members for whom The Mount really is their home.

This forms part of a natural development whereby the addition of a Cohousing community endeavour has brought



The Mount's biography in a sense 'full circle', including the imminent step beyond the perimeter into the high street of Wadhurst, where the newly acquired Pond House is currently being prepared in order to accommodate more adults.

The Mount is currently very consciously going through a process of evolution in its development, looking back over fifty years of achievement and already actively engaged in nurturing new seeds for the future. The Board of Trustees stands wholeheartedly alongside everyone involved in this exciting process. The development of Pond House is very significant in the context of the whole past, present and future development of The Mount.

Looking outwards, however, does not mean that 'the centre cannot hold'. As long as College and Cohousing are living side by side in partnership, there is potential for a whole spectrum of opportunities for living and working styles and practices to coexist. It is an honour and privilege for me to be associated with The Mount in this exciting phase of its development and I look forward to sharing in the ongoing pioneering from within which is currently underway. In this milestone year, celebrating half a century of achievement, we can feel inspired, rejuvenated and reinvigorated when looking to the future.



## LOOKING TO A COMMON FUTURE



# 80 YEARS OF CAMPHILL

## “A New Day Has Begun”

### Covid 19 and the Lantern Community

By Carol Cheeseman, Operations Manager

*It is with inspiration and pride that I write of the endeavours of us all in the Lantern to come together, with a resilience of purpose, in the true reflection of our Community.*

Difficulties have been the loss of some co-workers, and this will present challenges in the coming year. Success has come in the form of creativity, and utilizing resources. The community itself is in quarantine, houses attached to one workshop as part of the social distancing measures.

The Shop has become the Hub of the community, under the motivational lead of our newly appointed Retail Services Manager. We are running shopping orders for the houses, of food, fresh veg, bread and milk, creating a meaningful workshop for the companions. Deliveries are taking place to local customers, who are self-isolating. A tuck shop, Library of Puzzles and Games to swap, has replaced Life skills on a Saturday.

The Bakery has responded to the Co-op to provide a delivery of bread for some of its community stores. Staff have adapted and have responded to the need.

Rhythm and Routine go hand in hand, but our Companions are an example to us all.



# LOOKING TO A COMMON FUTURE



*As the world takes stock, of what its become,  
We return to the roots, where Camphill began,  
By coming together and responding to need  
With a new day of dawning, like sowing a seed,  
Rhythm and Routine, still prevail,  
The office is still receiving the mail,  
It's a worrying time for you all from afar,  
But the Companions are fine and raising the bar,  
With social distancing and Infection Control,  
In our beautiful grounds, we're still able to stroll,  
By way of a mention, the elusive PPE,  
If it comes to fruition, it would be nice, to see,  
As we respond, to the challenge that  
Covid 19, brings,  
In the stillness, we can hear, the tune,  
the songbird sings,  
With the Art of creativity, we adapt each task,  
into a weave,  
It is truly inspirational in what we can achieve,  
We can find ourselves reflecting on all  
the doom and gloom,  
But let us not despair, we can  
always revert to 'zoom'  
The future as we know it will be  
in a different space,  
The Lantern as we know it will be in  
its rightful place.*

CGCA

## What does the future hold for our families?

Families are beginning to talk about the future in the imagined “new normal”.

We wonder how the evolving situation in the world will be reflected in our communities. Some residents are amongst the more vulnerable. How can they be shielded if others are coming and going?

Some people have gone home for the moment. Will they be able to return to their communities? When? Will they need to quarantine before rejoining their friends?

Others have remained in their communities. When will they be able to visit their families, and will they then be able to return?

Once we are all allowed out again perhaps one way forward would be for our relatives to go out in larger groups with a support worker to a less populated place, so that social distancing - and hand washing! - could be ensured.

As families we have many questions but we remain hopeful that good solutions will be found.

Camphill Families and Friends.



# 80 YEARS OF CAMPHILL

## An 80th Whitsun Birthday for Camphill

By Vivian Griffiths.

*Eighty years ago this Whitsun Camphill moved from Kirkton House to Camphill Estate where Dr Konig's colleagues and the first group of Children moved in 1940. There were many birthday celebrations planned for this June, giving us part of the theme for this edition of Pages. Sadly these have been cancelled or delayed for the time being.*

This includes the festival at New Lanark, the site of Robert Owen's remarkable working, education, social and cultural Mill Complex, that was such an example of good practice at the birth of the Industrial Revolution. Owen became one of the 'Pillars' of Camphill's endeavour along with Amos Comenius and Count Zinzendorf from the central European religious community builders of the 16th and 17th century, figures that inspired Dr Karl Konig when the idea for a community grew from idea into reality that would work where the image of the human being was threatened.

The New Lanark site with its remarkable facilities of meeting rooms, accommodation and hospitality in the glorious setting of The Clyde Falls south of Glasgow were a fitting backdrop to a number of inclusive conferences that took place in the new century which began with a modest remark by a co-worker at Newton Dee at a Summer Conference marking the centenary of Dr Kong's birth.

He mentioned he was taking adult education groups from the Newton Dee to New Lanark to learn not only more about the personality of Robert Owen and the birth of the Cooperative Movement but witness the rebirth of the semi derelict mill and housing site through imaginative Job Creation Projects in an area of high unemployment as mines closed and social deprivation threatened the local community.

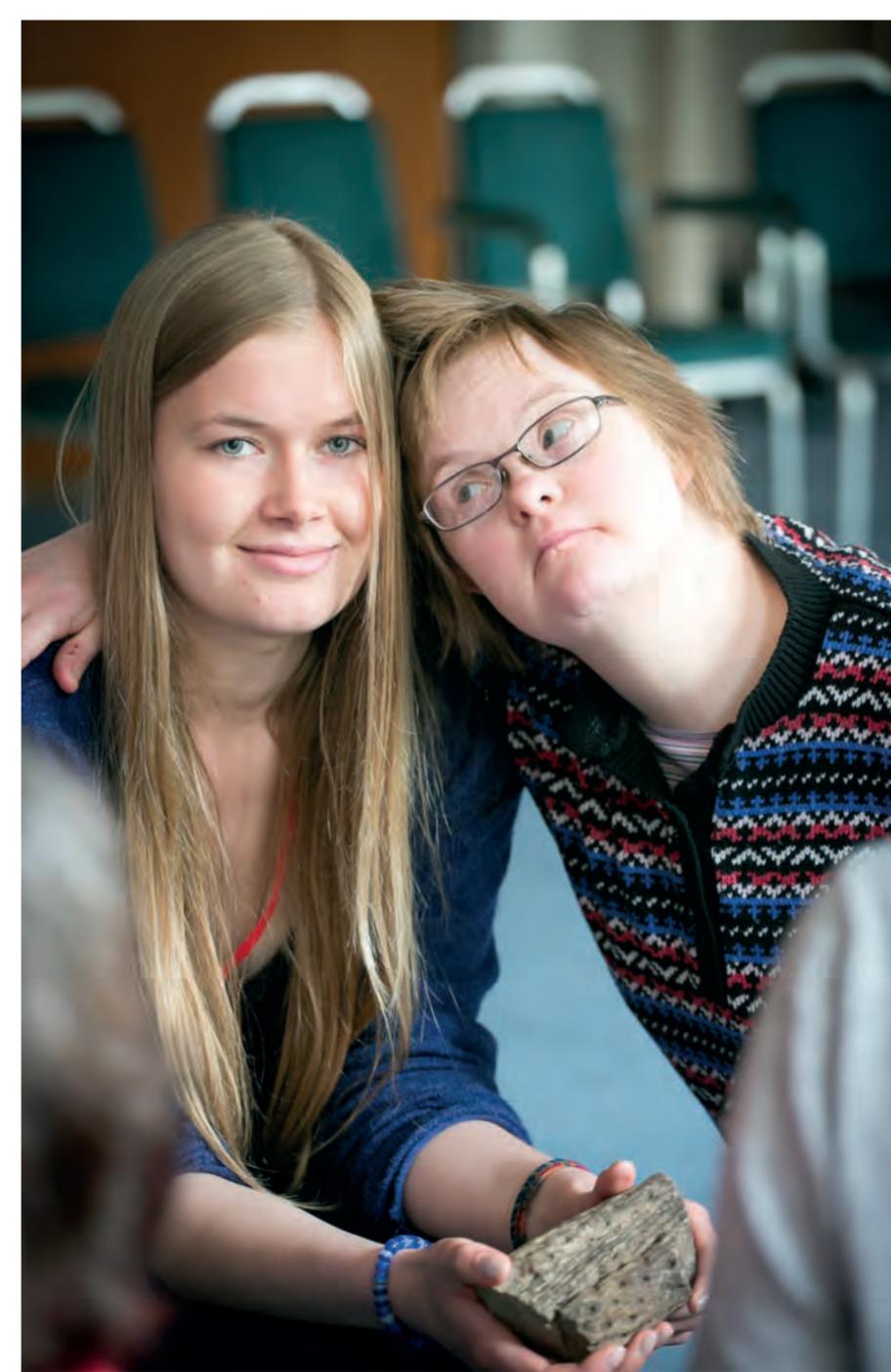
The rebirth of the New Lanark site with its Camphill 'Owen Connection' thus became more than just a place to meet, it represented a response to this threat to the Image of the human being.

It would be remiss if I didn't mention the part played by partners of Camphill and friends who quickly formed a working group to bring about the first gathering in the early summer of 2003. Jack Reed and Garvald were central and carried much of the organisation. The Iona Community were eager participants at the first conference as was the L'Arche Communities and social service departments were also represented, a truly inclusive attempt to share good practice, learn about each other's approach and have, it has to be said, a very good time together. Birthday Celebrations will be happening locally within many Camphill Communities and we look forward to a return to New Lanark in the future when we can all come together to celebrate.

Meanwhile A Happy 80th Birthday Camphill wherever you are in these lock down days!



# LOOKING TO A COMMON FUTURE



# 80 YEARS OF CAMPHILL

## Chardon's Story

By Chardon Minh Nguyen (Ms.)

I am writing to you to tell you my story in Camphill Blairdrummond. I am Chardon Nguyen, a Co-worker from Vietnam. Let me tell you about how I am going on so far in Blairdrummond. First of all, I would like to tell you my very first step I made on the Blairdrummond journey. This was the day in March last year that I decided to go to Blairdrummond and it took me almost 10 months for application and a visa to the UK, and it also took me nearly 29 hours to travel from my hometown in Vietnam to Blairdrummond. I think right now you are considering what motivates me to go through such a long journey. Moreover, these reasons also encourage me to stay here during the very difficult time instead of returning home.

I worked in an art and craft school for children in Vietnam before I applied to volunteer in Blairdrummond. Apart from the normal business of the school, I wish to establish a non-profit project named Heart Arts to use arts as a form of soul nourishing for children living in poverty and as a therapy for children with autism. Therefore, learning that Scotland is a cradle of Camphill Movement and what these Camphill communities do to support the residents, I undoubtedly submitted my application when I got to know Blairdrummond was recruiting international volunteers. Before coming to Blairdrummond, I visited their website to have a big picture of how the community is doing to get ready for my voluntary role there. When I actually started to work, I realized that this place is definitely where I should spend a full year.

Like other co-workers, my role in Blairdrummond is to support the residents in daily life and spend time with them in workshops. In my definition, Blairdrummond is a place where love never ends and where no one is left behind. Blairdrummond is a community whose all the people help one another no matter who they are. I must say that not only I learn from the staff and other co-workers, but I do also learn a lot from the residents, especially the unconditional love they have for others. As I have some experience in the art and craft school before, I love making handmade and decorations with the residents and this is how we are together going through the lockdown. Their facial expressions, their eyes opening surprising, and how they love the handmade items we make together make me believe that arts as a therapy can heal the soul for everybody. I still remember the time I painted a rainbow in my house doors. It was a rainy afternoon, the sky was so grey and there was a resident in other house looking at me doing the artwork. He patiently stood by the window in his house

seeing a rainbow gradually appear in such a cold day. This made me to believe that, the lockdown is like a rain, it will be gone and rainbow will come if we do not give up our hope. The more I spend time with them, the more I know about their stories and the more I get to know that they deserve to have more. I read an article about people with learning disabilities, it said social distancing is not a new experience for them, they are familiar with that since they got the disabilities. This is when I determined to stay here, together we will overcome this situation. My country is currently controlling the virus with just more than 50 cases being treated in hospitals and zero death recorded. It is a safe place to return, but as I said above, the resident taught me what unconditional love is defined. They cannot come home to visit their families, they cannot go out in weekend to other places in Stirling, they cannot meet their friends from day service and other houses, this is when they need us – co-workers more than ever. We want to take this time as a chance to do more physical exercise and craft activities. Therefore, the residents can have a health physical body and mind. As I also want to do more for them, this is the time for me to do because I have more time than before.

For my personal life in Blairdrummond, yes I myself want to go out because when I first came here, I struggled a lot with the cold weather and simply could not go out. When it is warmer and I just settled down for a completely different life in Scotland it was locked down already, so I have never had a chance to visit my new hometown Stirling. But let look at a positive side of the situation, that I have never been to these places makes me not really miss them and so I find it not too hard to stay at home. Luckily, Blairdrummond is located in a very peaceful place near a pinewood, rapeseed fields, lake and river, what else I could ask for more? My parents teach me that if I cannot change the situation, try to live with it and it will be gone when I do not notice. Hence, as we all need to do social distancing, I try to get me a healthy routine at home. I wake up early in the morning, go for a walk while listening to the bird singing, watching the sun coming out, and breathing the fresh air. On my walk, I stop for several places and make some photographs as I have got photography as a new hobby for myself, or I write down my diary of what I have done these days and especially what I think and how I feel so that I can remember how I spend my year in CBD later on. This pandemic situation gets me to live slowly to think more about my life and how to make it the most meaningful as possible.

*There is a song in Vietnamese  
I listen these days, it says that  
if everybody chooses to do  
easy jobs, who will take the  
difficult ones?*

We are all thankful for the NHS and other people in frontline risking their lives to protect us, so I know that I am going on a right path so far and the orientation for my future career is also a good choice. There is one saying that encourages me to voluntary works for more than 6 years

Volunteers are unpaid, not because they are worthless but because they are priceless.

It has been nearly 3 months since I came to Blairdrummond. This is a place I will miss so badly when I return home and no matter how carefully I pack my luggage, there will be for sure one thing I forget to bring home, this is a part of my heart for the community. Blairdrummond is not just a workplace, it is a home with my family living there.

"Land of a silver birch... Blue lakes and rocky shores I will return one more..."



# LOOKING TO A COMMON FUTURE

## Maggi's Story

By Magdalena Briesch



there. The months up until Christmas was a amazing time with all the Advent and Christmas projects in the workshops and the many visits to the Scottish Pantomime or restaurants. During this time we Co-workers were a close-knit group and my house became to my second family. I felt so included in this big Community. The advent time until Christmas was for me a time with hope, peace, joy and love. Then the spring started but not for me with sunshine and happiness, but with the corona virus, the biggest topic at the time. It was rumoured that Co-worker have to go back to our country's, but, in the end it was our own decision and I didn't even have a second thought to go back to Germany. There no reason to go back and I felt that everyone here had greater need. A lot of friends decided with legitimate reasons to go back to their home country's and in this difficult time especially for the residents, we

all had to say goodbye to the co-worker that decided to leave and who were now a family member or friend.

That was a time when in our morning gathering some houses was missing and fast came every week changes and we didn't have the chance to prepare the residents for the big changes so the morning gathering was cancelled and the day service closed.

A Week later we had workshops only with the house, the workshops were then closed, we got new staffs in the houses, we had to do social distancing so we can't have meals together anymore and a house closed so that we have a isolation house in the worst case.

Every house got two or one new residents. Every day we have new rules and something is changing and we don't know for how long. So we can't tell the residents when we can

go back to normal and what is after this time again normal?

Now I have the feeling we can manage that and that we are as good as possible prepared for whatever... I am so surprised how well the resident are doing because not all of them can get the situation why we can't hug each other anymore or why we have no workshops and why they can't go at home now. I never thought that my volunteer year will be like this but actually I enjoy it to do so much with the residents from my house and support them in this time

I decided to stay longer because if I go back in august I don't have the feeling that I will be finish here in three month. I went with my residents in this difficult time and I want to support them back to their normal routines.

# Keeping Connected with Friends and Family

By Tim Davis, Milton Keynes



We have a range of things going to keep us connected but physically distant.

We mowed 2m markers into the green in front of our houses around tables and chairs so that residents can socialise by their house with the proper 2m distance between them. It seems to work well as there is a physical and visual marker for the space.

I installed Amazon Alexa devices in each of our houses a few months ago so residents can talk with their friends in the other houses by "dropping in" on each other for a chat "virtually". We have regular social distance exercise, mindfulness and meditation and I also started an internet radio station so we can share music and singing, stories and other connections. Tomorrow is an Easter broadcast with Easter songs and stories that Joan recorded for me on a MP3 Dictaphone as she is very much isolated from the community due to health issues in her household.



Lots of other things going on including a "Zoom Room" I set up so residents can spend an hour chatting with family on a nice comfy sofa that we can sanitise in between uses, crafts are in houses rather than workshops and as our workshop staff retrained in care we are utilising both skill sets.



# 80 YEARS OF CAMPHILL

## Celebrating Camphill at New Lanark

By Susanne Salthammer, Loch Arthur



Unfortunately, due to current Scottish coronavirus guidance, the Party will no longer be able to take place on our Birthday, but the steering group are planning, subject to support from the Scottish Neighbourhood (and the Government), to still arrange the party in our 80th Year, perhaps towards the end of that year in May 2021, perhaps in connection to Whitsun which in itself is a celebration of community.

Plans for the postponed Party are all in place and with good will from all the celebration we had planned will go ahead in a similar manner with enthusiastic participants, a huge Birthday cake, celebratory ceilidh and some exciting creative activity workshops, and of course the mandatory very short inclusive talk!



The venue can host around 150 people and so with the approximate participants for this year from the Scottish Communities of only around 110, we hope we will be able to open the Party to others within the British Isles... watch this space...

Meanwhile let's celebrate as best we can on 1st June 2020

## Creating Community Life in Challenging Times

By Susanne Salthammer, Loch Arthur

Easter has just passed and the beauty around us is at times overwhelming - the bird song in the morning is loud and joyful, the daffodils turn the world in their happy yellow and in our woods next to the Loch the bluebell plants grow stronger every day - persevering despite the sheep considering them as their personal lunch special.

In the Community life ticks on as well in many ways in its usual rhythms and routines - with slight adjustments... Loch Arthur has a strong social, cultural and spiritual life and like many Communities and indeed for people all over the world, it has been a challenge to find ways to hold on to what really matters and to transform it so that we can connect and celebrate in responsible ways.

For Palm Sunday traditionally we have a boundary walk with the whole Community, always a very social event, walking in a group of 40 or more. This year this was of

course not possible in the usual way. After some thinking and organising we managed to get everyone who was interested to go on a walk on our land in small groups. It was a lovely event, we set off at different times to avoid big crowds but still there were small short meetings, group to group, exchanging smiles and all enjoying the warm sunshine. We managed to take photos of all the groups and there will be a big poster of the whole Community in our hall soon.

For Holy Week we often have gatherings after lunch in our hall - again this was not possible. We did though feel it was essential for us as a Community to find different ways to mark the days of Holy Week. So, instead of coming together with the whole Community, we held small gatherings in each house. One person took on preparing those and they were distributed beforehand - some thoughts relating to the Bible reading of the day, as well as poetry,

verses and songs to sing together. It felt very special to know that every house was reading the same words and it added to the deep connection that we as a Community experience with each other. We will carry on having those house gatherings on Sunday mornings to replace our big Sunday gatherings in the hall for the time being. A silver lining to this is that now some people feel able to speak in front of big groups, are now feeling able to prepare gatherings and write them out for everyone.

I add a few pictures from our Boundary Walk as well as one of one of our Easter Sunday gatherings - for this one each house created a Mandala - a joyful, colourful and meditative piece of temporary art.



# LOOKING TO A COMMON FUTURE

## Celebrating Camphill's 80th Year

By Alison Lodge - Murtle House, working with the Camphill House Archive, Aberdeen

On the 1st June 2020 Camphill School Aberdeen is 80 years old! Researching how the pioneers and the children who came managed to make the School what it is today, and to start communities all over the world has been a wonderful experience and in these challenging times we are excited to share what we have found.

Camphill's 80th has inspired a project on the School's first twenty years (1940-1960). We often speak of Karl Koenig and the pioneers but much less is known about most of the children/pupils. This project has made it possible to do more in depth research to add these voices to theirs.

Peter Bergel became at ten years old the first child to come to the school at Kirkton House, before the purchase of Camphill House. Peter and his family were refugees from Germany just before the Second World War. The family were Jewish, Peter had additional needs after becoming ill as a very young child and Peter's father was a lawyer in the Jewish community trying to help others in Frankfurt-Am-Main. None of these things were welcome in Germany in 1939.

After being able to leave Peter at school in the spring of 1939, his parents left for the USA in the winter of that same year knowing that he was as safe as it was possible to be during wartime. They were not allowed to take Peter into that country. Peter stayed

within Camphill communities for the rest of his life, eventually moving to Botton Village as a pioneer adult villager in 1956.

More of a puzzle is the life of Rudi. Rudi Samoje is much less well known than Peter but arrived around the same time in 1939. Before Camphill House was bought, leaving just before the rest of the first children moved there in 1940. In many ways Rudi's family life was very like that of Peter's but Rudi was not a child. Rudi came to the school as a young man of 26 years old.

Rudi was brought by his widowed mother who, with her older son left Germany in around 1958 for Bolivia. Rudi's younger sister had already escaped to the USA with her young family. Like the Bergel family the Samoje family were Jewish and Rudi was severely epileptic. Rudi's father had also been a lawyer in Berlin.

It is now becoming possible to find out what happened to Rudi and the other first pupils like Sandy from the Christmas Story and share just some of these stories for the 80th Celebration. Although we may not see each other face to face in June work continues to share what has been found about these early years as widely as possible.



## The Message

By Peter Brown

Peter joined Loch Arthur Community in 1994, having been living on his own before that in Dumfries, where he had been an accounts clerk for the local Council.

Peter has found life in our Community a vital support to his mental well being, and has worked in our garden and creamery for many years.

He is now semi-retired in his early sixties, and loves writing and sharing poetry.



*In our difficult age  
As we easily turn the following page  
Of pointless human conflict  
My only one true offering to this divided world  
Is that of profound spiritual peace  
Because on such an honest basis as that  
Humans can escape from their cruel cage  
Where evil weapons of war are so casually made  
And in that moment  
Will feel an endless love  
Without any futile or tragic hesitation  
Travelling slowly downwards  
From those vast heavenly realms  
So high above  
And then in that very same moment  
Will testify to the pure presence  
Of the only one absolute god  
With that grateful nod.*

## Can you help?

Alison Lodge is researching the early years of the Camphill School, Aberdeen. She is looking for anyone who lived there between 1939-1960.

If you can help her with contact details please email Alison Lodge [A.Lodge@crss.org.uk](mailto:A.Lodge@crss.org.uk)

Interviews will be to an agreed set of questions and most likely by phone.

# 80 YEARS OF CAMPHILL

## School's Surprise at Larger than Life Cheque

By Laura Jane-Mann

### From Coffee Mugs to Music Room; how small acts of kindness can make a big difference.

Sheiling School Thornbury was thrilled to receive a generous donation of £4,140 from Motability Operations. The organisation, who operate the Motability Car, Powered Wheelchair and Scooter Scheme, selected us as one of their chosen charities this year. After an inspired Facebook request by Head of HR, Alison Davis, for a donation of mugs for the school kitchen, a member of Motability Operations not only responded, but also offered to become more involved.

Through their ongoing work, they donated Easter eggs for every young person and footballs, which were particularly well received by Class 7. Pupil, Alex said "playing football is lots of fun and really enjoyable, I like playing with all my friends and teacher". Pupils were especially excited by a visit from Pudsey Bear, who helped boost cake sales for 'Children in Need' and presented a 'Fire Tablet' donated by Motability Operations, to use as first prize in the School raffle.

The organisation then capped off the year by transporting the whole school to a special performance of their pantomime, including goody bags for everyone to take home. This is the first time all the students have been able to attend a large theatre performance like this, for a very long time, which is a great achievement and one that everyone

hopes to repeat again next Christmas. The biggest surprise came in the New Year, with the presentation of a grand £4k+ cheque from the sales of the Pantomime tickets and other fundraising the company has done for the school. Head of HR, Alison, said "We are hugely grateful to the team at Motability Operations.

We were really delighted to receive 12 new mugs and the amazing thing is how that first contact turned into a really strong ongoing relationship of valued support.

I have a sense of awe that something so great can come from an initial simple request. It reignites my belief in human kindness and it is really touching'. Sheiling School has an exciting new development which is the creation of a music room. We already have a drum-kit, kindly donated by a pupil's father and with the charitable cheque, we hope to sound proof the room and purchase more instruments. One of our pupils is already emerging as a budding musician and songwriter- we are so proud of Dylan (Class 9) who has written and recorded a song, 'Broken Dreams'.

He composed the piece entirely by himself and performed bass guitar on the track with Ollie, his Learning Support Assistant, singing the vocals. Head-Teacher, Dean Frances-Hawksley, said "This music room will also provide special sensory opportunities for the pupils to learn and play. Rhythm is one of the fundamental aspects of the therapeutic approach here". With the rest of the money we also intend

to purchase 'sensory swings' for two of the residential houses, which apart from fun, will help pupils develop self-regulation and confidence. Nico Sialelli, who originally volunteered at Sheiling School 20 years ago and returned, becoming CEO in 2011 said "We can't thank Motability Operations enough for making us one of their chosen charities.

Over the past year they have supported us in so many ways and it is wonderful to see how the pupils have benefitted from their amazing generosity."

If you would like to hear Dylan's song please use this link: <http://ow.ly/JLu130nq1QI>



## Life in Camphill on Film

By Jennifer Leiper, Camphill Scotland

Camphill Scotland is excited about a new film project which we are undertaking with award winning film producers Media Co-op. The film will celebrate living and working in Camphill in Scotland, focussing on the timeless qualities found within Camphill, of relationships, environment and purpose.

**Neil Henery, Camphill Scotland's Director said:**

"The video will use the occasion of Camphill's 80th birthday to demonstrate the excellence and distinctiveness of Camphill as a provider of education, care and support for children and adults with learning disabilities, autism and other support needs. The video will refer to the original inspiration behind Camphill and its growth through the decades, but the main focus will be on the contemporary relevance of Camphill."

**Claire Dean of Media Co-op said:**

"We are really looking forward to working with residents, service users, pupils, staff, volunteers and families not only to share the 80th anniversary celebrations but to show viewers the real impact Camphill continues to make to people's lives today. By involving members in the production, both on and off camera, we hope the film will truly reflect life in the communities across Scotland and be shared widely to inspire others across the world."



# LOOKING TO A COMMON FUTURE

## A Rare Breed

By Camphill Wakefield

At Camphill Wakefield we have a small breeding flock of Whitefaced woodland sheep. They are a rare and large breed of sheep that originate in the South Pennines in England. The rams are known for having big curling horns and the ewes are typically excellent mothers.

Our first lamb was born on the 3rd of April 2020 and four more quickly followed.

We now have two boys and three girls who are running around the field with the adult sheep. All are doing well and enjoying this glorious weather.



## Coronavirus: Contingency, Care, Community

By Eskdale Valley News

*The area around Danby Dale and beyond to Whitby in the North Yorkshire Moors is covered by a rather special local magazine The Esk Valley News which has quickly become a go to source for all local information from local history to train times!*

*The Basement Press from its location in The Old Parsonage at Glaisdale with Nicola and Pascal putting together the monthly magazine illustrated here which has been a great encouragement to The Esk Valley Camphill Community and its development. So when Nicola went to The Danby Health Shop clutching her shopping list, at the start of the lock down, this is what happened!*

Coronavirus/Covid-19 outbreak has been declared a pandemic and UK schools are about to close. We have a small shopping list and, as we're heading for the Esk Valley, decide to stop off at Danby Health Shop.

The door is locked and I guess they've closed early, maybe delivering to customers. There are notices in the window about the coronavirus, protecting people and measures to keep customers supplied. I'm about to leave when I see two people through the glass door. A combination of muffled voices and gestures establishes that the shop is open for business, if not physically accessible to customers.

Fortunately, I had a reasonably legible list and I pressed this against the door for the staff to copy. Over the next few minutes various items were brought to the door and a series of finger pointing and thumbs up gestures led to a satisfactory outcome.

The next step was payment, achieved by a member of staff pressing a machine against the glass while I did the same with a debit card. I was then asked to retreat while the goods and receipt were brought out; staff inside again and I collected the goods.

I cannot articulate adequately the emotions I felt on completing the transaction. A disparate set of thoughts sprung up, such as the exemplary practice to protect shop staff, customers and local residents. I also realised that in those minutes we had used various means of communication, from rudimentary sign language to new technology. This was not 'panic-buying' but a serene experience of utter light and positivity in these beleaguered times. I was reminded of Ernest Hemingway's reply when asked what he meant by 'guts': he said 'Grace under pressure'. Thank you

Danby Health Shop, part of the community



# 80 YEARS OF CAMPHILL

## Clanabogan. Keep on, keeping on...

COVID-19 has brought challenges for us all. In Clanabogan each house is in self-isolation, residents are not going home, relatives are asked not to visit.

There are no community gatherings, no outings and the workshops are not functioning as they did. But our households are not inactive. Each work co-ordinator is now attached to a house. The farm is farming, the bakery is baking, there are looms in conservatories, craft workshops and exercise schedules. Everyone has a routine, it may be different to the old one, but the structure is still there and life goes on.

The weather and our surroundings at Clanabogan help to make things easier. We have our own great outdoors where each household is able to get out to enjoy exercise and fresh air whilst keeping remaining in isolation.

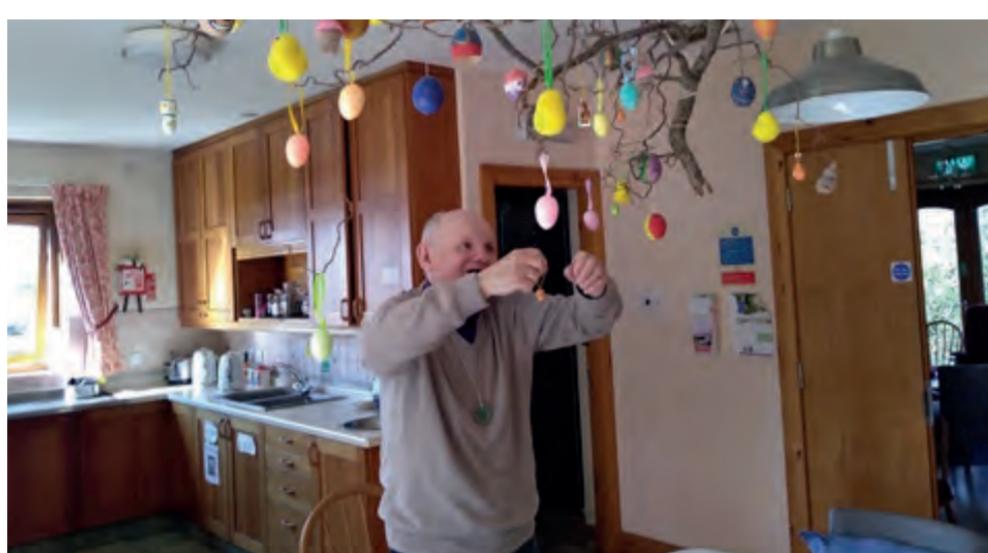
There are also opportunities to do new things. With every house being allocated a new workshop/activity we have seen people extend themselves and get very engaged in activities they might otherwise not try. We have been using technology to keep in touch with one another and with family and friends; also to continue with speech therapy and educational lessons. We have a Community full of people who can now What's app, FaceTime and Skype.

We have turned our quarterly newsletter, The Bogan Bugle, into a weekly one and renamed it the Baby Bugle to keep families in touch with our lives here in the Community.

It was an unusual Easter for everyone as each house prepared to celebrate in isolation, but on Easter Sunday morning, the sound of bells awoke every house in the Community. Even the cows enjoyed the melodious chiming across the community. As the day continued, there was the traditional Easter egg hunt and of course each house enjoyed a delicious celebratory meal.

There was however was no communal get together to sing our songs. Instead something quite remarkable happened.

As the clock struck 4.00, house communities gathered outside their doors and started to sing, singing the same songs in unison, singing to one another, with one another. Easter Sunday may have been different but it was still Easter Sunday.



## Time for reflection

On March 17th Jon Plunkett was due to give the time for reflection address to the Scottish Parliament. He was invited to do so by Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills John Swinney. This has been postponed.



### Meanwhile

(For Betty) a poem by Jon Plunket

In various places at various times people discuss community – what it was, or is. What it could be, or should be.

Meanwhile.

On a spread of land by the River Braan trees knit the earth into place while their branches point to things beyond.

And in workshops clay is spun into pots, pots used for drinks and moments shared.

Flour is kneaded into dough, dough baked into bread, bread delivered by small steps and swinging baskets. And fields are ploughed to furrows.

Seeds stretch to drink the sun. Animals are fed. Horses are cared for. Paths are foot-pressed into place, words carved into stone.

Wool spun into weave, design pressed into art.

Wood is seasoned and turned into form and function. Wood is ringed and split. Wood is warmth.

Days are turned into dates, dates into festivals.

Houses are turned into homes, plans into action (most of the time)!

Wax is melted into moulds, liquid into solid, solid into light.

Needs are met with care, care leads to love.

And within, and around and between all these small transformations are joinings of one being to another.

So people can discuss community – what it was, or is. What it could be, or should be.

Meanwhile.

Here, on our spread of land by the River Braan

Community is what it is, and carries on.

Turbulent, calm, turbulent, calm, but never stagnant, and like the river, is flowing always to depths unknown.

Needs are met with care, care leads to love.

# LOOKING TO A COMMON FUTURE

## The Boy who Lived

By Gordon Griffiths

It is almost impossible to believe that our lad is 19 years old; full of questions and life, who goes train spotting and loves to work on the Corbenic estate. His start in life was hard. His biological parents absent, opiate dependent and 25 weeks early he was not expected to live beyond age 5. But he has lived, lived well and flourished into this able, handsome and wonderful young man.

I remember the first few months of meeting this tiny young survivor. Building a bond over weeks until the moment he cried for the first time in his wee life. With this emotional "switch on" Aaron's hair started to grow and his dependence on machinery decreased.

Aaron's early years were touch and go. Every cold and virus going did its best to attack Aaron's weakened immune system. But his determination to live always brought him through.

When Aaron went to school he was very well supported by his teachers and peers, first at a specialist school and later in the main stream. But Aaron couldn't keep up with his peers. Diagnosed with autism and

attachment disorder he found a place at in a specialist stream at Fairview.

During this time he also encountered the school at Ochil tower and had decided that he wanted to live in just such a place. At 16 and thinking about his future he settled on Corbenic. Through Fairviews sixth form programme Aaron started at Corbenic first as a day student and now as a fully settled member of the community there.

So the baby who would not walk nor talk has turned into a striding young man, full of confidence (in the right setting!) At Corbenic, which is the right setting, he is known for his sense of humour, and his willingness to be involved and getting things done. Should you see Aaron around, say hi. He is easily recognisable, being a train spotter, he has a fluorescent orange safety jacket, as worn by railway engineers.

Ask him when the next train from Dunkeld to Perth is running, he will know the answer.



## Camphill Budapest

By Monica Hand, Craft Workshop Leader



Last September five of us from Corbenic Camphill Community Monica, Jisol and three artists Hector, Suzanne and Andrew packed our bags and headed out to the beautiful city of Budapest (Andrew travelled all the way from York to Budapest by train with his parents) to go to the opening of our first International Art exhibition in the Brut Gallery. We arrived on the 8th of September and got picked up by Emese Kovaks who firstly drove us to the Citadel to see Budapest by night then took us to our beautiful apartment behind the parliament buildings.

The next morning Emese arranged a car and tour guide to give us a city tour we went to Heroes square near Széchenyi Spa and then to St Stephen's Basilica stopping for Langos (traditional Hungarian dish). Later we got dropped at the famous food market where we enjoyed a bowl of delicious Goulash. The following day was spent relaxing at the Széchenyi Spa set in a beautiful Neo-Baroque Palace, that evening we had a wonderful cruise down the Danube. We spent the Thursday on St Margaret's Island where we met up with Andrew and his parents we had a lovely walk and picnic spending time at the Japanese Garden.

papier Mache, mosaic and other crafts. Recently we have started a drawing day where we set up still lives or go out to the gardens to draw, we have set up a printing area in the workshop where we do mono printing, lino printing, silk screen and we are going to start gelli plate printing soon.

Over the past year I feel my drawing has really improved and I feel much more confident trying new techniques such as using pastel, watercolour pencils and pen. We sometimes trace our drawings and transfer them onto Lino. I still need a bit of help carving the Lino but I enjoy printing with the printing press. My favourite things to draw are birds, flowers and anything relating to nature one of my Lino prints has been chosen by the 'John Muir Trust' an environmental organisation to be put on all their merchandise.

I am very proud to see my work exhibited in this beautiful gallery along with all my colleagues work. I would really like to thank Liza and Emese for giving us this wonderful opportunity, and Thankyou to Monica and Jisol for bringing us here.

Thankyou.

My name is Suzanne Rae I have been living at Corbenic Camphill Community for a year and a half. It is brilliant living at Corbenic I am happier than I have ever been, I have found my heart here, I belong to life of Camphill, I feel safe here and I am always busy. I have always enjoyed the Craft workshop where we do weaving, silkpainting, felting,



## A message from the Chairman

By Dave Mitchell, AoCC Chair

When put alongside all the other changes and adjustments that everyone has had to make in order to contain the spread of Covid -19, the cancellation of the Association of Camphill Communities (AoCC) AGM and Assembly is really of no real significance in the grand scheme of things. It is worth noting though that it is the only gathering in the United Kingdom and Ireland that we have for anyone who is connected to Camphill to come together in order to share our experiences and questions about what really matters to us. Promoting and supporting active dialogue is at the core of all the activities of the AoCC. The prime aim of the Association is to encourage an active interest in each other and to support collaborative working.

It is both wonderful and remarkable that Camphill is now about to celebrate its 80th anniversary. Our Communities share a very long and rich history and are all part of a Movement that is inspired by anthroposophy and founded on the curative education and social therapy principles outlined by Rudolf Steiner and Karl König. The Camphill Communities in the UK and Ireland have all in one way or another been on a journey characterised by change and transition. These processes have been reflected in our annual assemblies in the last few years as we have embraced and celebrated the diversity of forms that Camphill Communities now take. Coming together in this way also gives the opportunity to look at what it is that holds us together "What makes us Camphill today?" was to have been our theme for the assembly this year and we had intended to explore how we

implement our Camphill Values into the daily life of our Communities.

It is interesting to reflect in this time how the language of Coronavirus where we have to accept and to adapt to the clearly defined concepts of "social Isolation" and social distancing", just how alien they are to our Camphill values and practice. We are places of welcome for everyone who come towards us and who want to live, learn, play and work together for the benefit of themselves and for others and who hopefully find value and meaning in the relationships that they make with each other. These Pages contain some wonderful stories of the innovative practical and artistic solutions that Communities have been able to come up with in dealing with the challenges presented by Covid -19. They all go beyond the task of keeping people safe and well within the Communities, but in some cases finding ways to still be of service to the wider community around them. It appears that the Camphill model also comes with a built-in resilience!

One silver lining to the crisis nationally has been the growing acknowledgement and appreciation of all NHS and social care workers. Within Camphill we need to acknowledge the great contribution that the short-term volunteers make in our Communities. This group of young people who mostly come from Europe and beyond are essential to Camphill. In many places they are involved in providing direct care and support to the people we support and are all involved in our working life as well. However, their

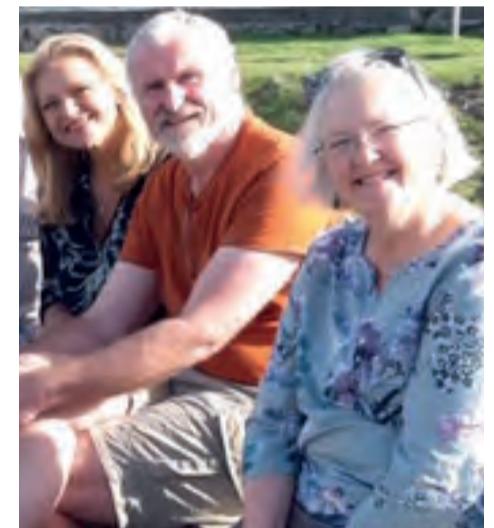
most important contribution is their youthful enthusiasm and energy to support and uphold the social and cultural fabric that underpins the ethos of Camphill. It is clear to me that without this flow of young people with their vitality, our Communities could all too easily become very staid and settled. Whilst a number of our overseas volunteers returned home ahead of the lock down many elected to stay sometimes against the advice of their governments and placing authorities and have helped keep everything going so well through this time.

We recognise that the Covid -19 is having an impact on our ability to recruit new volunteers in the next few months. This will potentially be further exacerbated next year as we leave the European Union and with it the freedom of movement. The AoCC is continuing its work to bring these concerns to the relevant authorities.

Covid -19 of course is a worldwide pandemic and is also affecting Camphill Communities across the world. We are of course very connected to the Communities in South Africa and Botswana and for many years have been able to offer financial and other support to help them meet the very particular economic and social challenges they face. The international Camphill Dialogue meeting was hosted by the two Communities in Hermanus who went to an enormous effort to prepare their communities to host up to 100 guests from across the world, less than 18 months after the devastation caused by the bush fires that burned through. It was heart-breaking that just as the conference was getting underway,

the South African Government introduced measures that prevented it going ahead. The Dialogue did open and close, it happened although in a very curtailed form. As someone who was able to attend, I want to pass on my tremendous appreciation to everyone who was involved in preparing it and to those who managed to get there. It turned out to be an unforgettable and very rich experience, though very different from the one we had all expected.

In the absence of an Assembly and AGM to which the nominated Co-ordinating group report and who gives them their mandate, the AoCC Co-ordinators will continue their work encouraging Communities to work together for the good of all the members, and we will look forward to next Spring and being able to gather together again.



## Get involved!

We want to hear from you. If you have a story to share please email [editor@camphillpages.net](mailto:editor@camphillpages.net), deadline for contributions is Friday 18th September 2020

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### PUBLISHED BY:

The Association of Camphill Communities UK and Ireland.

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