

# Corrymeela

VOL 9 | No 2 | SUMMER 2009

[www.corrymeela.org](http://www.corrymeela.org)

- Comment from the Leader
- All the latest community news
- Dates for your diary
- Coventry opening



Corrymeela will donate to Northern Ireland's Carbon Footprint Tree Planting Scheme, to offset the environmental impact of this magazine.



6



26



30



THE  
CORMEELA  
COMMUNITY

Kathleen has this radiance...  
how good it was to be in her company,  
To be reminded of it.  
And to be reminded of the kind of love that can be between  
two people, wherein they do more healing together than apart.  
The generativity of real love; how it inevitably heals all who  
encounter it.  
May this radiant love now live through us.

# ecumenicity

there is a plough  
in my mind  
tilling and turning  
earth of many experiences  
full of feelings and thoughts...  
perceptions, questions, concepts, theories  
brokenness, fears, struggles, hopes...

it is taking its time

to catch up with my heart,

where a grove of redwoods grows  
along with oak, eucalyptus, birch, pine, yew, plum,  
mango, fir, baobab, cedar, magnolia, cherry, elm,  
chestnut, apple, maple, fig, olive and palm

entrusted into life long ago  
magnificent root systems grown comfortably one  
in common love

in each of us  
awaiting...

though our minds cannot remember  
enough  
most of the time:

our inherent knowing of peace  
how it is to flourish  
to be shalom,

and so the plough  
reminds us;

that is, our communities  
remind us;

the movements of belonging to each other  
somehow  
here and now  
remind us;

intentionally  
being in relationship  
reminds us:

how far we are  
yet to keep going

as each season is turned  
for new growth to bring us nearer...  
to exist  
with, in, through, for, as  
love

to feel the trees  
embodied

to know shalom  
earthed.

*In thanksgiving for the consciousness work of Corrymeela  
inspired by Ray and Kathleen Davey*

**Colleen D. Brown**

Corrymeela Community Member





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## MEET THE CONTRIBUTORS



**Alf McCreary** is Religion Correspondent of the Belfast Telegraph and the award winning author of a very wide range of books, including the story of the early decades of Corrymeela, and more recently its 40th Anniversary history, In War and Peace.



**Michael Fryer** is a former long-term volunteer who first came to Corrymeela in 1996. He recounts the experience of his recent pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela.



**Ray Davey** trained as a Presbyterian minister and founded the Corrymeela Community in 1965. He served in the Second World War and spent time as a prisoner of war in France and Germany.



**Karen Gregory** worked in both the Belfast Office and at the Ballycastle Centre as a mid-term volunteer earlier this year as part of her UNESCO university programme.



**Jacob Jeyaseelan**, from Sri Lanka is currently working as a long-term volunteer at the Ballycastle Centre, he is from Batticaloa, Sri Lanka. He is sponsored by the Methodist Church.



**David Stevens** has been Leader of the Corrymeela Community since January 2004. Formerly he was General Secretary of the Irish Council of Churches 1992 to 2003. He is the author of two books: The Land of Unlikeness: Explorations into Reconciliation and The Place Called Reconciliation: Texts to Explore.



**Duncan Morrow** is a Corrymeela Community member and is Chief Executive Officer of the Community Relations Council, the primary body responsible for funding and development of inter-community relations practice and policy in Northern Ireland. He was previously a lecturer in politics at the University of Ulster and is an author of numerous reports, books and articles on politics, peace-building and inter-community relationships.

Corrymeela magazine  
Volume 9 Number 2  
Summer 2009

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Corrymeela magazine is published by the Corrymeela Community.

The Corrymeela Community is a dispersed community of people of all ages and Christian traditions who, individually and together, are committed to the healing of social, religious and political divisions in Northern Ireland and throughout the world.

Corrymeela magazine is sent to all 'Friends of Corrymeela'. To become a 'Friend of Corrymeela' and receive the magazine send your name and address to the Belfast office. Friends subscription is £26 (waged), £13 (unwaged), (€33 / €16, US \$50 / \$25) per annum. The magazine is published three times per year.

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Corrymeela is a company limited by Guarantee. Registered in Northern Ireland No. NI6823. Corrymeela is recognised as a charity by the (UK) Inland Revenue. Inland Revenue Reference Number XN 48052A

Design: TatchDesign. Tel: 9260 1832  
Printing: Graham & Heslip, Belfast.



## Blind guides of the blind

'LET THEM ALONE; they are blind guides of the blind, and if one blind person guides another, both will fall into a pit'. (*Matthew 15: 14*)

This is said in the context of the Scribes and the Pharisees coming to Jesus and asking 'Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands before they eat'. (*v2*)

In the picture 'The Parable of the Blind' painted by Bruegel the Elder in 1568, a group of blind men, each grabbing on to the next, marches in a grim diagonal towards the lower right hand corner, where one of them has sprawled into a ditch. This is what Jesus foresaw for the Scribes and Pharisees and the picture bristles with rank, smelly detail; from the begging bowl at one man's waist, to the sightless, accusing eyes that another turns on us, in pleading or rebuke. 'See, if you can still see, where blindness will lead', says the look on the face.

What is the blindness of the Scribes and Pharisees about? It is not simply about whether to wash hands or not. The Scribes and Pharisees are absolutely identified with a system of misrecognition (equals blindness) which fails to see that beyond the purity/impurity distinction a much greater uncleanness is hidden: 'for out of the heart comes evil intentions, murder, adultery, fornication, theft, false witness, slander' (*v19*).

However, purity is an important religious idea. Rules of ritual purity keep people in their 'proper' place. Without purity regulations there would be a crisis of distinctions – the difference between the sacred and profane would collapse.

Therefore those who are out of their 'proper' place are dangerous and the safety of the community requires the maintenance of the purity/impurity distinction. And a purity/impurity distinction requires an insider/outsider distinction as well and a willingness to enforce the distinction. The custodians of the sacred distinctions – the Scribes and Pharisees – are blind to really important things, and they blind those who they claim to be leading. Jesus signals an end to a world of sacred distinctions, and he is a profound threat to the custodians of sacred distinctions. The world of blindness is close to violence, and it will only become obvious when it is challenged.

Being blind in terms of the text is a moral condition and it is an inability to see what is really important. What is being suggested is that it can affect whole societies, and particularly the guardians of their 'sacreds'. In our western societies, one of the 'sacreds' is money – as Marx clearly saw. We have a society that uses money to mark individuals in terms of success and status. This is how we make distinctions between people. This is our purity/impurity distinction. Money mystifies and requires contemporary scribes and pharisees to maintain the mysteries. The current financial crisis suggests that we have all (or most of us) been blind, and that there have been blind guides of the blind. The issue is: how deep is the pit?

**David Stevens**



David Stevens is the Leader of the Corrymeela Community



**AT THIS TIME OF YEAR** we are busy preparing for our Summer Programme at the Corrymeela Centre, Ballycastle. A summer visit is at the heart of the Corrymeela experience for many children and young people who rely on our help each year. Many of these families live in the shadow of peace walls.

Northern Ireland has more peace walls now than ever in its history as communities remain trapped in segregated housing, schooling and local amenities. There are 27 government-built walls, fences or other physical barriers in Belfast that mark boundaries between Protestant and Catholic communities, and an additional 10 such structures in other areas of the country.

In an age of modern pressures, addictions, health issues and debt, Corrymeela provides a unique oasis as we support and nurture families and people. For many who are living in contentious interface areas a visit to Corrymeela could be their only chance of a real break all year and the only opportunity to meet someone from across the peace wall.

Along with good times we experienced the horror of what with thought was in the past. The murder of two soldiers and a police officer

by Republican dissidents has caused enormous reverberations in Northern Ireland followed by the abhorrent murder of Kevin McDauid by Loyalists, read more on page 25. Just when we thought we had put the past behind us this happens. But the response shows how far we have travelled. People made it clear they did not want to return to the past. At Corrymeela we know our work to integrate communities is at least a thirty year task and in the words of David Stevens, page 20 “ This is a place which dares to speak of moving beyond brokenness to healing.”

Thinking of the future we have completed our new volunteer accommodation called Coventry House which was opened by the President of Ireland, Mary McAleese, read more on page 20. We look forward to the start of our final phase the new village complex so that Corrymeela is well equipped for working towards a truly reconciled society. I hope the stories and opinion pieces in this issue will inform and inspire you and I thank Alyson McElroy Jones for her help in editing this edition of Corrymeela.

### Jo Watson

Editor

## Requests

### **Corrymeela Connections**

Do you or any of your family or friends work for any businesses, in particular the Progressive Building Society, BT or Phoenix Gas? If so, Astrid Conville, Corrymeela's Fundraising Officer, would like you to get in touch. She can only approach the above companies for a donation or grant if someone with a Corrymeela connection is employed by them. Astrid: [astridconville@corrymeela.org](mailto:astridconville@corrymeela.org) or 028 9050 8080.

### **Spread the word**

To inform people about Corrymeela's work, and how they can become involved, we are going to ask churches in the greater Belfast area if they would be willing to have someone from the Community attend one of their Sunday services and speak to the congregation at the end. If you would be willing to do this, please let Bernie Magill know.

If you have spoken on Corrymeela's behalf in the past, can you please confirm with Bernie that you are willing to continue? Bernie: [belfast@corrymeela.org](mailto:belfast@corrymeela.org) or tel: 028 9050 8080.

### **For the wee ones**

Our Ballycastle Centre needs four or five children's car or booster seats to meet the needs of visiting infants. If you can donate one or more of these, please get in touch with Tiffany Rendall: [tiffanyrendall@corrymeela.org](mailto:tiffanyrendall@corrymeela.org) or 028 207 62626.

### **The Centre is looking for**

- Any unused or unwanted musical instruments especially guitars
  - Any unwanted DVDs
- Contact Shane O'Neill: [shaneoneill@corrymeela.org](mailto:shaneoneill@corrymeela.org) or 028 207 62626 to donate.



## Sad news

WE REGRET that following a long illness Fred Hirsch passed away at the end of March; our thoughts and prayers are with his wife Pamela and family.

Fred was a much-loved and valuable former member of Corrymeela who dedicated his life to the work of peace and reconciliation. Turn to page 38 for our tribute to Fred.

## Polish Wedding Bells



CONGRATULATIONS to Robert Deignan, our Volunteer Co-ordinator who got married in June. We wish Robert and his new wife Renata every future happiness together in Poland.

## Legacies

WE REMEMBER William Rutherford; we sincerely hope that it brings a little comfort to his family to know that William's legacy gift will be put to good use.

## LETTERS AND EMAILS

OUR NEXT ISSUE will have the theme of forgiveness in all its many forms, do you have a personal story, a prayer or opinion that you would like to share on this subject? If yes please get in touch.

To submit a letter please post to:  
 Editor  
 8 Upper Crescent  
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 Or email: [editor@corrymeela.org](mailto:editor@corrymeela.org)



*Hope to hear from you soon, Jo & Ally*

CORRYMEELA MAGAZINE TEAM



# Homebaking a fundraising success

KNOWING that there is nothing folks love more than a cup of tea and a sticky bun the Aberdeen support group and Northfields Corrymeela supporters hosted Spring coffee mornings to raise valuable funds for Corrymeela.

With good coffee and a delicious assortment of home-made delights on offer the Aberdeen group, co-ordinated by Rosie Leavett, raised an astounding £2,200. Rosie said, "It all went really well as it always does; I've never seen home baking disappear so fast!!"

Meanwhile long term supporter Peggy Owens gathered support from the parishioners of St Peter's and St Paul's in Northfields. 'Corrymeela Sunday' has been going for over 12 years thanks to the dedication of Peggy and her husband Frank. Kate Pettis, Corrymeela

Chairperson, received wonderful hospitality and had the opportunity to share news and stories about Corrymeela at no fewer than four packed masses on the Saturday evening and Sunday morning which together raised an impressive £1,500. This is the last year that Peggy will be organising this event and everyone at Corrymeela would like to say a very big thank you to her for

hard work, dedication and loyalty over so many years. Thank you Peggy and we wish best of luck to her successor for next year!

We are grateful to all community fundraisers for their hard work and generous contribution to our funding purse. Money raised supports activities at the heart of Corrymeela that cannot be financed in any other way.

If you would like to host your own coffee morning please contact Bernie Magill at Corrymeela House, Belfast 02890 508080 to get your Corrymeela merchandise, magazines, tailored event posters and flyers... and not forgetting lots of encouragement too.



# Irish Football Association and Football Association Ireland share same goals playing for peace

FOLLOWING RECENT TRAGIC EVENTS that have shocked Northern Ireland, the Irish Football Association and Football Association of Ireland have taken the unprecedented step of releasing a joint statement promoting positive Community Relations.

This is a fantastic development in a time when growing tensions threaten the already fragile peace in Northern Ireland.

It said, "Both the Irish



Football Association (IFA) and Football Association of Ireland (FAI) are committed to promoting football for all, creating a fun, safe and inclusive culture.

We are committed to using the sport of football to challenge discrimination and bigotry in all its forms and promoting respect for diversity.

Following recent tragic events in Antrim and Craigavon our thoughts are with the families affected.

We are committed to ensuring the sport of football plays its part supporting positive good relations and a healthy and peaceful society. Moving forward we will continue to work together on areas of mutual benefit to both organisations, such as sharing good practice in coach education, community relations, club development, volunteer empowerment, disability football and the promotion of positive inter-culturalism.

We recognise, value and respect each

organisation's distinct autonomy, jurisdiction and football heritage. In football terms we are each other's nearest rivals but we share a spirit of friendship based on trust and respect. We also share the same goals that the sport of football can be used to promote respect for difference and to celebrate our diversity. As society becomes more diverse we are united as a football family to ensure that everyone can feel safe, happy and secure enjoying the beautiful game".

**Since this statement was released Northern Ireland has witnessed the tragic death of Kevin McDaid as a result of football sectarianism. This dreadful act highlights the reconciliation work that still needs to be done to create real peace within our fractured communities. Please read Duncan Morrow's insight piece on Page 25**



**LOVE FOOTBALL  
HATE BIGOTRY**

## Corrymeela FC wins Sittlington Cup



THE TALENTED Corrymeela football team brought home the Sittlington Cup when they won the final match in April of this year drawing 1-1 with Comber Rec, Corrymeela won 3-2 on penalties



# Fundraising celebrates the spice of life

IN FEBRUARY, the Indian Community Centre hosted a wonderful evening of fun and fundraising for Corrymeela's Indian volunteer, Vishwas.

More than £1,500 was raised by 120 guests. We shared a traditional Indian meal together and enjoyed an unforgettable programme of Indian dancing, as well as a wonderful presentation from Vishwas about his work at Corrymeela. We all have lovely memories of the evening but it couldn't have happened without the dedicated support of particular individuals.

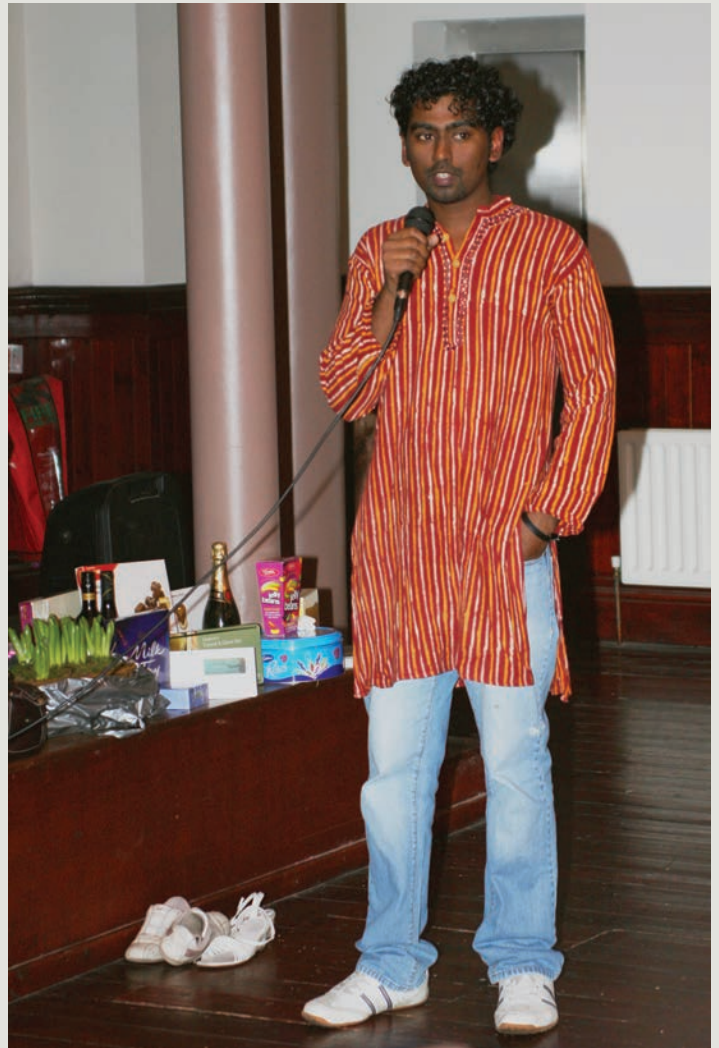
Sharada Bhat, a member of the Indian Community whom I met through the NI Inter-Faith Forum, took me around the Indian stores and markets in Belfast to shop for the various ingredients for the meal and did a great job (considering that the numbers were growing right up to the last day!)

On the night Mathilde Stevens was a great support in the kitchen with Beena the chef, who changed into a gorgeous outfit after the meal to take her place on the stage with the bangra dancers - terrific Beena!

Rajni and Ashok Sharma were a wonderful support too. Ashok organized the planning meetings and donated a lunch for two at his restaurant Archana on the Dublin Road as a ballot prize.

The dancers and drummers were superb. I felt so blessed by everyone's contribution, and none of it would have happened without the fantastic audience, so thank you to all who came, supported the ballot, donated prizes and thanks also to all who gifted money towards the event - you were great!

**Yvonne Naylor**  
Corrymeela Community Member



## Corrymeela now on Facebook

THE CORRYMEELA COMMUNITY is catching up and has recently joined the social networking site with its own page.

Log in and search for "The Corrymeela Community" in order to become a fan, share photos, participate in discussions, see what fellow friends are up to, and get reminders about upcoming events.



Suggest to Friends  
View Updates  
Subscribe via SMS

Get involved and stay connected to the Corrymeela Community!

Information  
Founded:  
1965

### The Corrymeela Community

Wall Info Photos Boxes Notes Discussions >>

#### Basic Info

Founded: 1965

#### Detailed info

Website: <http://www.corrymeela.org>  
Company Overview: Founded in 1965, Corrymeela's objective has always been and continues to be promoting reconciliation and peace - building through the healing of social, religious and political divisions in Northern Ireland. Corrymeela's history is built upon committed work with individuals and communities which have suffered through the violence and polarisation of the Northern Irish conflict. Our vision of Christian community and reconciliation has been expressed through a commitment of promoting interaction... (read more)  
Mission: -Be a Christian community of reconciliation following the way of the gospel.  
-Be in positive relationship with people regardless of class, religious opinion or political conviction.  
-Create safe spaces where people of diverse backgrounds can come and meet each other, where there is an atmosphere of trust and acceptance and where differences can be acknowledged, explored and accepted.  
-Work to realise a society whose priorities are justice, mutual respect, the participation of all, concern for the vulnerable and the stranger, stewardship of resources, and care for creation  
Products: <http://www.corrymeela.org/sitepage/shop.aspx>





*The Corrymeela Team at the awards ceremony in Spires Centre, Belfast earlier this year.*



Millennium Volunteers

## Outstanding volunteers, clock up more than 200 hours of community service

THE TIRELESS WORK of young Corrymeela volunteers was celebrated at a prestigious Awards of Excellence ceremony in Belfast's Spires centre recently. The Volunteer Development Agency's Millennium Volunteers Programme acknowledged the energy and commitment of the 16-25 year olds who have each completed an impressive 200 hours of community service.

Education Minister Caitríona Ruane, who presented the awards said, "It is my privilege to be here to present the awards in recognition of

those young people who have completed over 200 hours voluntary work. I want to congratulate everyone involved with Millennium Volunteers. Your commitment and dedication is making a real difference to your communities and to people's lives."

The Corrymeela volunteers who completed the programme are both local and international, from Ballycastle, Newry and Belfast, but also The Gambia, El Salvador, India and Sri Lanka, Germany, Sweden and the USA. Sonja Tammen, Volunteer, Support Co-

ordinator said, "Corrymeela joined the Millennium Volunteers Scheme last April and it has proved a great way of rewarding the young people for their commitment. The scheme allows volunteers to gain recognition for their efforts and so enhance their CVs. Volunteering is a fantastic way to acquire new skills, meet new people and learn about yourself and we at Corrymeela couldn't continue our work without them. So a big thank you from the centre."

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer for Corrymeela, contact Sonja Tammen on

volunteersupport@corrymeela.org or 028 2076 2626 for more information.

Millennium Volunteers is funded by the Department of Education in Northern Ireland, administered by Volunteer Development Agency and was launched in 2000 to support and encourage young people to make a sustained commitment to volunteering in their community for a period of 200 hours. Since the launch, 2,346 young people aged 16 – 25 have achieved Awards of Excellence.



# Site Developments

WE ARE PLEASED to inform you that planning permission for a wind turbine, at the Ballycastle Centre, has been granted and we are now applying for a grant to facilitate the

project. This brings us one step further along on our journey to create a fully sustainable and environmentally friendly base on the North Coast.

# Congratulations

CONGRATULATIONS to Isobel McDonagh and Gill Michael who recently received the Coleraine Women's Forum Women of Achievement Award.

Isobel, for her work as Chair of the Coleraine Churches Forum, especially for promoting interfaith dialogues and also for her previous work in setting up the Coleraine Hospice Homecare Team.

Gill, for her work leading the St Patrick's Bridgebuilders in promoting interdenominational discussions and for earlier work as Chair of the Causeway Area Peace Network when she organised the Children's Art Competition and subsequent calendars.

# Foundation Training Course in Church Mediation



THIS TRAINING COURSE examines people's experiences of conflict in life and in the Church, attitudes towards conflict and their varied personal responses as well as looking at a range of different ways of handling conflict. Particular attention will be paid to mediation as an intervention and when it is appropriate to use it as a method of dealing with conflict in church settings. The different stages of the mediation process will be explored and appropriate skills at each stage will be identified.

Participants will have an opportunity to practice the art of mediating during the course.

The course will be accredited by the Open College Network and course members will consolidate their learning by completing a portfolio. Anyone with an interest in this area is welcome to attend. In addition, specific invitations to attend this course are being extended to Clergy and lay members of the following Churches; Methodist, Catholic, Friends, Presbyterian, Church of Ireland, Baptist and Fellowship Churches.

The course is being run under the auspices of Mediation Northern Ireland and will be led by staff and

associates of Mediation Northern Ireland.

The course will be held from September – November 2009, as a mix of evening and day seminars. The evening sessions run from 7pm – 10pm and the day sessions from 9.30am – 4.30pm.

The dates are:

Friday 18 and Saturday 19 September

Friday 2 and Saturday 3 October

Friday 16 and Saturday 17 October

Friday 6 and Saturday 7 November

Venue: Friends Meeting House in Frederick Street, Belfast.

Cost is £250 and includes: venue hire, tea, coffee, lunches and the fees associated with accreditation. The tutors on the course are working pro bono and so there is no charge for their services.

Those interested in attending the course should contact Elizabeth Weir on: Telephone: 028 38872177 or Mobile: 07720 036670 E-mail: libby1weir@yahoo.co.uk

Friday evenings 7:00pm – 10:00pm Saturdays 9:30am – 4:30pm



# Sikh Vaisakhi honours the Corrymeela Community

The work of the Corrymeela Community was honoured by Sikhs in England at London's Canary Wharf recently.

THE COMMUNITY was nominated for an outstanding contribution to 'creating trust between different religions' which was presented as part of the 2009 Sikh Vaisakhi festival. Vaisakhi marks the Sikh New Year and is one of the most important dates in the Sikh calendar. It also commemorates 1699, the year Sikhism was born as a collective faith.

Sikhism is a young world religion with approximately 20 million followers, the majority of whom live in the Punjab district of India and Pakistan.

Sikhs or 'disciples'

believe in one God who guides and protects them. They believe that everyone is equal before God. Sikhs aim to work honestly, share with others and lead a truthful life as part of their community.

Vaisakhi was epitomised for me by a small 'happening' which illuminated my day. Despite the closure of the Jubilee line I arrived early to await instructions on the Award Ceremony. I sat outside and watched Volunteers prepare food for hundreds of Londoners. I observed young girls in jewel coloured saris rehearse their dance routines. I noted the serious intent

of young male and female Sikhs as they executed their martial arts sequence. I listened to Bangra music and gave an impromptu radio interview. For me the atmosphere was reminiscent of Summerfest and Community weekends.

In the crowd, a woman came towards the space beside me; she was laden with coats, a pram, a baby and cups of tea for two!

I asked if I could lend a hand, meaning that I could hold the paper cups of tea – instead I got a little baby girl to play with as well as a cup of tea! Struck by the openness and trust of that small interaction I got into conversation with everyone around me. It transpired that this was no ordinary baby – this seven month year old had starred in two Disney productions. By coincidence her mother was also receiving an Award.

From Rani I learnt that the founding story of Sikhism is rooted in the martyrdom of the 9th Guru, who was publicly beheaded by Mughul ruler for protecting freedom of worship for both Sikhs and Hindus.

From Gurdev I re learnt that to be a Sikh means to follow the panj kakke (Five Ks) thus joining the Khalsa 'Community of the Pure'.

The five Ks include

- **Kesh:** Sikhs are not permitted to cut or dye their hair as this is changing the human image created by God
- **Kangha:** a small wooden comb in the hair as a sign of cleanliness
- **Kara:** a steel bracelet, a reminder to do good and be connected to God
- **Kachhera:** short cotton underwear, more practical for daily life than the traditional dhoti worn in India
- **Kirpaan:** a sword, to protect others and for protection

Having chatted to new friends and played with a surprising number of Sikh babies, I joined two other Award recipients on stage. On behalf of the Community, I accepted an award which recognised our 'strong leadership and skills in tackling inequalities between different groups, overcoming the fragmentation of communities and encouraging positive relationships between people from different religions.'

**Carmel Heaney**

Corrymeela Community Member





The  
**7th Generation**  
Project



THE  
CORRYMEELA  
COMMUNITY

The 7th Generation Project and Corrymeela invite you to:

**eco** equity  
system  
awareness  
conomy  
action

**Open Space on pathways  
towards rebalancing our  
sustainability equation**

**Friday 9th – Sunday 11th October 2009,  
Corrymeela Peace & Reconciliation Centre,  
Ballycastle, Northern Ireland**

Cost: £250\* per person

\*Low Wage/Student Rate & Scholarship information available

The structures and system of the Earth are out of balance. Our pathways are converging at crossing roads; in early December 2009 the leaders of the world's nations will come together in Copenhagen, Denmark. There they will decide, on our behalf, the future of International policy that will affect not just the course of climate change, but global economy and social justice alike.

It is our desire that the peoples of the earth are not silenced or immobilised as we face the realities of climate crisis, peak oil, global economic recession, mass human population growth, ecosystem collapse, poverty and personal fatigue. Rather we seek to acknowledge our common structural realities and map new pathways that may one day lead our world to a shared sustainable future. Despite the conference in Copenhagen we know that true change does not come from the top down, or outside in – such mechanisms open the door – true change grows from the bottom up, the inside out. Everyone has a role to play.

Now is our time. Centuries from now our future children and their children may well ask of the people of our time: "What prevented them from taking the necessary actions to fulfil their roles as guardians of our world?"

We invite you to join us at this Open Space event to further these conversations and our individual and corporate strategies for awareness and action, as we seek a sustainable future.

Contact Matt Scrimgeour for booking information:  
Email: [openevents@corrymeela.org](mailto:openevents@corrymeela.org)  
Phone: (+44) 028 2076 1726

# Fancy the pub?

PEOPLE UNDER-  
STANDING BORDERS,  
or PUB as it became  
affectionately known,  
is an innovative Youth  
Programme run by Ivan  
Cross, Corrymeela's Youth  
Co-ordinator. The sessions  
between young people  
North and South of the  
border, running from July  
2008 – April 2009, were  
brought to a celebratory  
end with an Easter  
Residential at Corrymeela's  
Ballycastle centre.

Below a PUB goer,  
shares her experience:

PUB was the chance I had  
been waiting for, a way  
to share Corrymeela with  
my friends - they had all  
heard endless stories of  
Corrymeela that brightened  
up many a gloomy Monday  
morning. We set off on 12th  
July 2008 - not the obvious  
choice for bringing nervous  
Dubliners to the North for  
the first time - but their

feelings and views of this  
place changed dramatically  
throughout the year.

The PUB Group, as we  
named it, was such a great  
adventure for us 'Dublin  
Girls;' my friends have had  
so many experiences and  
met people that they would  
never have otherwise come  
across.

The Easter conference  
is a memory that stands  
out. I will always remember  
the feeling Rachel, Vanessa  
and I had after leaving  
our first session. I was so  
proud of myself and my 'I  
hate speaking in front of  
people' mate. What PUB  
group taught us was not  
only the obvious things  
we had done during the  
weekend, but also that we  
now had the confidence  
and support to conduct  
facilitation sessions for  
people who were little  
more than strangers. It's  
all down to PUB, so thank  
you!"

**“The opportunity to be part of a new  
Corrymeela group; to take part in a  
programme we would construct the way we  
wanted and the chance to meet loads of new  
people...yes please!”**





# Creative connections with Corrymeela

OVER THE PAST FEW MONTHS, Corrymeela has had some amazing opportunities to partner with several different organisations to allow for easier and more creative ways of donating and support.

## Recycling means Each One Counts for Corrymeela

Fundraising for the community has got even easier through 'Each One Counts' recycling scheme.

Care for creation is high on the Corrymeela Community's priority list, so we are delighted to be able to give you the opportunity to help us meet this goal and raise much needed funds at the same time.

Each One Counts is an organisation that recycles used inkjet cartridges and mobile phones. Corrymeela will receive £1 for each recyclable cartridge and £3 for every, recyclable, mobile phone you send to them.

It is very straightforward, simply log onto [www.eachonecounts.co.uk](http://www.eachonecounts.co.uk) and follow the instructions. Once you have registered with Each One Counts they will send you a free post bag to pop the used inkjet cartridge or mobile into and off it goes.

When the agency receive recyclables from unregistered individuals the rate is halved and divided among all charities on their list so it's vital you sign up for Corrymeela to truly benefit.

If you are not web savvy and would like Corrymeela to send your used items on for you, please post them to our Belfast office: Corrymeela House, 8 Upper Crescent, Belfast, BT7 1NT. [www.eachonecounts.co.uk](http://www.eachonecounts.co.uk)

## Just Giving

Through the Just Giving programme, friends of Corrymeela now have the chance to fundraise in a

straightforward, modern way. Just Giving allows you the chance to create your own fundraising page for Corrymeela. You don't have to be 'a computer genius' to make it happen; creating a page is an easy, fast, and straight-forward way to get your message out.

For further information log onto: [www.justgiving.com](http://www.justgiving.com)

## Book Fair raises £1500

THE ORMEAU ROAD CELL set a precedent with their book fair in May, raising more than £1500 for Corrymeela, Trocaire and Christina Aid.

They brought the Ormeau Road's five worship centres together – a Chapel, two Presbyterian churches, a Methodist and a Church of Ireland - in order to create an inclusive event for the whole community.

Chief organiser Susie Morrow, Corrymeela member said, "We got the idea from a similar event in Scotland and thought it was a great way to fundraise and create a shared space. A staggering number of books were donated and we were delighted with the result after only two

hours of selling! It was lovely to be part of an event that was explicitly for three very different charities and that was the first of its kind in our area. We will definitely be doing it again next year."



# American Friends

THE CANBERRA Friends of Ireland Society celebrated St Patrick's Day with an ecumenical service that raised more than \$1000 for the work of Corrymeela. Canberra's Irish organisations, the Celtic Choir and Irish traditional musicians, provided music, poetry and reflections for the occasion.

The high profile gathering with representatives from the Embassy of Ireland, the European Union, the UK High Commission and diplomatic missions of other countries with historic ties to Ireland, was attended by well over 200 people.

The Corrymeela

Community was a prominent feature of the speeches and most poignantly Susan and Rod Page, who have stayed in Knocklayd, read two of Kathleen Davey's poems, explaining what the Community meant to them as Irish-Australians.

So powerful was the message that one woman who had never heard of Corrymeela was making enquiries about possible volunteering opportunities.

The service was a small but significant step forwards in our campaign to spread global awareness of the Community.

With thanks to Conor Bradley.



## Journey of 500 miles

MORE THAN A DECADE after seeds were sown, former long-term volunteer Michael Fryer, walked his talk when he completed the ancient pilgrimage route to Santiago de Compostela in north-west Spain recently.

Michael who first came to Corrymeela in 1996, started thinking about the pilgrimage during that year and we are delighted he has now met a life-long ambition and completed the route.

What's more Michael used the opportunity to raise money for Corrymeela's long-term volunteer team and has donated £530 to our work. To read about his journey turn to page 33.



## Ballyhackamore Golf Society dedicate 2008 to Corrymeela

CORRYMEELA WAS DELIGHTED to receive a donation of £2,020 from Ballyhackamore Golf Society. Kate Pettis, Chair of the Corrymeela Council received the cheque from Joan Greyston, a founding member at the Society's Annual Dinner. She said, "Ballyhackamore Golf Society is a wonderful example of Corrymeela in action. Arising from the relationship built up over many years between members of Gilnahirk Presbyterian Church and St. Colmcilles Catholic Church at Ballyhackamore this group of people has shared fun and laughter and knows a thing or two about the importance of relationships. Under the captaincy of Helen Baird they have swung their clubs round many a golf course and organised quizzes and dances – all for the benefit of Corrymeela! We thank everyone involved and

send every good wish for the future."

Ballyhackamore Golf Society is a friendly, cross community group of people of all ages and golfing abilities who not only enjoy playing golf on different courses, but raise funds for local charities.

Its core members are from two local churches, St. Colmcille's Catholic and Gilnahirk Presbyterian. As some members are also associated with Corrymeela, it was agreed that it should be the chosen charity for the 2008 year. One golfing event and two quiz nights were held to raise the £2,020.

Corrymeela wishes to thank everyone who actively fundraises for the work of the charity. Without your support we would not be able to deliver the wide range of programmes that are key to peace-building in Northern Ireland and even further afield.





## Knocklayd Open Events

### Walking Together

Friday 10 – Tuesday 14 July 2009

A long weekend of rambling along the coast and through the Glens of Antrim. Non-resident participants are warmly welcome.

### Sponsored Walk

Saturday 18 July 2009

For the more energetic, why not join Edward Lane on Saturday 18 July? Edward will be completing a sponsored walk in aid of Corrymeela around the Coleraine-Portstewart-Portrush-Coleraine triangle. The final route has yet to be decided and may depend on weather conditions on the day, but who could resist this opportunity to ramble 15 miles or so along some of the most beautiful coastline in the world, taking in part of the North West 200 route.



## Ballycastle Open Events

### Gardening Weekend

Friday 11– Sunday 13 September 2009

Enjoy a weekend working in Knocklayd's beautiful gardens in exchange for food and accommodation. Led by Kate Graham, Carol Press, and the Corrymeela Community.

### Painting for Pleasure

Friday 2 – Sunday 4 October 2009

These weekends are for those who enjoy painting/ art and wish to experience the changing seasonal beauty of Knocklayd and Glenshesk. Led by Raymond Bakewell and the Corrymeela Community.

### Thomas Merton Retreat Weekend

Friday 16 – Sunday 18 October 2009

A 'Time Apart' for silence, prayer, contemplation and personal reflection.

### 'Less is More' Retreat

Friday 23 – Sunday 25 October 2009

A time to put aside the hectic pace of our lives and remember who we really are, practicing the principle of 'Less is More'. Where time is simply the moment we are living in, we will share food, fun, faith and friendship. There will be times of silence, liturgies and celebrations aimed to help us re-connect with one another and with what makes 'our hearts burn within us'. The weekend will be founded on a 'spirituality of subtraction' and we hope that with very little, we will create a lot. Led by Maria Garvey and other members of L'Arche Belfast.

### Enneagram Weekend

Friday 13 – Sunday 15 November 2009

Time Out to Find Yourself. A tool for improving self-knowledge and relationships. Led by Aidan Hart.

### Ballycastle Nativity Play

Saturday 28 November 2009

Usher in the holiday season and support local talent. In partnership with the Moyle council's Spreading Wings programme, Ballycastle High School and Cross & Passion College.

### Christmas Open Day

Sunday 13 December 2009 (2:00 – 6:00pm)

An open day for families including Christmas singing, music, arts and crafts, storytelling, and drama. With special guest visitor!

### Advent Retreat

Friday 4 – Sunday 6 December 2009

Prepare for Christmas with the Knocklayd Team. Join us for spiritual meditations and discussion, crafts, song and decorations.

For further information  
on all our events  
or to register log on to:  
[www.corrymeela.org](http://www.corrymeela.org)





# Knocklayd Open Day

## Saturday 6th June

WHAT A DAY OF EXCITEMENT and activity at the Corrymeela Knocklayd Retreat Centre for the annual Open Day! While there were seven different areas with crafts and sale items available, the most active place was the dining area, where folks enjoyed tea/coffee with scones and many other delectable sweets, visiting with each other, and enjoying the beauty of the Knocklayd mountain setting.

We were very fortunate to have a dry day with a bit of a breeze, which allowed the children to do some outside chalk drawings, and also some folks to enjoy their tea on the patio outside the dining room.

Items for sale included paper-back books, paintings, flower plants and garden plants, jams and jellies, baked goods, and of course, the edibles mentioned earlier. A number of donations were received in addition to the sales made. With a goodly number of folks passing through the doors, a number for the first time, and the very gracious help of most members of the Knocklayd committee, the day was a success from the standpoint of the cooperative effort and the total of the sales.



**Jake and Nancy Rittenhouse**  
Resident Volunteers



# Profile of a mid-term volunteer

OVER THE PAST FEW MONTHS the Ballycastle centre has greatly benefited from the help of a number of mid-term volunteers. We appreciate their hard work, fun and commitment to our centre. Chris Albrecht, a Jesuit Priest from Switzerland wrote the following about his four month experience:

I'm Christoph Albrecht, a Jesuit Priest and Doctor of Theology. I was born in 1966 in Basel, Switzerland.

My first professional training was a 4 year apprenticeship in precision-instrument making, after which I studied electrical engineering. When I was 23 I entered the religious order of the Jesuits. I went on to study philosophy and theology in Munich, Paris and Innsbruck, also spending two years in Bolivia teaching in a boarding school for teenagers from poor families.

From 2004-2008 I was spiritual advisor and programme director of a Jesuit centre in Fribourg, Switzerland.

Over the past nine months I have been following a Jesuit intern further training to deepen my spiritual life. One element of this training is a placement in an apostolic or a social project. Having studied conflict management and communication, I chose the Corrymeela Community because I believe the work of dialogue and reconciliation on all levels of society, culture and religion is one the most urgent issues facing our society.

I have learnt a lot from the ecumenical approach and long, rich experience of this Community.

**Christoph Albrecht**





# The Parting Glass

## Peace and joy be with you



**RACHEL CRAIG,** Corrymeela Family and Community Worker, has been a semi-permanent fixture of Corrymeela Ballycastle for decades.

As evident in the elegant willow swans hung high, flying in the rafters, her creative

message of peace remains scattered throughout the halls and in our hearts. While Rachel will keep Corrymeela near as she continues her presence as a Community Member, she is embarking on a new professional chapter in her life. We here at Corrymeela acknowledge her tremendous contribution to Corrymeela's mission and to Centre life itself, including her impact on countless volunteers, fellow staff, visitors and groups.

Rachel has been involved in working for reconciliation in Northern Ireland for over 30 years. Most of this has been focused through her membership with the Corrymeela Community.

Volunteering in many capacities since 1977, she joined the full-time programme team in 1999

and has worked as our Programme Resource Co-ordinator and Family and Community Worker.

Rachel took a special interest in developing the Creative Art Learning/ Experiential Learning programme at the Centre and has led a synthesising of this into a holistic approach to Trauma Recovery for those who have been victims of the inter-community conflict in Northern Ireland. She remarks of her recent post, 'I think Corrymeela is a fantastic resource for family work as children have less freedom of movement and are becoming captive children in their homes. We have the space and possibility to let them play, imagine and create in beautiful surroundings.'

In 2007 Rachel qualified as an accredited trainer in the Dialogue for Peaceful Change (DPC) conflict management methodology and has worked in Kenya, Nova Scotia and Northern Ireland on these programmes. In 2005 Rachel helped co-found Different Tracks, a social entrepreneurship company working to build sustainable communities.

Thank you Rachel for all that you are and all you have done, we raise our glass to you. Blessings and peace be with you.

**Ada Ketchie**

**“We have the space and possibility to let them play, imagine and create in beautiful surroundings”**

Dear Everyone,

I just wanted to send a big thank you for being all kinds of support whilst I was working for Corrymeela. From 1977, my first volunteering encounter and then on from 1990 with Colin and the boys to this March 2009. Like you all, it's woven through me so much, inspired and stretched me being part of you all and this place. For those too, who come through from all over the world. Thank you xx

With lots of love and looking forward to seeing at the Community weekend soon.

Rachel Craig

My new e-mail address is [rachelhupit@gmail.com](mailto:rachelhupit@gmail.com)

# Sponsor a young person to become a peace-builder, through our Long-Term Volunteering programme

THE VOLUNTEERING PROGRAMME lies at the heart of Corrymeela. People of all ages, from different countries, and from many different traditions come to visit Corrymeela. Volunteers give generously of their time, anything from a few days, a month, to a year, or even two.

Some bring specific skills such as group facilitation, arts and crafts or administration, some have recognised training or qualifications in teaching or youth work. Others have little or no formal qualifications but bring enthusiasm and a commitment to the ethos and vision of Corrymeela. Long-term volunteers stay for a

year or more, mid-term volunteers commit for a period of anything from two weeks to six months.

Corrymeela is a charity and every year we need to raise over 50% of our income from voluntary donations and non-government grants. Perhaps you or your family could make a donation to support the work of our volunteers? Every penny received makes a difference and no donation is too small or too big!

Please get in touch with Jo Watson on 028 9050 8080 or email her at [jowatson@corrymeela.org](mailto:jowatson@corrymeela.org) if you would like to sponsor a young person or family visit to the Corrymeela Centre.

## Have you read 'The Shack'?

**Fiction cannot deliver completeness. God does not appear unambiguously. This may be frustrating for religious people who want answers plonked down in novels, preferably in banal prose, but it is the truth.**



A NUMBER OF CORRYMEELA MEMBERS have been asking me: Have you read The Shack?

Yes, I have now read The Shack. The Shack is at one level truly terrible and deeply sentimental fiction. What it also shows is that God and Christ, let alone the Holy Spirit, cannot be credibly portrayed in fiction.

Good fiction written by committed Christians, such as Muriel Spark, Flannery O'Connor, Marilynne Robinson for example, can bring us into the realm of mystery, incongruity, strangeness, obliqueness, absurdity - Christian writers are often comic writers - the absence or the odd presence of a quality that can be described as 'grace', and the presence of the 'good' and sometimes its profound absence.

These novelists raise 'religious' questions - but questions that cannot be answered in the context of fiction. Fiction cannot deliver completeness. God does not appear unambiguously. This may be

frustrating for religious people who want answers plonked down in novels, preferably in banal prose, but it is the truth.

If people want to read good fiction, written by a Christian writer, they should look at the recently republished collected short stories of Flannery O'Connor; one of the truly great American writers of the 20th century. A really fierce Catholic, she wrote about southern fundamentalist 'freaks' that good liberals would shudder at. She knew about absurdity and she had a merciless eye for hypocrisy - including liberal middle class hypocrisy.

What good can be said about The Shack, then? The emphasis of The Shack's theology is on relationships, love, forgiveness and reconciliation. There is laughter and fun - this is a Trinity that you would want to be in relationship with, and to have conversation with. There is a gracious orthodoxy, rather than a graceless, judgemental fundamentalism. And that cannot be bad.

**David Stevens**

*Do you agree? Write and tell us.*



*And yet no other corner in this land  
Offers in shape and colour all I need  
For sight to touch the mind with living light*

*from The Glens, John Hewitt*



All extracts on pages 21-22 from David Stevens' speech at the official opening ceremony

# President McAleese opens new state-of-the-art residential facilities for Corrymeela

**This is the North of Ireland today, a place of broken history, a contested present, and a hope that all these comminglings will lead to a better history. This is a place which dares to speak of moving beyond brokenness to healing**

David Stevens

FRIDAY APRIL 3RD proved to be an exciting and historic day for Corrymeela. Irish President Mary McAleese made her way to the North Coast and officially opened the new £1.4m residential centre in Ballycastle.

Over the next 30 years, the new energy efficient centre, called “Coventry”, will be home to more than 7,500 long-term and short-term international volunteers working to help us deliver a wide range of community programmes.

This new accommodation, offering self-contained and shared living spaces, also expands upon and begins to accomplish, the community’s wish to, “create safe spaces where people of diverse backgrounds can come and meet each other, where

there is an atmosphere of trust and acceptance and where differences can be acknowledged, explored and accepted.”

Leader of the Corrymeela Community Dr. David Stevens said, “We want the new Coventry House to be an international place of sharing with others and with the volunteers, who are vital to the life and continued work of Corrymeela. We are grateful to all our funders and donors who have generously funded this excellent building. It will enable us to offer more volunteering opportunities to a more diverse group of people.”

The International Fund for Ireland contributed £1m to the capital build (delivered through the Northern Ireland Rural Development Council);







while the Community Relations Council, which administers measure 2.1 (Reconciliation for Sustainable Peace) of the EU Peace II programme, awarded over £250,000 and Ulster Garden Villages Ltd charitable trust granted an additional £100,000. The remainder of the funding was raised by Corrymeela.

Denis Rooney, CBE, Chairman of the International Fund for Ireland, said: "The Fund for Ireland has been a long term supporter of the Corrymeela Community and as such is delighted to have contributed £1m to its new residential

centre and in turn support the vital contribution made by the volunteers every year. The project forms an important part of the Fund's Leaving a Legacy strand of work which aims to make a long term contribution to peace building and integration on the island of Ireland." The opening of this fresh, contemporary residential centre marks the end of phase one of Corrymeela's building project. The final phase includes the building of a new £2.2m village complex which will provide modern group accommodation for the many groups that stay at Corrymeela each year.



*Right Reverend Bishop John Stroyan  
with the Cross of Nails*

"RAY DAVEY, the founder of Corrymeela, stretched our imaginations to take on the suffering of a wider world.

In a sense Corrymeela has its origins in the rubble of Dresden, which he was in a few hours before it was bombed in February 1945. Not the bombings of Belfast. This leads me to another bombed city, Coventry.

Following the destruction of Coventry's medieval Cathedral in 1940 a charred cross was erected behind the altar amid the ruins and later the inscription "Father Forgive" was made on the stonework. Three of the roof nails were put together into the form of a cross, the Cross of Nails, and this later became the symbol for an international movement of healing and reconciliation, at first between Dresden and Coventry but later extending to a world-wide network of Cross of Nails Centres. Corrymeela became a Cross of Nails in September 1971 and the first Coventry House was largely funded by the Coventry Cathedral Cross of Nails Network under the inspiration of Provost Williams and Canon Horace Dammers. It was opened in 1976."

**"Ray Davey,  
the founder of Corrymeela  
stretched our  
imaginations  
to take on the  
suffering of a  
wider world"**





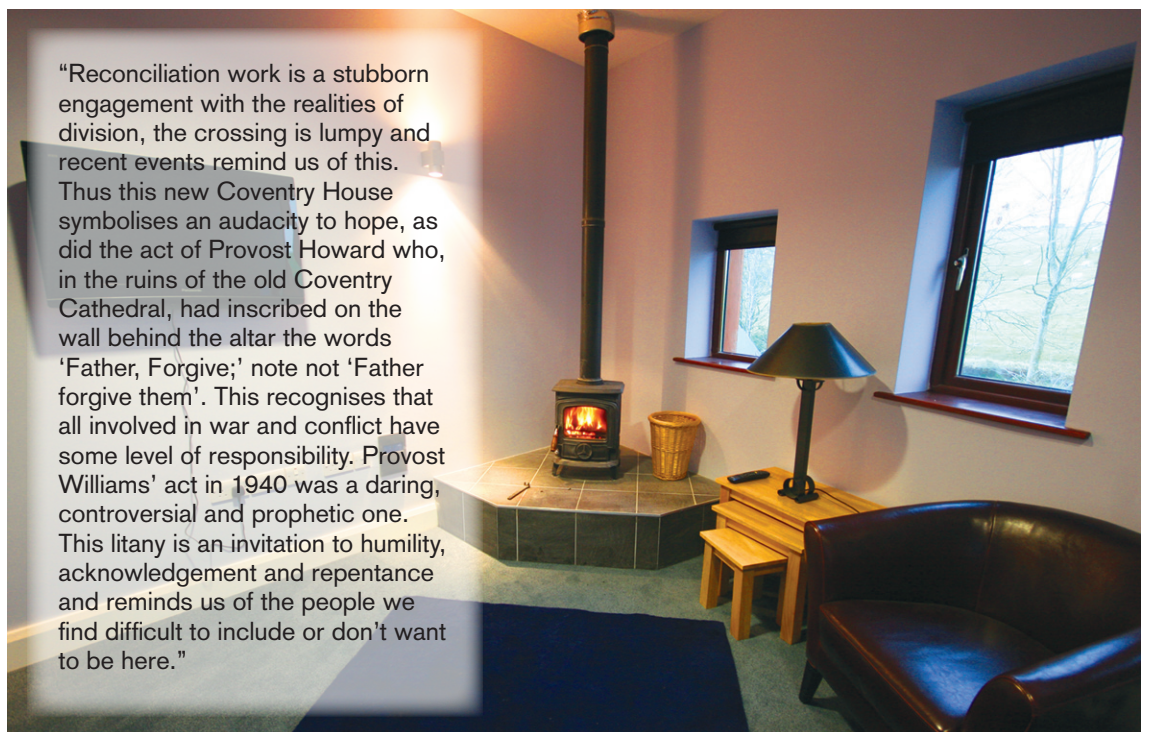
“THE FIRST Coventry House was home to more than 300 one-year volunteers as well as some permanent staff, it was a meeting point across many international cultures and traditions.

This residential house was a place of sharing where our young people could meet their contemporaries from other cultures through living and learning together in community. We want the new Coventry House also to be a place of encounter. John Morrow, the second Leader of Corrymeela, said of the first Corrymeela Coventry

House. ‘It is an important physical symbol and reminder of our international solidarity with movements for healing the wounds of history in many parts of the earth. It reminds us that our wounds are not so unique as we think and that in sharing with others we can deepen our own understanding as well as share our experiences and healing with others.’ We want the new Coventry House to be an international place of sharing with others.”

**“Reconciliation work is a stubborn engagement with the realities of division, the crossing is lumpy and recent events remind us of this.”**

“Reconciliation work is a stubborn engagement with the realities of division, the crossing is lumpy and recent events remind us of this. Thus this new Coventry House symbolises an audacity to hope, as did the act of Provost Howard who, in the ruins of the old Coventry Cathedral, had inscribed on the wall behind the altar the words ‘Father, Forgive;’ note not ‘Father forgive them’. This recognises that all involved in war and conflict have some level of responsibility. Provost Williams’ act in 1940 was a daring, controversial and prophetic one. This litany is an invitation to humility, acknowledgement and repentance and reminds us of the people we find difficult to include or don’t want to be here.”





COVENTRY OPENING





# THE LITANY OF RECONCILIATION

Following the bombing of the Coventry Mediaeval Cathedral in 1940, Provost Howard had the words 'Father Forgive' inscribed on the wall behind the Altar of the ruined building. These words are used as the response in the Coventry Litany of Reconciliation, which is prayed in the ruins every Friday at noon, and is used throughout the world by the Community of the Cross of Nails and was recited at our Coventry House opening.

*All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.*

*The hatred which divides nation from nation, race from race, class from class,*  
**Father Forgive.**

*The covetous desires of people and nations to possess what is not their own,*  
**Father Forgive.**

*The greed which exploits the work of human hands and lays waste the earth,*  
**Father Forgive.**

*Our envy of the welfare and happiness of others,*  
**Father Forgive.**

*Our indifference to the plight of the imprisoned, the homeless, the refugee,*  
**Father Forgive.**

*The lust which dishonours the bodies of men, women and children,*  
**Father Forgive.**

*The pride which leads us to trust in ourselves and not in God,*  
**Father Forgive.**

*Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another,  
as God in Christ forgave you.*





# The murder of Kevin McDaid

THE MURDER of Kevin McDaid was a lynch-mob killing - a planned attack on 'Catholics' by a murderous crowd without thought for the human costs or consequences. As in any hate crime, human beings were reduced to the value of some hated symbol- in this case football tops, colours, addresses and labels. All that mattered to the murderers in the Heights was that Kevin McDaid was one of 'them'. Sometimes sectarianism can be denied- this time there can be no doubting that the 'motive' for murder was a hatred of others so deep that the lives of their victims were treated as secondary.

In the twisted logic of hatred, the McDaid's were some sort of 'legitimate target', legitimate, we can only presume, because they were of the 'wrong sort'. But the only thing which strikes everyone looking on is the hatred and the devastation of the McDaid family.

The return of the violence of 'us and them' to the streets of Coleraine might be an isolated tragic event, were it not for the fact that it reminds us all of a pattern of fear and loathing which has deep roots around here- sectarianism and the division it spawns. It is to be hoped that the devastation of the violence is enough to cause everyone to hold back but it does not take many incidents for people to start retreating behind the old barricades for fear that we might be next. Already this year we have seen dissident killings and serious sectarian incidents from Rasharkin to Lurgan and from Belfast to the Fountain. It does not take a genius to conclude that sectarianism is still alive and kicking. All it takes is someone else in another small town to act on this logic and trust starts to weaken everywhere. As long as 'they' still hate 'us', 'we' will have to defend ourselves - and so the 'them and us' cycle goes on.

On one level, none of this is surprising. It is hardly news that Northern Ireland still operates on the basis of 'us' and 'them'. What is important this time is that we recognise it for what it is - a poisonous hatred which threatens to undermine the promise of a shared and better future. By some counts, we are now fifteen years into a peace process, a process which only makes sense if former enemies become partners. Being partners does not mean that we pretend that our differences have magically disappeared. But it does involve a real recognition that the future for me depends on a fair and equal relationship with you and a commitment to make it work for everyone. Enemies aim at the other's destruction. Partners work for the best deal for everyone - now and in the future.

What is certain is that partnership cannot be reconciled with ongoing hatred and violence of all things Catholic or Protestant, all things British

or Irish. Them or us is the politics of exclusion, segregation and fear. At its core is a desire to drive the other out, the politics of ethnic cleansing across the world. What the events of the last months show is that we cannot have partnership in public and then retreat into sectarianism in private. We cannot have peace and harmony for the international audience and 'our old traditional enemies' for home consumption. When the First and Deputy First Minister stand together in the face of violence, the partnership seems real. Yet the language of the election still seems worryingly familiar.

Apartheid is always about separate, but it is never about equal. It always about keeping the other down and out, an enemy who can never be trusted who must be watched with suspicion at every turn. The rhetoric of a shared and better future depends on establishing that we have become partners - no longer seeking each other's destruction but embarked on a radically different chapter where the other's fears matter, because my own security depends on seeking ways to address them.

If anything good can come out of this terrible murder, it would be a public recognition that the sectarianism which tolerates hating another's identity to the point of murder is a live poison which must now be finally faced and ended. Sectarian hate crime does not come from nowhere, but grows straight out of the everyday experience of them and us. It is all too clear that we are not yet comfortable with the truth that our former mortal enemies are now our permanent partners. So the logic and language of them and us, of enemy tribes is still there every day in politics, and in daily life - with or without an Old Firm game. Careless talk still costs lives.

Sharing the future here is not a choice. Short of ethnic cleansing, it is our fate to live in a place where there will be both British and Irish, Nationalist and Unionist, Protestant and Catholic and much more besides. But if we are serious about making it a better future the habit of keeping the sectarian pot bubbling, of looking out only for our own, of offering justifications for our discrimination and violence while condemning theirs, and of building ever higher walls rather than sharing the space for all, will have to stop and the logic of partnership made into the key principle of public and community life. We can't go on with the old patterns of hostility and expect a different result.

## Duncan Morrow

CEO of the Community Relations Council and Corrymeela Community Member.



'Old Firm' game refers to the regular football fixture between Glasgow Rangers and Glasgow Celtic



# I am... Jacob Jeyaseelan

I AM JACOB JEYASEELAN and I applied through the Sri Lankan Methodist Church to become a volunteer at Corrymeela. I received a Scholarship (SALT) from the British Methodist church and so I am co-sponsored by Corrymeela and the Methodist Church to be here as a long-term volunteer.

Despite coming from a very different background in everything from culture to language, community and the weather, I felt very welcomed and accepted by all the people in Corrymeela. It is a beautiful place with a unique blend of cultures, languages, nationalities, generations and much much more...

When I consider Corrymeela's breathtaking location and all the factors that make up this exceptional place, I know God's blessings are richly abundant here.

## I am volunteering because...

Jesus himself guided me to this place. That's why I'm here. What God has done in my life is so amazing. Almost five years ago I had a vision of a beautiful landscape like Ballycastle; it took a long time for me to understand the vision. Before I faced the volunteering interview in Sri Lanka, I visited the website and was completely shocked when I saw the photos.

Coincidentally at this time I met Michael Fryer, who had been a long-term volunteer nearly 10 years before. I met him in my hometown of Batticaloa, during a peace and reconciliation workshop. This was unbelievable for me. Michael shared his experiences as a volunteer with me and taught me so much about Corrymeela. All these things encouraged me and I felt God confirmed his word through these incidents and so I was moved by this, by his Spirit, to make what would be the most wonderful decision I have ever made in my life. I'm in the place where God wants me to be and that

fills me with joy.

Corrymeela has been a great blessing in my life; I will never ever forget my life as a volunteer, a life I am proud of. Jesus said, "Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve" Matthew 20:28; this verse is a challenge for me and I must act on it - what a wonderful opportunity to serve and learn in Corrymeela.

## I am looking forward to...

As Ray Davey said 'Corrymeela begins when you leave', I'm looking forward to working towards peace in my country. Sri Lanka has been in the headlines a great deal because of the civil conflict and I believe we still have a long way to go to build a real peace among the community. The country was also badly affected by the tsunami in December 2004.

I feel God wants me to help those who are vulnerable in some way and the experience and learning I have gained from living in Northern Ireland and working in Corrymeela will definitely help me to contribute back home.

For me, to move forward with focus, the two questions we need to keep asking ourselves are: Who are we? and Why are we doing this?

If the Lord my God opens the door for me, I hope to come and study in Belfast Bible College where I can also work as a short-term volunteer.

As the Bible says, God has a perfect time for everything; sometimes we worry about our future but one thing I know is that through Christ my past has gone and by living through Him my future is secure.

## J. Jacob Jeshanth

j.jeshanth@yahoo.com

Jacob is a long-term volunteer at Corrymeela Centre, Ballycastle

**"God has a perfect time for everything"**





# The Wildflowers of Peace

IT WAS ONLY NATURAL that Northern Ireland's first snow in three years should fall during the very week in February I arrived. I had come here to learn about conflict resolution and social change, to build relationships with new types of people, and to escape the 'frozen tundra' I had left behind at home in Minnesota for a few months. And although the climatic conditions weren't perfect, Corrymeela fulfilled my first two aspirations more than I dreamed possible and paved the way for my eventual return to the States to be one of renewed hope and enthusiasm for the future.

My first few weeks in Northern Ireland were spent on the North Coast examining the country's political and social history. My class read endless stories and listened to lectures about violence and sectarianism on a daily basis. But when I packed my bags for my work-experience with Corrymeela in Belfast, I felt somewhat removed from the situation and unsure what I could bring to the table in terms of peace-building and conflict resolution.

My first few days working in the Belfast office of Corrymeela were a whirlwind of trying to fit in as a co-worker, rather than a foreign student,

making connections with people very different than myself, and trying to find my "niche" in the office. The initial experience complemented everything I had learned during my first few weeks here, but it wasn't until I joined Nicola McKeown and Ivan Cross in helping to facilitate their school and youth cross-community programmes, that I began to fully recognize the scars the past has left behind and the slow but sure process of building a peaceful future from the bottom up.

On my day accompanying Nicola, I saw first-hand what type of interaction takes place in a typical cross-community school programme, and I began to understand what I could contribute towards peace-building. Nicola led a discussion about the meaning of colours and symbols, and I got a chance to speak with the children about their interpretations. Some children said they were "intimidated" or "scared" of either the red, white and blue combination or the green, white and orange, and I realised that by simply discussing this, it helped them to see there is no reason to be afraid and created common bonds.

The children were also curious and had certain preconceived ideas about me as an American.

**"The programme began with two distinct groups of youths sitting opposite each other. It ended with one big group of youths trying to hide in each other's buses home."**

**“The programme began with two distinct groups of youths sitting opposite each other. It ended with one big group of youths trying to hide in each other’s buses home.”**

However, further interaction and discussion clearly allowed them to begin to separate stereotypes from the girl sitting in front of them. I was extremely moved when two girls, a Protestant and a Catholic, approached me and held out a small handful of wildflowers. This simple action rounded out the day in terms of my understanding of the difference Corrymeela and other cross-community programmes are making in community relations and peace-building, as well as the importance these programmes have in the future of Northern Ireland.

The following weekend I helped facilitate a Youth Programme at the Ballycastle Centre with Ivan Cross. The weekend gave me a chance to work with teenagers from inside and outside of Northern Ireland and illustrated for me Corrymeela’s ability to provide reconciliation and community-relations support to many types of people, despite age or background. As with the Primary School, the programme began with two distinct groups of youths sitting opposite each other, but it ended with one big group trying to hide in each other’s buses home.

While cancelling my airline ticket back to the States has crossed my mind a few times, my push to return home was spurred on by the thought that I would be able to carry what I had learned in Corrymeela and Northern Ireland, back with me to Minnesota.

Facilitating co-existence, witnessing steps towards a peaceful future, and learning about the



fusion of different backgrounds and cultures is something that anyone, anywhere can relate to and benefit from. Even if it’s something as small as mending a broken friendship, learning to forgive and compromise, or reaching out to a stranger. My experience at Corrymeela has shown me that if children from cross communities in Northern Ireland can work together and begin to forget which school uniform they wear, then peace and social equality can be achieved in any community, regardless of size or location.

Thank you, Corrymeela for allowing the future to look that much more brilliant.

**Karen Gregory**



Karen Gregory spent the spring of 2009 as an international student studying peace and social justice in Northern Ireland, as well as doing work placement in Corrymeela’s Belfast office. Her interests include travelling, cooking, reading, sustainability and learning more about global issues.





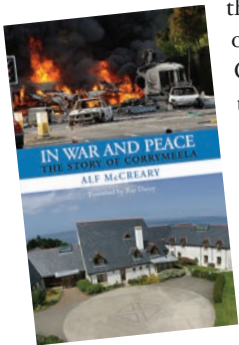
# Behind the headlines



THE OFFICIAL OPENING of the new Coventry House by President Mary McAleese recently brought back memories of the previous main structure on the same site, and also of the people who had helped to make it happen.

When I wrote the first book on Corrymeela a long time ago, the story of the Coventry Cross of Nails was fresh in the collective memory. From that perspective of time, the Second World War had scarcely ended and the fresh, vivid memories of Corrymeela’s founder, Ray Davey, were inspiring a new generation to work for a permanent peace in Northern Ireland, which so badly needed political stability even then .

A period of relative calm and prosperity since the end of the War had papered the cracks between the main communities, but none in the early Sixties, even at Corrymeela, thought that the upheaval would be so traumatic as it turned out to be.



The early image of the Coventry Cross of Nails was a sufficient reminder that Northern Ireland was undergoing its own torture, but the Coventry network

was also an assurance that we were not alone in our suffering. Thus Coventry House was a daily reminder of universal conflict, and also an important practical asset to help sustain the continuing task of peace-making in Northern Ireland.

Now that the former Coventry House has been replaced by a new structure, does this mean that the task of peace-making has finished? Far from it. As the current Corrymeela Leader Dr David Stevens keeps reminding everyone, we are merely at

a different stage of a difficult journey.

Lord Eames, the former Church of Ireland Primate, noted recently that while Northern Ireland has made, “unbelievable political progress, it remains questionable how far it has experienced true reconciliation.” This is all the more reason why Corrymeela, and other peace-making communities and organisations, must continue with their efforts, despite the difficulty in finding new funding.

One of the problems of the so-called “Peace Process” is that so many outsiders believe that the Good Friday Agreement has in effect solved the Irish problem. It may have pointed the way, but a painfully slow process is still evolving towards a lasting settlement.

Those with the perspective of history will know that a weary British Government thought that it might be sowing the seeds of peace through a “temporary” partition in the early 1920s, but how wrong they were.

There is a danger of history repeating itself, and the former Presbyterian Moderator the Very Revd Dr Donald Patton warned recently that “things could go sour” and that unless people were vigilant, the recent peace process which was so painfully put together could, in fact, unravel.

It is the constant mission of everyone, and not least those in Corrymeela, to make sure that this does not happen. The new Coventry House accommodation is a timely and welcome facility to help further that mission, but its very presence is a reminder of the pain of the past, and a visible warning that in human affairs, nothing – and particularly peace itself – can ever be taken for granted.

**Alf McCreary**

**In War and Peace  
The Story of  
Corrymeela**  
by Alf McCreary  
is available from  
Corrymeela House  
(028 9050 8080)  
at £8.99 plus p&p



# All the small things

LAST NOVEMBER, Corrymeela introduced Emma Cowan as the new Faith and Life worker. Emma's role is to develop ways of engaging individuals on social and ethical issues. This is being achieved through a series of events under the banner of AKT - Activism from the Kitchen Table.

The first AKT event in February was an outstanding success. I caught up with Emma to find out how she's getting on and to explore Faith and Life from her perspective.

**“People need to realise the issues of faith and life can be incredibly basic and practical - we actually need to find faith in life”**



activism from the kitchen table

## What does Faith and Life look like from your perspective?

Faith and Life is about making people aware of their motives for getting involved with the many forms of activism. Our aim is to explore these issues and empower individuals to change society.

Our first AKT event, The Crunch Back, looked at the economic situation. It was a perfect topic for us to kick off the project because it provided real-life

examples of how people can manage their money, live on less, develop a spirituality of the Sabbath, and exchange time instead of money. We plan to use its round-table discussion format in future AKT events, because this allows for a cross-fertilisation of people and ideas through naturally flowing conversations. The feedback was fantastic – many people were interested in coming to further events and wanted to sign up for the online social network

[www.aktion.ning](http://www.aktion.ning).

AKT enables a wide mix of people to gather together and deal with contemporary issues that affect us all. Everyone has something to offer, and by recognising that, we can begin to build our own faith and activism.

## How important do you think the next generation's role will be in determining our future in regards to Faith and Life?

Their role will not only engage with the traditional ecumenical issues between divided denominations, but between an array of many faiths, as well as none.

You don't have to have a religious "faith" in order to be an activist. What's important is to recognise the small things you can do to help the world and find meaning.

The older generation can help through leading by example and demonstrating balanced lives where it's not all about our 'doing', but our 'being' and our spirituality. Part of what Corrymeela offers is successful examples of people in the workplace





making positive, practical changes in many different ways.

### **How and for what reasons do you think people become motivated to get involved in issues of global injustice?**

People need to encounter an issue that touches their hearts in order to be inspired to take action. Getting involved creates a platform for learning and growth. When we learn to live not just for ourselves, we come to see ourselves as part of a wider “global family” and this creates a sustainable passion to help with global injustice.

Our deepest desires for friendship, community, self-worth and meaning come from this realisation. Unfortunately we often get side-tracked with the allure of new and more “stuff”. This is where older generations can teach us lessons. Many of them had much less than we have today and appreciated it much more.

Today’s society and future generations have to become much more conscious of the need to “fix” things, literally and metaphorically. We must adopt classic principals such as reuse, renew, recycle. We must learn to buy locally, use less, ride bicycles and support ethical companies. All of these are small steps towards making a difference in the world.

Consider Margaret Mead’s words: “Never doubt what a small group of citizens can do to change the world. In fact, this is the only thing that will.”

### **What are some of the barriers in today’s society that prevent people from getting more involved in social and ethical issues?**

We live in an age with endless access to information and this can be extremely overwhelming and disempowering. One of the greatest challenges of getting involved and inspired is to overcome the feeling like there is just too much out there and that one human’s actions won’t make a difference.

Motivation comes from realising that small acts of kindness, like smiling at a stranger, are activism. Whether it’s going on a march, writing to a decision maker, fundraising for a charity, buying fair trade products or using public transport, people need to know that every bit matters.

### **Karen Gregory**

As this edition of Corrymeela was going to print, preparation for the second AKT event took place. Emma said, “One Hundred Thousand (ways to) Welcome promises to be a space where we will welcome one another in a spirit of friendship and enquiry. We want to create a place where we can talk freely around a table, and enjoy a cup of tea. From these conversations, I hope that we can all take away at least one thing that we can follow up and AKT upon.”

# Face to Face Faith to Faith

CORRYMEELA is to host a multi-faith youth leadership programme. The annual Face to Face, Faith to Faith project involves 60 Jewish, Muslim and Christian teenagers from the United States, Northern Ireland, South Africa and the Middle East. Over the course of the year they will engage in dialogue and interactive activities relating to issues of peace, violence and social responsibility.

The programme is open to young leader types aged 16-18. It will begin with an intensive and creative two-week summer programme at a residential camp facility in New York from 28 June-12 July. On their return, the participants will undertake a number of follow-up activities, including five gatherings and a residential, each designed to build upon their experiences in the States.

The programme works to enhance participants’ knowledge and understanding of their own faith traditions; nurture an advanced understanding of other religions, cultures and people; inform participants about the call of religious teachings to engage in public and world issues; and increase participants’ ability to collaborate across lines of religion, culture, class and ethnicity to make a better world.

Following the summer intensive, participants will return home and continue to utilize and develop communication and leadership skills learned during the summer programme. In addition to engaging in continued interfaith dialogue, they will devise and implement activities in their home communities designed to promote social justice, interfaith understanding and reconciliation.

Face to Face, Faith to Faith takes its name and inspiration from the biblical text of Genesis 33v10, “For truly to see your face is like seeing the face of God,” when Jacob and his estranged brother, Esau, the twin sons of Isaac, reconcile.

While the participants are not required to be ‘religious’ there ought to be an openness to spirituality, dialogue and encounter with people of other faiths.

Please get in touch with Emma Cowan if you are interested in receiving more information and an application form. Contact [emmawcowan@corrymeela.org](mailto:emmawcowan@corrymeela.org)

**“For truly to see your face is like seeing the face of God”**

Genesis 33v10



# The tree of life

I STILL RETAIN after many years a most vivid memory of the first weeks I spent in an Italian prison camp. It was in the middle of the summer and in very miserable accommodation, small bivy tents which gave scant cover from either the great heat or the rain. Food and water were very scarce, sanitation was primitive and the open field overcrowded. In addition morale was low and the future uncertain. There was, however, one redeeming feature about the camp and that was the great thickly-leaved chestnut tree at one of the corners in the high perimeter wire that held us in. This became the camp meeting place.

Here prisoners could gather together in the shade and talk together, or have music or a discussion or hear the latest news very mysteriously passed on to us from its source, a hidden radio. Here also camp meetings took place to transmit information and orders from our hosts. Here also prisoners gathered regularly for worship and prayer. To us all, the tree became a place of meeting, of community, of encouragement and support, and of humour and hope.

Now whenever I go into the Croi at Corrymeela, I am always reminded of that tree in Italy under which we used to meet. Because the dominant symbol inside the building is a tree beautifully worked on linen with coloured embroidery and set in a three part sliding screen. The artist, Elizabeth Andrews, based it on Revelation 22 v 2, which describes how the tree is planted beside the river of the water of life, flowing from the throne of God and "the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations". I always think what a wonderful sign the tree is

of Christian Community. Here is unity and diversity seen in the relationship between the trunk, the branches, the fruit and the leaves - some 300 of them embroidered in a simple pattern by people from all over the world.

The Croi is a very special place in Corrymeela. The name itself means "the Heart", so this place lies right at the centre of the Community's life, both physically and spiritually. It is an open place in which all the different groups on site doing different things, with all sorts of different needs, and coming from different places and traditions, will come together to pray.

Back to that camp with the great tree above and around, because again it seems to me that the whole of life is here. As I sit I think of all those who come here through the year: the politicians and community leaders; the school teachers and the youth and community leaders with their young people; the different clergy and theologians: those who come to face together the political, religious and social divisions that create conflict: the many young adults hurt and trapped by unemployment and a low opinion of themselves and exploited by the sectarianism around them. In addition, the many others who are the victims of a divided society: those whose men are in jail; those who are single parents, those who have been bereaved in the killing. But it is also a place of challenge: those who seek to give and serve and who want things to change. Those who know that this is the place where Christ is met, in all these different people.

## Ray Davey

Founder of the Corrymeela Community



"... the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."

For further information about Ray please log on to our website: [www.corrymeela.org](http://www.corrymeela.org)



# As I roved out

ON APRIL 4TH I SET OUT from the border between France and Spain on a 519 mile (825km) walk to Santiago de Compostela in north-west Spain. The idea of following this ancient pilgrimage route first came about while I was a long-term volunteer ten years ago. I've spent most of the last decade talking about doing it and decided that ten years talking about doing something was enough!

All I really need to say regarding my preparation is that I over-prepared in many unimportant ways, and under-prepared in the important ones. My guiding principle appears to have been that might come in useful! The result was a bag that was far too heavy and an experience that has provided countless opportunities for learning in the whole area of what I think I need and what I actually need.

One of my biggest mistakes was to buy new boots too soon before setting off. To call it a schoolboy error would be to insult the intelligence of schoolboys. As a consequence, my enjoyment of the first couple of weeks was somewhat hampered by the fact that I had blisters on both the heels and balls of my feet. I ended up walking with a comical shuffle that provided my walking companion, Huw, no end of amusement.

We made our way along the coast on the Camino del Norte, following the yellow arrows that mark the way. These are sometimes on official plaques, but most of the time the arrows are simply painted onto a lamp-post, a rock or a tree.

Northern Spain is beautiful and very different from most people's idea of Spain. Different languages are spoken, especially in the Basque Country and Galicia, and the landscape ranges from coastlines that reminded me of north Antrim; mountains that looked like the Mourne, to rolling green hillsides and alpine pastures. It was spectacularly varied and at times, breathtakingly beautiful.

Our days were spent alone. Sometimes we'd walk together, chatting about life, football and random things. Most times we walked at our own pace. It took a long while for the 'noise' and clamour of daily life to decrease in volume. In the first three weeks my main task was to try and put the pain and discomfort, present in every step, out of my mind. Some of those walks were the toughest physical and mental challenges of my life. Not because of the distance but because I had to dig into previously unknown resources of determination and sheer bloody-mindedness. One particular 3km descent down a rocky path will live long in my memory!

After Oviedo we followed the route of the Camino Primitivo towards the mountains south-west of the city. It was a stunningly beautiful couple of weeks. We were incredibly lucky with the weather and walked in glorious sunshine with snowy peaks in the distance and seas of cloud below us in the valleys. The air was fresh and the mountains majestic. It reminded me of one of my favorite

**Our days were spent alone. Sometimes we'd walk together, chatting about life, football and random things. Most times we walked at our own pace. It took a long while for the 'noise' and clamour of daily life to decrease in volume."**







**“There was the hills, an’ there was me, an’ we wasn’t separate no more. We was one thing. An’ that one thing was holy”**

The Grapes of Wrath  
John Steinbeck

quotes, spoken by the ex-preacher, Casy, in John Steinbeck’s *Grapes of Wrath*, “There was the hills, an’ there was me, an’ we wasn’t separate no more. We was one thing. An’ that one thing was holy”.

I came into this looking forward to some space to think, reflect and switch off the noise of everyday life. I wasn’t expecting any flashes of inspiration or moments of revelation. However, it has changed how I look at the world and my place and role in it. One of my conclusions is that sometimes it’s essential to do something extraordinary, something very different to how one normally lives, in order to short-circuit established patterns of behaviour and ways of thinking. Another reflection relates to the importance of simply starting something, even though you don’t have a clue how you’re going to cope with the inevitable challenges that will emerge.

It’s been a wonderful adventure. Some of the memories that flash by are of the immense beauty of nature that we experienced every day. Some are of moments of intense pain and discomfort, while others are of my gratitude towards a great

friend who’d stop and take over the responsibility of carrying the heavy load of someone else’s excess baggage. Most memories relate to people – the old man shuffling at a desperately slow pace just 10km from Santiago, his wife patiently walking beside him and then the following day seeing him behind me at Mass in the cathedral, sitting there smiling. Or the light in the beautiful, blue eyes of a twice cancer survivor as he talked about his grandchildren.

It was a profoundly human experience and for five weeks I felt fully alive. It’s a feeling I want to try and keep. I’ve no idea exactly what the next year holds. However, I’ve a few ideas that I’ve been talking about doing for a long time and having just knocked ‘Walking to Santiago’ off the top of the list, I’m kind of in the mood to start turning a few more words into action!

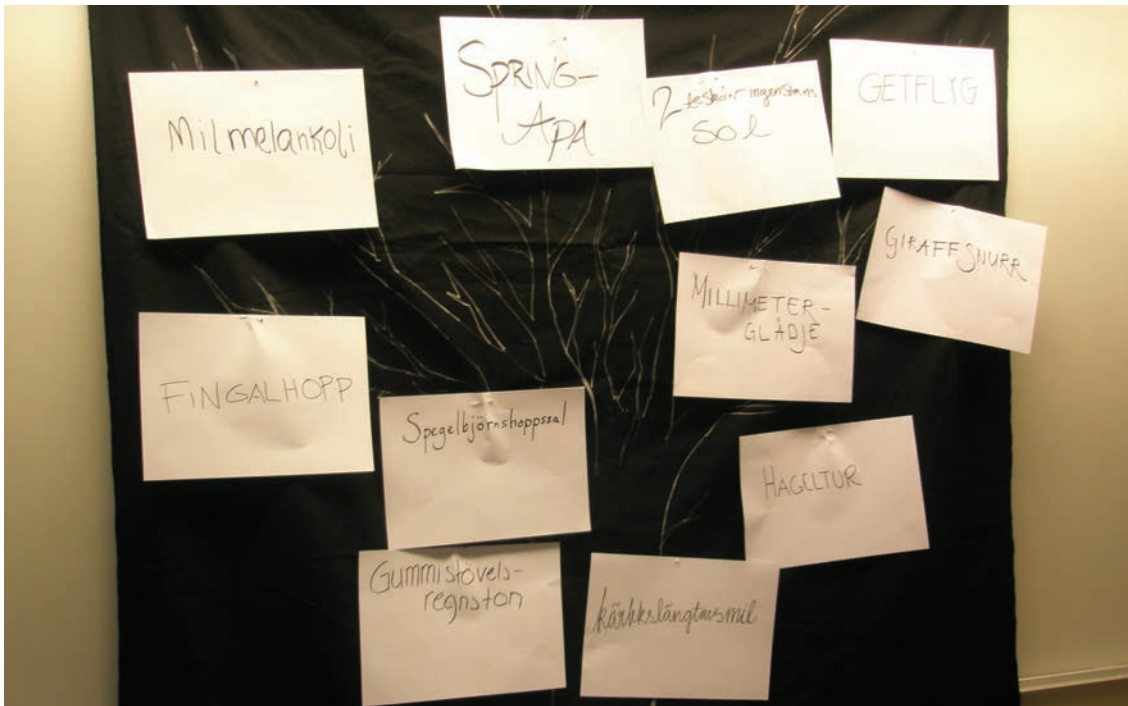
**Michael Fryer**

Michael is a former Long-Term Volunteer

<http://www.justgiving.com/michaelfryer>







# Det var den bakade potatisen of Alla och Fingal

(It was the baked potato, the story of Everyone and Fingal)

THE ORIGINAL GOAL of Alla och Fingal was to provide a movable space for people to write, to dance, to think... to find a way out of the accepted ideas of how 'creative writing' should be.

... word tossing in progress: the scene is a brightly lit room with tall windows in the small town of Trollhättan, Sweden. A silver-painted tree hangs on the wall and a group of young people wander through the space. They are barefoot, shouting out phrases every now and then, some gazing at the floor, others giggling, some seeming to concentrate. Sheets of paper lie scattered around their feet, evidence of their creative work.



And then there is Fingal. The little wooden chair standing in one corner of the room. Who is Fingal? Yes, a piece of antique furniture...but also the founding member of the writer's association, Alla och Fingal, and as such, a symbol of the connection between

the places the association has visited and will visit.

Fingal's story changes from place to place. According to one version he was put together from fugitive pieces of wood, in a city made of aluminium where real wood is something of a legend. Another workshop determined his origins to lie in a forest inhabited by coffee maniacs!

Whether it be at a youth club, a culture festival or a secondary school, the story of how Fingal came into being is recreated by the participants – this story telling is now the standard introduction to this workshop of uninhibited word juggling, a new way to address different themes.

To me it seems fitting somehow, that it all began over baked potatoes. Potatoes are solid, basic, tangible things. You can toss them around. You can eat them or paint them, if you feel like it. What could be simpler than a potato, or a chair? Often the concrete, simple things are the best gateways to inspiration.

In the spring of 2007, after two years of creative writing in art school, my friend Emilie and I were living on opposite sides of Sweden, each focusing on our own studies and working to keep our own writing alive. One evening we had

**“And then there is Fingal. The little wooden chair standing in the corner of the room.”**

the urge to do something bigger, to be part of a collective and experience a sense of liberation that we had lost sitting alone at our individual desks. This is when the idea of an ambulating room for creative writing was born.

Over now cold potatoes, all sorts of possible and impossible ideas bounced back and forth. We would incorporate finger paint, use different languages, we would toss the chair between us while reading poetry on stage.

We decided that participants would leave a one-phrased legacy somewhere on Fingal after every event; and that our phrase, "It was the baked potato..." would be the first in every story.

The workshops have been called everything from Platslös meaning Locationless to Konstruktion, Instruction. For International Women's Day, we focused on inner and outer roles because writing is, in many ways, about submerging into different roles and making the unknown your own.

In early June 2009, I led a session at Corrymeela working with a group of students from Philadelphia University who were studying the conflict in Northern Ireland. The session looked at writing as a means of approaching images of new people and new places they have encountered on their physical and intellectual journey.

A wonderful encounter, I couldn't help but miss



a certain friend and a certain chair. I wonder what would have been said if this group of people had met Fingal, and were asked to tell his story...?

**Jessica**

Corrymeela Volunteer



## HAVE YOU A CONNECTION WITH CORRYMEELA? ARE YOU WORKING FOR CHANGE IN YOUR COMMUNITY OR IN ADOPTED COMMUNITIES ACROSS THE WORLD?

**If you can answer yes to either of these questions we would love to hear from you.**

As the famous quote reads, "Corrymeela begins when you leave" and we would love to hear your stories of change as you move on in the wider world. If you have a story you would like to share please email us at [belfast@corrymeela.org](mailto:belfast@corrymeela.org)





ONE SABBATH DAY Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues and a woman was there who, for eighteen years, had been possessed by a spirit that left her enfeebled; she was bent double and quite unable to stand upright. When Jesus saw her he called her over and said, "Woman you are free from your illness" He placed his hands on her and at once she straightened herself up and praised God. The synagogue official was angry that Jesus had healed on the Sabbath... He replied, "You hypocrites. Any one of you would untie his ox or donkey from the stall and take it out to give it water on the Sabbath. And this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan has held bound these eighteen years... was it not right to untie her bonds on the Sabbath day"?

# Bent

Dirt, ditches, dust,  
mud, blood, stones,  
weeds, scorpions, spittle,  
shadows, hooves, holes  
and endless pairs of feet;  
your vista, your world view for eighteen years.

A voice  
a call across a synagogue; words you had never hoped to hear,  
"Woman, woman, woman,  
you are released, you are liberated, you are free".  
Touch ..... you had forgotten the feel, the comfort of;  
hands ..... holding you, tracing that bent and twisted spine,  
jolting it, guiding it to straightness, to beauty, to dignity.

And oh, a face...  
Dark shadows beneath the eye,  
deep lines towards the mouth,  
'A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief'.  
Love ..... love come to claim and heal you,  
name you accurately, 'Daughter of Abraham'.

All,  
we are all at some time bent double, unable to straighten up;  
twisted caricatures of what we are meant to be,  
eyes seeing only dirt and darkness,  
life's detritus and despair.

Call to us through friends and families  
or through 'the kindness of strangers';  
touch us by hugs of humanity.  
Straighten us, oh, straighten us to see  
your dear face again.

Sylvia Sands

Full reading: St. Luke 13 v 10-17



# Fred Hirsch

*A tribute from his loving wife Pamela*



*Fred Hirsch b 03/11/1930; d 01/04/09*

I MET FRED at the Quaker meeting in south Belfast. We got to know each other and found we had a shared interest in Mahatma Gandhi. When the film ‘Gandhi’ came out, Fred and I handed out leaflets for the Fellowship of Reconciliation for which he did a lot of voluntary work. He also asked me to take part in discussions about Gandhi’s teachings. In time we grew fond of each other and got married. So Mahatma Gandhi brought us together.

In the last hours of Fred’s life, as he slipped into unconsciousness in hospital, I reminded him of the wonderful times we’d had together, as well as all the good things he had done in his life. Here are some of them

Born into a German Jewish family in Berlin, Fred and his mother escaped before the Holocaust, but his aunt and uncle were exterminated in the camps and his granny died in transit. However, Fred held no ill feeling towards the Germans. He said that killing Germans wasn’t the answer; rather, we must fight the racism that caused the Holocaust.

Although born Jewish, Fred cared about deeply about Muslims. He supported an independent Palestine, and campaigned for peace between Jews

and Muslims. When he first contracted cancer some ten years ago, he was doing volunteer work at Golden Hillock Mosque.

Fred not only supported organizations such as Corrymeela and the Peace People, he also visited families from both sides of the religious divide who had lost relatives in the sectarian violence, to try and get them to meet, and break down barriers. He even cut short our honeymoon to attend a workshop at Corrymeela.

Fred opened his home to Protestants and Catholics who had been burnt out of their areas. He even had Alan Human, who went on hunger strike for peace, camping in his garage. Even when ill with cancer, Fred went to London to protest against the impending attack on Iraq.

During the night, when Fred was dying, he began asking questions in German and mentioning names I didn’t recognise. I spoke to my neighbour about it. She told me that when her friend’s husband was dying, he had spoken like that, as though asking about someone. Apparently he said that relatives who had already passed on had come to welcome him. She thought perhaps Fred had spoken in German so that his deceased relatives would understand him. I like to think that he was indeed communicating with them at that moment.

**“Fred opened his home to Protestants and Catholics who had been burnt out of their areas.”**

Diana Lampen, a Quaker:

***“Fred’s always attended the Prayer Cell in support of Corrymeela. His quiet presence and faithfulness meant a lot to us.”***

Julia and Paddy Baker, members of Finchley Quaker meeting, London that Fred attended for many years.

Julia:

***“Fred was a wonderfully complicated warm human being, and a never to be-forgotten-one. His ministry at Finchley meeting was second to none.”***

Paddy:

***“I recall Fred as a true follower of Jesus Christ. I think he would have been happy to claim, “I am a Quaker because I am a Christian”.***



Before Fred died he asked his wife to read to him from some of the books he had drawn spiritual inspiration from over the years. Pamela did not have them to hand but now shares with us in his memory.

**THE BROKEN BODY BY JEAN VANIER  
(Pg 74-75)**

*As people join together in a covenant within a community, they begin to discover what it means to be a peace-maker in a broken world. Above all they discover that there is hope. They are not condemned to brokenness, but can struggle for peace together. ... Now, as never before, we must try to bridge the gap that separates people, cultures, races, religions, rich and poor. Conflict is too dangerous a game; war can lead us only to annihilation. Jesus calls us to follow him to help bridge the gap - especially the great chasm of fear - and so become peacemakers like him.*

Jean Vanier started a community to care for people with learning disabilities.

**GOD CALLING; BY TWO LISTENERS  
Edited by A.J. Russell (page 200)**

*Your loved ones are very safe in my keeping. Learning and loving and working, theirs is a life of happiness and progress... you do well to remember your friends in the unseen.*

*Companing with them, the more you live in this unseen world the gentler will be your passing when it comes, Earth's difficulties and troubles will seem, even now less overwhelming, as you look not at the things that are seen, but at the real, the life to come...*

**MARKINGS by Dag Hammarskjold  
(page 36)**

*"You cannot play with the animal inside you without becoming completely animal; you can't play with falsehood without forfeiting your right to truth, you can't play with cruelty without losing your sensitivity of mind."*

# GB FRIENDS WEEKEND

at Barnes Close, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire

Friday 13 to Sunday 15 November 2009

The theme of our weekend, which is in preparation, will consider issues of nationalism and identity and the search for reconciliation. We hope to have a range of speakers from various ethnic/faith groups so that we develop some idea of the spectrum of diversity found in our communities and begin to assess the opportunities for reconciliation.

If you would like further details, including booking forms which will be available in early August, please complete this form and return it to:

The Corrymeela Community, Corrymeela House,  
8 Upper Crescent, Belfast BT7 1NT



I would like further information on the Corrymeela Friends' Weekend 2009

Name: (PLEASE PRINT) \_\_\_\_\_

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### www.corrymeela.org

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