

corrymeela



Courage

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Courage

On a street in Sarajevo
Nicknamed Sniper's Alley
She stood, frozen
By the kerbside
In the shelter of a gable wall.

Breathing deliberately,
She closed her eyes
And saw the varnished teak
Beneath her chin.
Her fingers played upon the neck.
She felt the bow held ready
To dance across the strings.

From a room within her heart
She heard Dvorák, Rachmaninov,
Bach and Mozart;
A communion of composers
Sore with anguish and distress.

They were calling her
To come and carry their beauty.

The sense of them
Drowned the noise of war
And filled her with desire
For wordless harmony
In a place of discord.

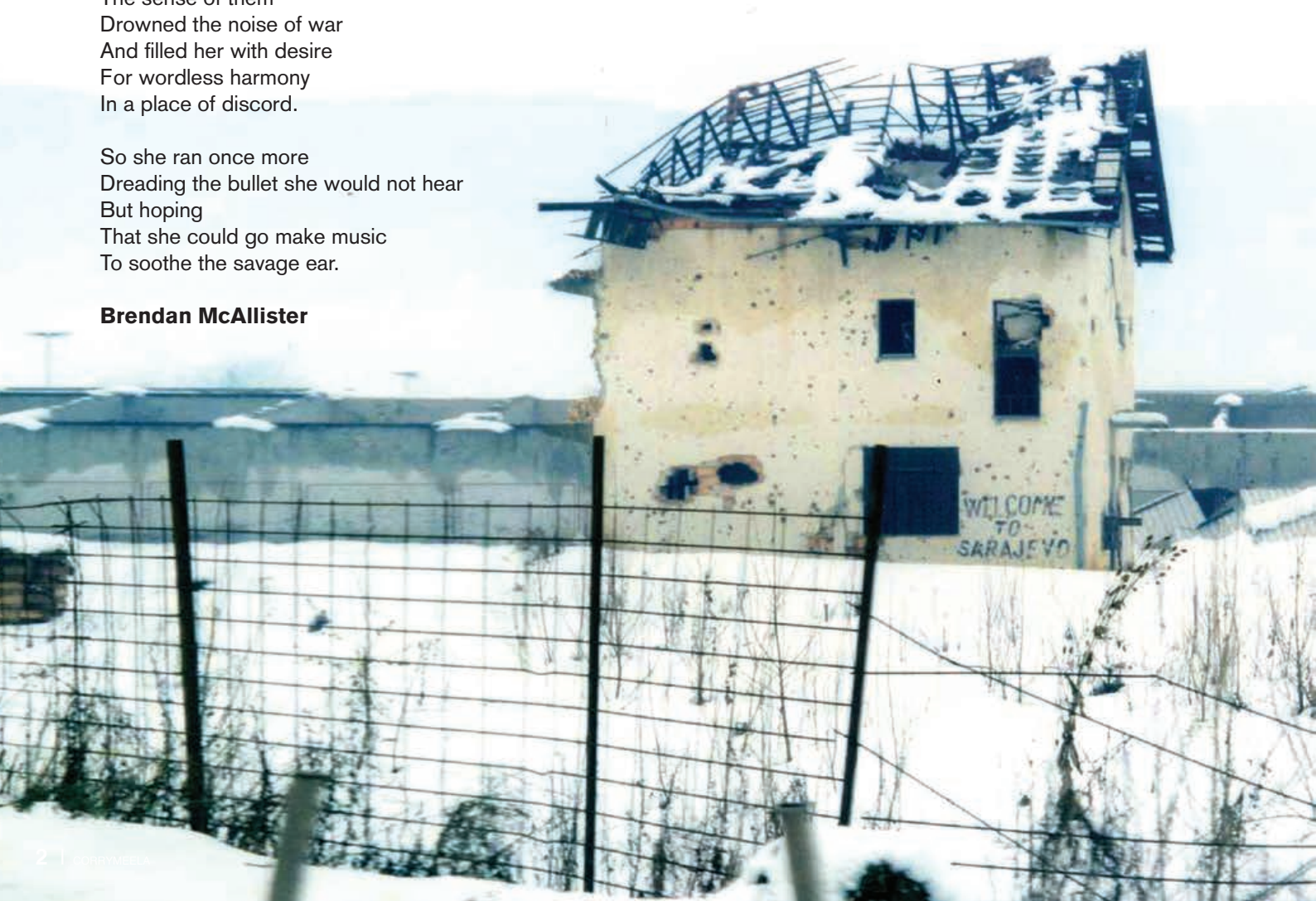
So she ran once more
Dreading the bullet she would not hear
But hoping
That she could go make music
To soothe the savage ear.

Brendan McAllister

I found it hard to think of courage without thinking of faith.
The Indian mystic poet, Rabindranath Tagore described faith in these words:

“Faith is a bird that feels the light and sings
When the dawn is still dark.”

In the 1990s, during the long siege of Sarajevo by Serbian militia men, snipers perched in the high hills overlooking the city had a perfect view of one particular street. For sport, they practised their marksmanship by firing on innocent pedestrians. Every day, for all sorts of reasons, people risked their lives to cross that street. One of them was a young woman trying to get to work. Her job was to play the violin in an orchestra.



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Dear Friends

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the first magazine of our 50th Anniversary year, a time for reflection, gratitude and celebration. A time also to recognize that the work of Corrymeela is still vital as we try to build a shared future for all in these islands.

This year will see some exciting events everything from sandcastle competitions to a Gala Celebration featuring a former Irish President and Ireland's greatest living poet. Already our cell groups have been fundraising and raising our profile across Northern Ireland. As you receive this magazine, five decades of volunteer alumni will be meeting in Ballycastle for a reunion called "The Gathering." There will be endless tea and coffee, walks, memories and a sharing of how Corrymeela has made a world of difference in so many lives.

As we step into the next 50 years, we are grateful for all that has been achieved and for the support of our friends around the world. We go forward together at a time of political uncertainty and within a very difficult funding environment, but we go forward with hope and courage. I am reminded of the words of Frederick Buechner – "Here is the world. Beautiful and terrible things will happen. Don't be afraid. I am with you."

Mark McCleary

Head of Communications, Corrymeela

Acknowledgements:

Corrymeela would like thank the following for the images used in this magazine. Gilbert Lennox, Pádraig Ó Tuama, Zach Dunn, David Cunningham, Ben Craig.



Front Cover Photograph:

The Footbridge, Ballycastle Beach. As we take a step towards the next 50 years this seemed an appropriate image. The photo is reproduced with kind permission from local photographer Gilbert Lennox. He describes his work as "capturing moments when light transforms even the simplest scene with colour, depth, form and texture. Moments that few if any get to see or notice if they do."

That description resonated with me as I thought about the work of Corrymeela, where occasionally we witness those moments where the light transforms lives and difficult situations. For more amazing images please check out www.gilbertlennoxphotography.com

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Thoughts from the Leader

A FEW YEARS AGO my friend Clare told me a story. She is from Australia and as a young woman she travelled around Europe. This was years before email or text messages or easy access to communication. While in Paris, she met and fell in love with a man and arranged to meet him two weeks later in front of the Australian Embassy in Rome. She was in the first throes of romance, adulthood, independence and life. She waited, two weeks later, for her lover, but he never showed. She returned for a day or two in case she had gotten the date wrong or he had been delayed. They never met. When she realised the truth that they would not meet again, she was devastated. She returned to her lodgings, distraught. Along the way a priest saw her. She was walking along an alley and he was walking the other way. She was upset and desiring privacy. As she walked by the priest, he looked at her, he really looked at her, and he said "corragio." When Clare told me this story, she said that in the thirty years since that encounter, she has thought about the word "Courage" over and over and over. This stranger spoke something to her in a moment that helped her be in the moment.

Since I took up the Corrymeela Community Leader post in November, I have been trying to



think about what practices and words can help us as we think of a daily commitment to live our lives in a way that demonstrates our deepest hope - whether we are in the midst of good news or troubling news. In our own political climate there are matters that give us hope and matters that give us concern. This is true across the societies and circumstances of all who read this.

In a post-conflict society like Northern Ireland, we are facing questions about how best to reckon with the past in order to move well into the future.

In other societies, too, there are questions about reckoning with conflict, division, tension and estrangement that cause us to ask about the quality of society we wish to shape for our future and the future of successive generations.

What I'd like to propose is the modest, but powerful, word of the "present." There is only the present moment, the here-and-now, and the quality of our future will be shaped by the quality of our courage in the present moment.

The word 'Courage' comes from the Latin word 'cor' which

is the word for heart. So to be a person of courage is, in a very real way, to be a person of the heart. To listen to the heart, and to act from the heart. This is sometimes easy and sometimes difficult. The heart is often understood as the place of emotion. But it is also, in many languages the place of reflection, the place of decision, the home of the psyche, the home of insight and analysis. So to live from the heart can mean to live from the place of wisdom, love, learning and insight.

When I think of courage, I think of the woman I met in Belfast who said that when there was a lot of trouble on her street, she slept at the top of the stairs, on the floor outside the rooms of her children, so that she could protect them. I think of the woman who was told that she had to leave her house with her children during "The Troubles." Somebody from Corrymeela heard it and turned up with the white van to say they'd take her somewhere safe. She packed her children and a few bags into the van to go God knows where. Because she didn't know anything about where she was going, she also packed a hatchet in case she needed to use it to protect her children.

I think of Billy Robinson, of blessed memory, whose story is featured in the Upstanders DVD

that is so very moving.

I think of politicians, community leaders, teachers, people in civic leadership and countless unnoticed people in the ordinary moments of their day.

One of the truths about courage is that it is most often needed where it is most needed.

Courage usually begins with some kind of worry, or fear, or terror, or horror. In British and American Sign Language, the Sign for 'courage' begins with the sign for fear and then moves from the place of fear to the place of strength, action and engagement. This is good news for us - fear is the first step of courage, not the last stop.

In the articles, poems, news, farewells and welcomes of this edition of the Corrymeela magazine we are privileged to host stories of courage. May we live with courage in the moment. May our courage help us to be wise, kind and truthful. May we shape today with the strength of the heart and in so doing, may we live well together.

Pádraig Ó Tuama

Community Leader, Corrymeela

Note: Clare, the courageous Australian, can be found at www.clarecoburn.com





From the Archive

As part of our 50th Anniversary year we will be dipping into our archives and reproducing some of the best of our thinking from the past. Below is an article that Ray Davey wrote for our 10th Anniversary in 1975 and many of the points are just as relevant today.

Vision for the future

THE ONLY CERTAINTY FOR THE FUTURE IS THE CERTAINTY OF CHANGE. It is completely obvious that life will never be the same as it was in '66 or '68. History never goes into reverse. So today in our country almost everything is in a state of flux. This is the context in which we live not only here but elsewhere in the world. Once again it seems "humanity has struck its tents and is on the march" or as the sociologists would rather more prosaically put it "we live in an age of rapid social change".

Free to respond

This does create difficulties when one attempts to write of the future of Corrymeela. Yet this is not quite accurate as through the years we have emphasised the importance of flexibility and openness and sought to avoid over-structuring and institutionalism. Five years ago we wrote in an article "Corrymeela is not an island": "Openness does not only apply to buildings, it also applies to mental attitudes and organisation, and we have tried to keep our programme and development as flexible as possible. This is most necessary in a rapidly changing situation". Little did

we think at the start in 64/65 as we planned the beginning of Corrymeela how things would turn out and how events would take us by the scruff of the neck and make us do certain things. But these have only been possible because we were flexible and available.

Of course it seems a vague philosophy to work on. But I find the sailing analogy used by Nels Ferre in one of his books a useful one. He suggests that there are three ways in which you can sail. One of them is just to drift along at the behest of wind and tide. Another way is to set the boat on a fixed course and lash down the rudder.

The other is to navigate by the stars, facing up to storms and hazards as they come but always relying on certain fixed points. In all honesty there has been something of all three in the first ten years of Corrymeela. Our critics would say that we come into the first category and we are too vague and woolly. Some of our would-be supporters have urged us towards the second. "Why not have a much more clear cut theology?" or "why not have a deeper political or social commitment?" or "why not come out clearly for – or against?" At our best we have taken the third way: we have tried to follow certain basic beliefs and apart from them remained open to adjust. It is well expressed by Herbert Butterfield, the historian: "We can do no worse than remember a principle which both gives us a firm rock and leaves us the maximum elasticity for our minds – the principle: hold to Christ, and for the rest be totally uncommitted".

As a comment on this it is

worthwhile recording that Corrymeela was started before "the troubles". It was not an ad hoc community relations project. Already in 1966 we had our basic principles worked out. The last one was to "to provide a meeting point for reconciliation in working and community life and in the Church". So much of what has happened since has been the working out of that principle; responding to new situations as they arose in the following years. Indeed our best moments have ben when we have been open enough to respond to events. The classic example was the project launched just after internment in the summer 1971 when there was widespread violence and shooting in West Belfast.

In collaboration with the then Antrim County Welfare authorities Corrymeela members evacuated 400 children to Ballycastle where they had the use of the High School and part of the Cross and Passion convent. Within 24 hours 60 Corrymeela

workers turned up and the children were looked after for two weeks. This did much to give us credibility that we had not before and also it sparked off our work in a new concern for families and teenagers in areas of violence. It was from this that the Tara Unit at Corrymeela for groups of teenagers was developed and with it various "mixed group" activities in Belfast.

We look to the future in Toynbee's terms of "Challenge" and "Responses". An organisation lives and thrives in the quality of its responses to the challenge of the times. There are things we have not responded to and perhaps we have tried too much, we have attempted to be "Jacks of all trades" and spread our resources too thinly. This is the reason why it has always been difficult to give a succinct answer to the question "What is Corrymeela?"

Theme

So as we think of the future there are many things that challenge us, but we must get our priorities right. I would put far beyond anything else that we should become a more authentic Christian Community and I would emphasise both words. I do not apologise for stressing the Christian element as basic. I recognise that some feel that Ireland has had an overdose of religion. But it is simplistic to write off something so vital because some people and organisation have misused and exploited it for their own ends. I am sure that in Ireland today there is nothing more relevant and meaningful than the Christian message of liberation and hope. It is here that Corrymeela has its most important contribution to make. Indeed if we fail here, we have nothing else to give. I become more and

more certain that this is the real heart of the struggle for our society. The battle for the future of our country is in the minds of the people, what they think and feel, because that motivates their deeds. Today on both sides so many are imprisoned by ignorance, fear and hate with all the terrible train of sectarian intimidation, violence and assassination. Counter violence merely produces an unending cycle of more killings. I am convinced that the only answer is the Christian message of liberation. By the power of the love of Christ working through ordinary people in our country many people are being liberated from hate, fear and insecurity and learning to see others not through the mist of bitterness and prejudice, but as persons and fellow humans with the same hopes and sorrows. Of course we must have a political solution, but it is naïve to split life into separate compartments. Political life if it is to be creative and positive flows from the inner attitudes and hopes of people. The Christian message of forgiveness, trust and understanding is the one thing that can change people's minds and create a new atmosphere in our society.

I should add that when we speak of the Christian message of liberation and hope, we also imply that great word "Peace", which means far more than a permanent "cease-fire". It means all that makes for the total health and well-being of society. Social justice, recognition of the dignity and worth of each person and total consensus. In a word it means that we all must work for a new society based not on privilege or power but on the quality of people.



Variations

This is the context within which I see Corrymeela developing both in Belfast and Ballycastle and elsewhere. This is the dynamic as well as the guideline. So having tried to express the on-going theme of Corrymeela, past present and future, I will be content to mention some variations on that theme.

We have always believed in Corrymeela that people matter

more than anything else and I hope this will always be so. I like to think of a great number of people who in very different ways have found real inspiration and hope and have gone on to do most creative work in very many different spheres for the healing of the wounds of our society. I hope this will increasingly happen, because it is only through people that regeneration and renewal will come about in our society.



School of Reconciliation

One of the ways in which we have expressed this idea is to think of Corrymeela as a SCHOOL OF RECONCILIATION. Should this sound so formal, let me hasten to explain. I am sure the most effective education is informal; what is “caught not taught”; what is picked up in contact with others, the genuine dialogue that cannot be laid on, but just happens; the atmosphere which creates openness and freedom; the knowledge, insight and understanding given not through formal lecture, but in the meeting of mind and heart.

Corrymeela’s task is never to brainwash, or dominate or push a line, but rather to provide a background, a stimulus of fresh ideas, different outlooks and attitudes so that people can think, discuss and talk to each other. Education means supremely to draw out what people already have in them; to provide the sort of security and confidence that enables people to talk honestly and be themselves. I think of some of the random remarks that come out. “I never knew that there were others who thought like this”. The man who was on his first visit who said “I wish I had known about this place before”, or “being in Corrymeela has given me a

new hope”. Then the remark after a weekend conference “this is the real – indeed the only answer to the way of violence”.

Frontier People

A further variation on the theme is that Corrymeela must be a FRONTIER GROUP. With the seemingly timeless popularity of “Western” films it is hardly necessary to explain what we mean. We must become willing, able and equipped to carry our basic theme of reconciliation and liberation and hope into new and unexplored territory, areas of community life that are dominated by sectarianism and prejudice or power centre that have become fossilised by bureaucracy and rigid institutionalism. In a society such as ours the liberating role that a free, flexible. Voluntary group can ply is vital. In all fairness we must pay tribute to the response that many statutory bodies etc have made to many of our efforts. We have a very important part to play in creating more communication and dialogue in a society where confrontation and stalemate are almost endemic. An excellent example of this is the current series of weekend conferences on “Police and Community”.

But to be Frontiers people means that we must be

adventurous and willing to experiment. There are so many pointers for us – the whole almost untouched field of urban theology in Belfast – also theology of the laity, which we have already started and all this on an ecumenical basis. Again there are the increasing number of young people on the edge or outside the Churches – the frontier job is to keep in contact with both, seeking to interpret the Church to some people and also make the Church more sensitive to them.

We acknowledge the initiatives some Church leaders have taken at great risk of misunderstanding and unpopularity and also the Campaign for Peace promoted by the four main church bodies. This is encouraging, but our task is to keep on reminding the Churches that the great overarching theme for them is in a costly and courageous way to be the Body of Christ, who is gathering all things, both in heaven and on earth into one. This ministry of reconciliation is the supreme task of the Churches here as everywhere. As Tony Spencer of Queen’s University has put it: “It is never enough for the Christian to love his own people. The quintessence of Christianity is universal love”.

We have already spoken of the need to work for a new society. This means that we must be ready to expose all our social and political presuppositions to the light of Him whose Good News of liberation, peace and hope judges any of the structures of our social order and makes possible a new society where peace is built on social justice and total participation of all.

Trailer of the New Society

Corrymeela is to be a trailer of the new society that is to

come. Where the differences are accepted and appreciated and understood. Yet where there is a deeper unity based on the many beliefs and hopes that are held in common. As a Belfast man said after a few days at Corrymeela: “This is right – this is the way we ought to be living all the time”.

Communicate

One of the big events in Ballycastle recently was the celebration of Marconi’s epoch-making experiment in wireless telegraphy some 75 years ago, when he successfully transmitted messages from Ballycastle to Rathlin Island. What a breakthrough that was for global communication and how it has transformed our lives. And yet in terms of the more basic communication with one another – we in Ireland have tragically failed. May it be that at the end of the next 75 years, Irish men and women of two great traditions; that it was here in Ballycastle that some at least of the foundations of the new society were laid; that here people of all ages and backgrounds came together, talked together, played together, worked together and prayed together and so came to discover each other as brothers and sisters.

Ray Davey

19 February, 1975



PICTURE THE SCENE:
80 women from all
types of backgrounds,
different ages, different
life experiences, standing
tall, literally finding their
voice as they shout:

**“Women
have
power!”**

**and you have an idea
of what our conference
Women and Our Power
in Society enabled and
inspired.**



The idea for the conference was inspired by a project funded by the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade that we had been delivering called Stop Peace Unravelling. The original aim of this project was to engage groups with the concept of democracy, but as the project rolled out what became evident was less of an interest with the idea of democracy, and more of a desire to explore and understand the bigger idea of power. The women who were participating in these discussions were fascinated and energised as they explored where and how they could exercise power in their lives and communities. At the end of the project the women were still hungry to learn more about power and hence the conference.

The conference took place at Crumlin Road Gaol in Belfast as one of the celebration events for International Women's Day. We specifically chose the gaol as the venue because of its resonance with what we were looking at over the course of the day. In 1914 four very respectable middle class women were imprisoned there on the charge of attempting to blow up Lisburn Cathedral. The women were part of the suffragette movement and in attempting to bring about a better and more equal life for women were targeting male bastions of power such as churches, golf clubs and race courses. Wherever they conducted their direct actions they left behind messages such

Women and Our Power in Society

as 'justice and militancy and fair play for women'. "Women have power!"

We were very honoured to have five amazing speakers who punctuated the day with ideas and stories that sparked conversations, ignited imagination and fired us up with possibility. The speakers also posed a question that we then took time to discuss at our tables and it was in those animated and real conversations that some of the most important learning took place.

Kerry Anthony, the CEO of Depaul, a charity that supports those without a home to find a place in society, talked to us about the effect, especially on women on being on the margins of society. She talked about the challenges of the work and posed the question about resilience and energy and how do you keep going if change seems slow?

Our next speaker was Kate Clifford, Director of the Rural Community Network and she talked about the inspiration she found in the life of Rosa Parks.

She talked about the many identities that we as women hold, daughter, sister, friend, mum, employer, employee and how they interact and play out. Her question to us was: Claiming your power. . . what realistic, yet inspirational role do you/could you play in your community?

Gabrielle Moseley shifted the focus to the global. Gabrielle works for the American Consulate and has been stationed in Iraq, Brazil and Belfast. She gave us a really fascinating insight into the world of international diplomacy and the role that women play in fighting for and bringing about change. Gabrielle's background is economic analysis and her question to us was around the freedom of women economically and how we felt about it.

Orlaith Hendron is a grass roots activist and she had us on our feet before lunch making a noise. Orlaith asked a simple question about when as women do we feel silenced and when does society silence the voice of women? Sadly the examples of both were many.

Our final speaker was Sarah Quinlan the Chief Executive of Children's Heartbeat Trust. Sarah talked about the power of women as mothers who wanted the best for their children. Sarah has just won an award for the charity with most political impact and her energy was infectious as she shared how even a small group of people can make a difference. Her question to us was around how we use our power to build people up and not put them down.

At the end of the day there was a feeling of possibility; women were exchanging numbers and email addresses and wanting to build on the connections that they had made.

It was a day where 80 women came together and explored how to live well together and began to realise that individually and together they have the power to make that happen.

Susan McEwen

Head of Programmes, Corrymeela





WHAT'S YOUR 20/20

“The Peace Process has lost the power to inspire!”

THAT WAS ONE OF THE CONCLUSIONS from the 2014 Monitoring Report which went on to talk about a society that is still segregated with communities that are entangled as opposed to connected. This was reflected in the ongoing segregation, for example, in housing and education. Paul Nolan, the author of the report, referred to a culture being talked into existence and the impact of the flags dispute on community relations. However, the report also mentioned the success of the City of Culture and cites a “life affirmative spirit that allowed culture to unite” and “a generosity that breeds generosity”.

Within this context, Corrymeela has developed the 20/20 Visions Project supported by the Department of Foreign Affairs. The project will run

through 2015 with the intention of directly addressing that sense of political apathy and cynicism by inviting people to articulate what they mean by a ‘shared future.’ We will ask people to imagine what their communities would like if sectarianism was no longer the norm.

However, we will be asking people to imagine their future by reflecting on the best of their present and begin with remembering times when their community has been best at living well together. Answering questions like; what happened to bring this about? If we could have more of this imagine what life might look and feel like locally; what was my role then, what is my role now and what could it look like tomorrow?

The first conversation we are seeking to grow is through

our 20/20 Postcards. Each postcard is a blank canvass with two questions:

- *What was good about today?**
- * What if we could.....by 2020?**

We are inviting people of all ages, from 3 to 103, to draw, scribble and/or write their thoughts to one or both questions and send your postcard back to Corrymeela. The pictures, and ideas will then be displayed both on social media and at Corrymeela slowly building up, brick by brick, some new foundations. We have been inspired by projects such as the Humans of New York (www.humansofnewyork.com) and over time would like to populate our social media sites with stories and hopes of 2020 people that make up this place.



VISION?

The second conversation we will be growing is by engaging with 20 groups of 20 people to deepen the conversation about people's experiences of 'living well together' and what it might mean to have more of this. Five of these groups will be faith based, five will be women's groups with the remaining

ten giving space and voice to a diversity of perspectives and experiences across the community including politics, sports, arts and culture across these islands. The methodology we are using for these workshops will be based on appreciative enquiry beginning with the experience of what

has worked and is working. As with the postcards we will be connecting stories and people across these conversations building up momentum through the media and social media towards a final gathering in December 2015.

We are also committed to gathering and communicating people's experiences, ideas and hopes in as creative a manner as we can. To that end we are working with graphic artist group Quarto, to creatively record the content and spirit of the conversations, which will be available to both the groups and Corrymeela to use. We will also be commissioning a number of poets to engage with the material harvested from the postcards and the workshops and write 20 poems which will be launched at the end

of the year. Copies will be given to local government, The Northern Ireland Assembly, and the British and Irish governments.

We invite you, the reader, to fill in the postcard, which is included in the Corrymeela Magazine, and send it back to us. If you would be interested in finding out more about the project then visit us on Facebook or Tumblr for more information or please contact Karin Eyben at Corrymeela. Email karineyben@corrymeela.org or call her on 07966 202184.

Karin Eyben

Family and Community Worker,
Corrymeela



APPROXIMATELY 30,000 CHILDREN PER YEAR in Northern Ireland are affected by the death of someone close to them. And as many as 9,000 school age children will suffer the loss of a parent or sibling. Families Learning Together is a new project designed to help and support families through the trauma of bereavement. And it does so in the simplest, clearest of ways: bringing together families who, in the words of Cruse volunteer Bridget Molloy, "are in the same boat - perhaps different parts of the boat, but in the same boat nonetheless".

Our boat

Families Learning Together is a partnership project between Corrymeela and Cruse Bereavement Care, which

Families Learning Together

began in October 2014. It will bring together families from across Northern Ireland into an environment where they can get to know and support each other. Through activity days, residentials in Corrymeela and ongoing

individual support, it will offer vital help to 50 bereaved families over the next 5 years, giving them the chance to face their own grief, but also to support other families and to help educate the community.

Corrymeela therapist David Cunningham is one of the professionals involved in the development of the FLT project: "My role as creative therapist supporting the families will be facilitating, along with volunteers, creative opportunities for families of all ages to develop a voice - A voice that will help them to express their needs, to support each other and to connect with others who have experienced similar bereavement."

Through this project, bereaved families can overcome the isolation that so often comes with grief, both within their immediate family and also in the wider community. At the same time, parents and volunteers can gain confidence in supporting children as they share their





experiences and get to know each other. Learning to communicate better within the family helps everyone to be more resilient, to have a stronger sense of emotional and mental wellbeing. Bridget Molloy is a young Cruse volunteer who knows first-hand the invaluable help that making connections with others can offer young people during their grieving process. "Cruse gave me a window in my life when a door had been closed. My Mum died when I was fifteen and it completely tore my life apart. When I was first told about the Cruse Youth Advisory Group (YAG), I agreed to go along to an event, but I wasn't convinced that it was for me. I thought it would be really personal and we would be asked lots of hard questions. But that's not what it was like at all. That first day was all about fun and getting to know each other".

A promising partnership

The partners who have made this project possible are Cruse Bereavement Care and Corrymeela, supported by a grant of £676,384 from The Big Lottery Fund's Supporting Families programme.

It is, indeed, a promising partnership, with not only the financial help of the Big Lottery Fund, but also with the joint eighty years of experience of working alongside people in the midst of bereavement, conflict and trauma: this year, Corrymeela celebrates its 50th anniversary, while Cruse has just celebrated its 30th.

Head of Programmes, Susan McEwen is very excited about this project. "This is for us a natural progression of the work of Desney Cromey, a community member who several years ago established the Treetops project working with bereaved families. In fact, it was Desney who first made the connection between Corrymeela and Cruse".

Elaine Roub, Young Cruse Coordinator, brings us to the origin of the whole project when she points out that FLT has evolved because it is what parents, young people and children who have come to Cruse and Corrymeela over the years have asked for: a chance to break through isolation, to communicate more with each other and with other families. So these two organisations are working together in order to build

on their common vision for strengthening families and individuals.

It is sometimes through hard, dark times, that precious and strong friendships develop, and the enthusiasm shared by those involved in FLT, professionals and volunteers alike, sheds light on these opportunities lying ahead: As Bridget explains, "The other people in YAG have become friends for life, and when I see them achieving their goals or standing in front of a crowd and talking about the hardest times in their lives, they give me hope for my future: hope that you can still live your life after someone dies. That's why I'm excited about FLT: it is an opportunity to connect with others and with your children,

an opportunity to learn more: not just about grief, but about life and hope as well."

To learn more or get involved with Families Learning Together, contact David Cunningham (Creative Therapist) email davidcunningham@corrymeela.org or phone Young Cruse Coordinator Elaine Roub at 028 9079 2419.

David Cunningham

Corrymeela



Remembering well together

WE ARE AT THE BEGINNING of remembering fifty years of Corrymeela. Our world, our lives, our political, cultural and global contexts have changed much in fifty years. But there is always need for courage.

Corrymeela is a community and practice that began in a particular time and place. As we reflect on the fifty years

since 1965 we are ever aware that our story is not only a story of responding to the events of the Troubles, but a story of responding to each other, in today's changing and evolving world. The lessons of life, politics, conflict, faith, fracture and reconciliation are lessons that are appropriate for Dublin today, for Belfast today, for Glasgow, Cardiff

and London today, for Paris, for Berlin and New York. They are relevant for rural and urban societies that are straining to be people of good will creating open villages of living well together. We live in a society that has a troubled relationship with how to remember and we would do well to recognise that there

is an ethic of remembering. Clare Mitchell, a Belfast based sociologist, notes that one of the dynamics of our conflict in Northern Ireland is that there is "conflict about what the conflict is about". This is true, not only here, but also elsewhere - across the fractures of all of our societies, cultures, political and faith groups, we find that there are disputed narratives.



And so, it is with this wisdom and caution that we find ourselves in our fiftieth year of Corrymeela. In January, it would have been Ray Davey's 100th birthday. He, magnificent man of words, bravery, friendship, invitation and welcome, was under no illusions either about himself or Corrymeela. We are a place of Lumpy Crossings, a place where we recognise our success by our endeavours with each other, and note, too, that our endeavours are never perfect, and that we cause pain to each other along the way.

At the beginning of our fiftieth year we have marked our celebrations with pilgrimages. The Ballycastle Cell group have taken pilgrimages of friendship and connection between cathedrals, peace centres, places of culture and places of pain in our geography. This is a humble and meaningful beginning to our celebrations.

We know that there are fantastic stories to be told, and we will tell them over and over this year. We will honour those who have lived brave lives of risk and courage and dedication. We will also tell stories of the arguments that hurt, we know that some may have felt distanced from us, and we know that in the midst of achievements for the good, there were bruises and damages to others.

In our year of celebration of gladness for all that we have been, let us be part of our wider society that must tread carefully when we remember, knowing that there are marginal stories to every good story. Let us not see the stories of damage as something to be ignored, and know that neither fear nor shame is the best final word. Let us be brave in our telling of our story - brave with the truth, and brave with hope, and brave with joy, and brave with learning.



This year we honour Ray, his family and his legacy. We honour his courage to be himself, knowing that what he started in his work at Queen's and his work in Corrymeela was always going to be a lumpy crossing, but that it was worthwhile doing it anyway. And what a beautiful thing this is.

We honour the people who have spent a day, a week, a year, a decade and a lifetime honouring us with their courage and dedication, their wisdom, love and joy at Corrymeela. We honour the faith that took concrete, old wood and brick and made a place of belonging. We honour the arguments, the politics, the doctrines, the pain, the courage, the stories shared and the stories kept private, we honour our love of each other and we honour our

journey towards learning how to live and love well together.

In celebrating our fiftieth year, we look forward to the party of memory, the festival of the present and the sacrament of the future.

Each year Corrymeela is kept vibrant and alive by over 80,000 volunteer hours. We're having an Easter celebration of volunteers this year. We have a Dublin event looking at diversity, an event of music in Clonard Monastery celebrating word, song and poetry. We have a festival of politics, faith, dialogue, arts and entertainment in the summer, and we have a magnificent suite of events at the end of October where we will hear the insight and vision of poets, presidents,

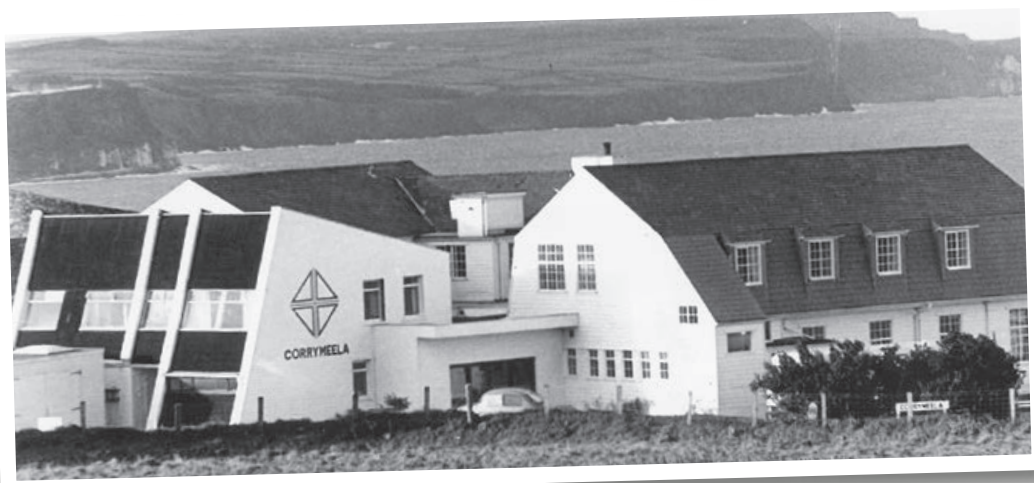
peacemakers, faith leaders and Corrymeela members.

We begin everything with a welcome. Corrymeela is an open village for all people of good will. If you would like to join us on a journey of discovery, join us on a journey of storytelling about the fractures of our world and join us on a journey of discovering how best we can live well together.

We are grateful for the gifts of thousands of people who have made us who we are at Corrymeela. We are grateful for you. You are always welcome.

Pádraig Ó Tuama

Leader, Corrymeela Community





Events

THE PHOTO OF THE FOOTBRIDGE at Ballycastle beach on the front cover really resonates with me. I see a safe space over a restless sea and a bridge leading to solid ground. Some days you will still get wet – it can be scary and uncomfortable but eventually you cross to the next stage of your journey.

For 50 years Corrymeela has sought to create that space for individuals and groups. Corrymeela believes in the power of people telling stories, of shared hospitality, of telling the truth about the present, of turning towards each other and finding strength, life and hope in each other.

Our 50th year gives us an opportunity to celebrate some of the lives that have been changed and to pay tribute to the thousands who have given their time and energy to the work. Over the next year we will have a mixture

of events – some organized centrally but most by our Cell Group members. Already the Ballycastle Cell Group have led the way with a wonderful series of Lenten walks in every county of Northern Ireland. And the Ballyhackamore Cell group raised an incredible £1500 at a movie night. The Events Calendar to the right has all the current events starting with the Volunteer



Mary Robinson

Reunion Easter 2015 and running through to the Easter 2016 Politics Conference. For the most up to date information check our new website. www.corrymeela.org

We are excited about all the events but particularly our actual anniversary weekend which will run from Friday 30th October to Sunday 1st November. “The Poet,



The Archbishop of Canterbury

“The Peacemaker and The President” will be a wonderful occasion for members, staff, volunteers and friends of Corrymeela. We will begin with a drinks reception in the Rotunda of Belfast City Hall and then move in to the Banqueting Hall to hear reflections from Ireland’s greatest living poet Michael Longley, Kathleen Kuehnast from the US Institute of Peace (see her profile on page 20) and former Irish President and UN Human Rights Commissioner Mary Robinson. There will also be live music and plenty of conversation.

On Saturday 31st October we will transform the Ballycastle Centre into a living museum featuring 50 stories from the last 50 years. Some will be written, some audio, some video and even some living exhibits, where you can sit down and have a cup of tea with some of our longest serving members. There will be two points of gathering in the Croí during the day. A full programme will be available on the website soon. www.corrymeela.org

Sunday 1st November is our Celebration Service in St Anne’s Cathedral. John Bell from the Iona Community has written music and liturgy for the event. Pádraig Ó Tuama will lead the service, there will be contributions from Community members and the Catholic Primate of All Ireland and the sermon will be delivered by the Archbishop of Canterbury. The Service will mix gratitude for the past 50 years with prayers for the next 50. The Journey Continues.

Mark McCleary

Head of Communications,
Corrymeela



Calendar of Events

April

3rd – 7th April

The Gathering – Making a World of Difference at Corrymeela Centre, Ballycastle, Volunteer Reunion.

19th April

Corrymeela 50th Anniversary Sunday Service in the Church of the Good Shepherd, Newtownabbey, organised by Newtownabbey 1&2 Cell groups.

30th April – 2nd May

After Dresden

A new play written by Philip Orr, explores the tragedy of the Second World War and how that in part inspired the foundation of the Corrymeela Community. It will be performed by the Belvoir Players at 8 pm in their Studio Theatre, 94 Belvoir Drive. Tickets are £9 (£7 concession) and can be purchased online at www.belvoirplayers.org or by ringing 028 9049 1210.

May

8th – 10th May

“Living Together Well in a Culturally Diverse Society”

A weekend of encounter and engagement with the realities of diversity, prejudice, upstanding and community across the island of Ireland and beyond organised by Corrymeela Dublin Cell Group.

29th - 31st May

Corrymeela Connections weekend (formerly known as the Friends weekend) at Corrymeela Ballycastle. The theme is “Faith and Tension: dialogue in a time of deep difference”.

June

6th June

Cappella Caeciliana in concert, 7.30 pm at St Patrick’s Church in Coleraine organised by Coleraine Cell Group.

12th June

East Belfast Cell Group Fundraising Barbeque at Streamvale Open Farm.

14th June

Voices Together Choir ‘Peace of Music’ Concert at Clonard Monastery, Belfast.

Throughout June 2015

Corrymeela Schools programme, Corrymeela Centre, Ballycastle for Primary school pupils.

21st June at 6.30pm

A Double Celebration of Corrymeela’s 50th Anniversary and the 13th Anniversary of the Causeway Coast Peace Group at St Patrick’s & St Brigid’s RC Church, Ballycastle, hosted by Rev Fr Brian Daly PP with the One Voice Choir and speaker Baroness Nuala O’Loan, DBE.

July

Throughout July and August

Corrymeela Summer and Family & Community Programmes at Corrymeela Centre, Ballycastle.

31st July - 2nd Aug 2015

Aperture Festival at Corrymeela Centre, Ballycastle.

August

Date tbc

Ballyhackamore Cell group are organising a Sandcastle competition on Ballycastle Beach.

September

Date tbc

Ormeau Cell Group Storytelling events, Belfast
Location TBC.

3rd-13th September

Oikosnet Annual European Conference at Corrymeela Centre, Ballycastle.

October

19th-23rd October

Corrymeela International Autumn School Living and Learning Well Together at Corrymeela Centre Ballycastle.

Friday 30th October 7:30pm

50th Anniversary Weekend

The Poet, The Peacemaker and The President. A Gala Reception at Belfast City Hall featuring Michael Longley, Kathleen Kuehnast and former President Mary Robinson.

31 October 1:00pm - 6:00pm

50 Years, 50 Stories

at Corrymeela Centre, Ballycastle
Reflection, Storytelling and Celebration.

November

1st November 3.00pm

Corrymeela 50th Anniversary Celebration Service at St Anne’s Cathedral Belfast, with Pádraig Ó Tuama, Archbishop Eamon Martin and special guest speaker The Archbishop of Canterbury.

December

Date tbc

Christmas Open Day

at Corrymeela Centre, Ballycastle.

2016

22nd-25th March 2016

Easter Politics Conference

at Corrymeela Centre, Ballycastle
Remembering Well Together - Corrymeela, Politics and the Decade of Centenaries.

Full details of all these events can be found on our website www.corrymeela.org

Our Summer Festival will run from Friday 31st July to Sunday 2nd August.

It is called Aperture – A Space Through Which Light Travels.

The festival aims to bring a diverse gathering of people together to examine issues of reconciliation, social justice, faith and politics through music, art, lectures, workshops and discussions. Aperture will celebrate, examine and give shape to a range of ideas and the authentic personal stories behind Corrymeela, placing it all in the context of a celebration of 50 years of community. The festival will feature local artisanal food and as well as the stunning views of Corrymeela's six-acre North Coast site. It will be a family friendly festival that will allow people of all ages to examine how far Northern Ireland has come on the peace and reconciliation journey and how far we hope to go, particularly during this time of political uncertainty. We will look at the history of peace building both locally and internationally. We will celebrate our common ground and our differences as we work towards promoting greater tolerance.

As to the name Aperture - its a photographic term and we asked photographer Jayne McConkey to explain how an aperture works.

APER Summer



ATURE Festival



One of my first certain memories is of a bad dream where my brother's blue and yellow plastic car was blowing down a tall hill. I don't think he was on it at the time. There are other early memories but so many of them are associated with, and built around a moment in time captured on celluloid, that it is not always possible to disentangle the two. My brother and I singing on my grandparents window sill, the heavy velvet curtains demarcating our stage and wings. Dressing up in my mum's wedding dress. Barefoot with black soot from a kerosine stove all over my face and tight toddler curls. A birthday party complete with doll cake and tricycle. Some of these memories come in black and white only.

I don't remember what my first camera was. I used dad's old Nikon a few times and then got a point and shoot as a teenager in Kathmandu. I have boxes of snap shots of teenage friends - dressing up, candid moments, bad haircuts. I learnt how to print my own photos in a photography elective in sixth form and through workshops with Belfast Exposed came up to work with a Summer School of young people at Corrymeela; the images now form part of an archive of N.Ireland. The images that tell a story. The stories that attach themselves to these images.

I am an amateur photographer at best. My DSLR spends more time than I wish it did on its 'auto' setting. But there is something special about those moments where you see something through your lens that feels worth

capturing. These moments are now more instantly saved and more lightly deleted, but the magic remains none the less.

The aperture of our camera is the opening through which light travels, and it determines how the rays reach the image plane (sensor). Our aperture setting (or f-stop) affects the depth of field and is one of the key elements determining what type of image we will end up with. When the aperture opening is small (higher f-stop) the many rays of light are forced into a more parallel pattern which results in a more even focus across the whole image. Conversely when the aperture is large (lower f-stop) the rays are less even so the surrounding areas of the image will be less sharp, allowing us to concentrate on the focal point of the image.

There are times we want to see a whole image sharply. Looking at the 'big picture', the landscape, a wide perspective. A narrow aperture keeps the whole image crisp and in focus. Other times we want to zoom in and focus on a detail. Seeing details previously unseen, an abstract moment, the clarity of an eye while the face is in soft focus. A wide aperture focuses in on a detail and leaves the edges blurred.

There is a time for everything. Time to see large and clear, time to look close and small. Time to celebrate and time to capture those celebrations in images to which we attach our stories of meaning and belonging.

Jayne McConkey
Community Member

the poet & the peacemaker & the president

On October 30th 2015, Corrymeela's event in Belfast City Hall will feature a Poet, a Peacemaker and a President: Poet Michael Longley, former President Mary Robinson and Peacemaker Kathleen Kuehnast.

Dr. Kuehnast is the director of the "Centre for Gender and Peacebuilding" at the United States Institute for Peace, focusing on the gendered impacts of conflict and post-conflict transition of both men and women. She's a former Corrymeela volunteer from 1980. An American, she first heard about Corrymeela in the Chinook Learning Community's Warm Wind Journal (1978) article by Sally Stowell: "Spirituality in Social Change, Reflections on Chinook's Ireland programme".

Kathleen says: "I read the article and I knew instantly that I had to go to Corrymeela. I finished my master's degree, bought a plane ticket to Shannon, purchased a second-hand bike in Enniskillen, and cycled eleven days up the western coast to Corrymeela. The day I crossed the border into Derry/Londonderry was a shock - from the roads of Yeats into the roads of this war-torn city--tanks, men with guns, and graffiti were everywhere. There I was a young American, wearing a beret, having no idea what that would imply."

When I finally arrived in Corrymeela, somebody took one look at me and said:

"Lose the beret but we're happy to have you."

Kathleen carried two books with her: Jean Vanier's *Community and Growth* and Simone Weil's *Gravity and Grace*. She was a student of communities.

At Corrymeela, she was introduced to a community that was working on narratives. She ran the outdoor education programme and spent lots of overnights in big canvas tents, full of children and young people. During the nights, they were often missing home, afraid of the dark and took solace in telling their stories. Kathleen says, "It was a pivotal because two things came to me - and this was before I understood that my career would be as an anthropologist.

First, I realised the power of narrative in children, and second, I realised that the effects of conflict were palpable at such a very young age." For Kathleen, the challenge was set in those tents: the challenge of how to help young people tell their stories with dignity, and to listen without judgment. Those nights taught her that "The narratives of injustice have to be heard before the narratives of healing can happen."

Since then Kathleen's work has focused on ways of supporting change in societies in transition, including those emerging from war. When asked what keeps her motivated she says:

"War is a terrible thing. The human capacity to harm and destroy other humans is breathtaking. But people who speak truth to power (as Robert Kennedy said) give me the courage to keep doing my part - which is convening safe spaces where people can, in innovative and even small ways, help to solve for themselves their terrible predicaments."

She co-edited the volume, *Women and War: Power and Protection in the 21st Century*, which focuses on U.N. Resolution 1325 and the critical role women should play in peacebuilding. She speaks about her understanding of gender in its relationship to peace:





"Gender is not another name for 'women'. All beings are gendered and gender is about identity - a very malleable sense of being. We have this adaptability: we know that societies change on a dime for good or bad. Societies are constantly changing and so are our identities. It's one of the most extraordinary parts of human society.

"I am an anthropologist of transition - I'm interested in the liminal zones - I am an anthropologist of between what you were and what you're going to be. In a post-conflict setting there are opportunities to re-write those rules. We see that some gender rules are being rewritten in oppressive terms. We have a unique opportunity to rewrite the rules for the good."

Kuehnast published "Better a Hundred Friends Than a Hundred Rubles" with the World Bank, exploring social economy in post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan. She says "The study revealed that one's social capital is really your neighbours - it is propinquity, who is nearby, not the faraway family members. To weave that into the work of Jean Vanier, I think it is about the recognition of our interdependency, how to nurture proximity into trust and how to really provide that safe passage from one identity to the next. I don't think we can ever do that alone."

'Courage' is this year's Corrymeela theme. At a recent USIP event that Kathleen convened, women spoke about preventing violent extremism. Kathleen's introduction spoke

about the intersection between courage and women's leadership:

"Leaders are not born; they emerge from challenges. They transform hardship into an imaginative capacity to put forth something new, in order to improve the lives of others. Their stories help us demystify the human force of resilience and recognise it in the human face of women."

Kathleen is very honoured to be the Peacemaker at Corrymeela's "Poet, Peacemaker and President" event. In our discussion, she relayed a story about an unusual meeting with an extraordinary and courageous poet that has influenced her understanding of the importance of narrative.

"I was standing in line for a plane and was telling a woman about my anthropology dissertation research in Kyrgyzstan. She said it was interesting, and she went her way and I went my way. In the middle of the flight somebody came back to my area of the plane and called out, 'I'm looking for the anthropologist!' I realised it was me. He said 'Miss Angelou would like to have you join her toward the front of the plane.'" Kathleen sat down by Maya Angelou and spent the remainder of the flight discussing the plight of women in Central Asia. "Maya gave me her business card, and told me that she wanted to read my dissertation when it

was completed."

"Unfortunately, I never sent it - I guess I was too nervous. I regret it now."

Regarding Climate Justice, a major emphasis of Mary Robinson's foundation, Kathleen tells she feels close to this nexus of work because her father was the state climatologist for Minnesota. "What he did best was to listen to the farmers, find out what their concerns were and then translated data - soil and temperature records - and predict when the soil would be warm enough to plant seeds. A lot of what I do is really framed around helping to translate abstract concepts into everyday living, interpretations, perhaps, to support transition processes in a way that people can best help themselves. I learnt that through my father."

Finishing a conversation, Kathleen turns to Hamlet, who said "The readiness is all." This is her motto, the twitter summary of her vocation. Be ready. Be ready for the focus on gender and climate issues in our global context. The readiness is all.

Kathleen Kuehnast spoke to Pádraig Ó Tuama on March 12th, 2015.



JOSE CORDON



BENI STÜCKELBERGER



NNEDINMA UMEADI



LARRY & BARBARA VENNELL



ZIHNA GORDON

Meet our new Staff and Volunteers



HOLLY BARN斯LEY



LISA MOONEY



JUDE THOMPSON



KARIN EYBEN



ZACH DUNN

Jose Cordon (21) USA

Born in San Francisco, California to immigrant parents from Central America, Jose arrives at Corrymeela with great hopes and expectations. Before becoming a volunteer at the centre Jose worked for a youth leadership organisation called One Day at a Time. There he worked to encourage positive lifestyles through programs that explore topics related to family, self-esteem, relationships, gangs,

drugs, school and much more. Through One Day at a Time Jose was given the opportunity to visit Corrymeela and was taken aback by the beauty he experienced. His days at the centre left an impact, which inspired his return. Jose hopes that his time here will help him become a better person more equipped to help his community back home. He cannot wait to embark on this journey and meet everyone who feels we as a unit can play a small part in changing the world for the better.

Beni Stückelberger (19) Switzerland

Beni is one of the many rays of sunshine brightening the landscape of Corrymeela. Before deciding to come to Corrymeela long-term, Beni had already experienced Corrymeela. He has previously contributed to the mission, as a Midterm-Volunteer in October and November. Like many before him, Beni felt the need to jump in with both feet as a Long-Term Volunteer. Before coming to Northern Ireland,

Beni worked for Switzerland's civil service (instead of military service) performing work focused primarily towards immigrants and young adults.

Beni is a goof ball that enjoys climbing, playing instruments, and is a self-proclaimed lover of tree hugging. Likely, Beni can be caught performing somersaults on the floor or making someone smile.

Nnedinma Umeadi (23) USA

Nnedinma (Nnedi) emigrated to the United States after spending her early childhood years in Nigeria. Her family landed in the state of North Carolina, better known to locals as the Land of the Pines. Most recently, Nnedi finished a 10-month term with the National Service Program, Americorps, in Baltimore, Maryland. Among many other things, Nnedi loves to laugh, cook, try new things, play in nature, craft and sing – although she admits her siblings claim she never fails to sing off key. Nnedi makes her way to Corrymeela with both nerves and excitement. While shying away from setting expectations for fear of being closed off to the slightest wonder, she looks forward to all the experiences and people she hopes to encounter.

Larry and Barbara Vennell, USA: Resource Team: Jan-Dec 2015

Barbara and Lawrence Vennell bring their services from Kennebunkport, Maine. Barbara is a children's librarian with a life-long love of connecting children with books and she is currently managing a bookstore. Larry spent his working life in shipbuilding. They enjoy reading, picnics at the beach, gardening and golf.

Since retiring, the couple has volunteered for various organizations in their community including Joyful Harvest, a faith-based after school program for inner-city children; He Cares Ministry, an organization providing household goods for those in need, as well as our church. Their first encounter with Corrymeela was during Summerfest 2008 while their daughter was a long term volunteer. The panel discussions, speakers and individual conversations convinced them of the important role Corrymeela has played since its inception. In 2012, they returned as midterm

volunteers to experience living in community first hand. They found it challenging, stimulating and meaningful. They became spiritually focused and welcome the opportunity to serve Corrymeela again.

Zihna Gordon, USA: Resource Team: Jan 2015-Dec 2016

Zihna studied science in college, then became a minister, then lost her faith, then started travelling, then bought a hostel in Indonesia, then found God again... If you asked her, she would say her life so far has been "an amazing, totally unexpected adventure." Her first Corrymeela encounter occurred 5 years ago when she came to Northern Ireland for a Celtic spirituality event put on by John Bell from the Iona community. A chance stop at the Centre on the way to the Giant's Causeway left the impact Corrymeela often does. Zihna has had a future volunteer experience percolating in the back of her mind ever since. Zihna enjoys reading, learning, hearing people's stories, to be in nature, explore, and go into places that are real with people.

She looks forward to contributing to the great work being done at Corrymeela, learning more deeply about conflict resolution and about the conflict dynamics particular to Northern Ireland, experiencing community living, enjoying the beauty of the place, and on days off, doing some exploration of the island.

Holly Barnsley, UK

Originally from Texas, Holly has lived in the UK for ten years, and by a strange series of events has found herself in the mix of the Corrymeela community joining the team as a temporary housekeeper. Holly is married to Ellis Barnsley, one of our Hospitality Support Workers, and "Mommy" to Dylan (6) and Coen (4). She enjoys singing with Voices Together and spending time with friends and family.

Both she and Ellis are very much enjoying living in Ballycastle and working with Corrymeela.

Lisa Mooney, UK

A local girl from right here in Ballycastle. Lisa's background includes a degree in History and Media Studies from UUC. As well, she undertook further study, whilst working, and completed a teaching qualification and Good Relations courses. She has worked as a Local Government Officer for the last 10 years in Moyle District Council.

Lisa has three wonderful children (all girls) and is passionate about community development and building links between schools, families and community work.

As she has always taken a keen interest in both teaching & facilitating and good relations & peace building work, Lisa has found Corrymeela to be a perfect combination of the two and an excellent place to contribute her skillset.

Jude Thompson, UK

Belfast born and raised, Jude first came to Corrymeela for some residentials as a part of her masters course at ISE, Belfast and fell in love with the Centre. After receiving her degree she went to Thailand to do work on issues of peace building as well as working with victims of the conflict in Myanmar.

Looking for similar work upon her return to Northern Ireland, her love for Corrymeela confirmed a decision to make her way back to the Centre. Jude now contributes as one of our programme support workers, helping to design and deliver the programmes delivered by Corrymeela.

Jude has a passionate love for anything active, including: yoga, running and climbing. As she is a bit of a history geek she loves going to castles.

Karin Eyben, Zambia/ Northern Ireland

Karin currently contributes to the mission of Corrymeela as a Family and Community Worker. She brings with her a wealth of experience working across a number of different organisations. Over the years she has worked for Future Ways; Northern Ireland Rural Women's Network; Rural Community Network; Integrated Education Fund and Community Foundation for Northern Ireland. Karin was born in Lusaka, Zambia and grew up in Africa and Asia and has been a Northern Ireland resident since 1994. Currently she lives outside Rasharkin with her two kids & two cats and volunteers with Rasharkin Women's Group and Rasharkin Community Partnership. In her spare time she is trying to learn to play the guitar with her great teacher, and Corrymeela's own housekeeper, Holly Barnsley.

Zach Dunn, USA

When this Seattle, Washington native isn't playing music or rock climbing in nearby mountains he spends his time hiking, improving his photography or learning something new about his computer. In 2015 Zach lends himself to the mission of Corrymeela with great excitement. He recently graduated from Gonzaga University in Spokane, Washington where he enjoyed his studies in Political Science, which took his mind to places around the globe; naturally he jumped on the opportunity to be an agent of positive change in an international setting of Corrymeela. Assisting in the communications and fundraising efforts Zach hopes to contribute to Corrymeela while building upon the skills he brings to the community.



Slán Shane!

IT WAS WITH REAL SADNESS that volunteers, members and staff said "Au Revoir!" to Shane O'Neill just before Christmas, last year. Shane who was most recently in the post of Head of Hospitality and Facilities had been on staff since just after Ronnie Millar arrived as Centre Director in the mid-noughties. Ronnie tells the story that as he watched Shane make his way down the carpark towards the front door of House, for his interview, he knew by the time that Shane had reached the entrance to the foyer, that this was the person for the job. Shane is the kind of manager who is most at home with his shirt sleeves rolled up to his elbows, among the workers. He was schooled in Hospitality behind the bar with his Da, working before he could legally smoke and from there had training, and then a career that took him around Ireland and beyond.

A geeky kid from West Belfast, Shane knew first hand the mindless hatred that is sectarianism. He rarely, when leading morning worship in the Croí, shared his story of being violently attacked on the way home from school, whilst meandering down the Antrim Road, only because his uniform identified him as being from

the other side. After his Daddy moved on from the trade, the family relocated to Portstewart and Shane spent the rest of his teenage years less than twenty miles from Corrymeela. He had visited the place with his primary school class. From that moment the Corrymeela 'je ne sais quoi' got under his skin to the extent that he wrote a song about the Corrymeela he experienced as a child. For a time every Friday morning during Croí time we would be treated to one of the classics in Shane's repertoire. Shane is a passionate man with little capacity for the violence that marked the time of his growing up in Northern Ireland. Arriving back at Corrymeela was a new chapter in his adventure and as I observed it, at least over the last 8 years, it was a time of personal and professional growth for Shane. Corrymeela has been for Shane an encounter with belonging, a kind of coming home.

Robert Deignan recounts how it was clear from the outset that Shane's "passion for the essential ingredients of the Corrymeela recipe - welcome and service - would richly benefit the work of the community during his 10 years on staff." In addition to contributing to

the ethos of the community, Shane also excelled in managing the hospitality teams and giving an organisational lead to the huge changes to the physical development of site at Ballycastle.

As Corrymeela invested in capital projects, first with Coventry and latterly with the Davey Village, Shane served and was shown the ropes by Desie McLernon who sadly left us before his time. Desie, Shane and Robert could often be seen wandering about the emerging concrete cathedral that is Coventry in their high-vis regalia and matching hard hats. More often than not when those three were together banter about future or past fishing trips to the back of Rathlin was soon a subject of conversation.

So much of what we see and take for granted at the centre day in and day out was cared for, maintained and developed under the stewardship of people like Shane. On the day we said a formal goodbye Pádraig Ó Tuama read the following words in a poem called Slán, written for Shane. Their meaning resonate for me with the man I am glad to know as a friend and brother.

And you have seen so much,
and been so much.
So let this departure be
the best kind.
The kindest kind, the most heartfelt and
heartmeant kind.
Only you can feel the feelings that you'll feel
at the end of this story.

But you are not only leaving empty,
dear departing brother.
You are leaving with our love, and joy,
and fonder wishes than we have words
to wish.
So safely, now, go.
We send you with hope.
And we send you with thanks, and thanks,
and thanks.
And we send you with love.

**Matt Scrimgeour, Robert Deignan
& Pádraig Ó Tuama**





One year on

As I was coming to write this little piece, I had the opportunity to read the article that Ray Davey wrote for the magazine on the 10th anniversary of Corrymeela way back in 1975, see Page 6. As I write, the Community are already underway with a range of events to celebrate our 50th Anniversary year. What struck me most about re-discovering the article was both how much has changed and how much has not changed. "The only certainty for the future is the certainty of change". This was a world largely ignorant of computers, Internet, email, Twitter and Facebook. The landscape of the British and Irish relationships has fundamentally changed but we still face the deep-rooted if differently manifested legacy of division.

To say the time has flown by is an understatement. My major task for the year was to transform our restructuring plans from ideas into a working reality. This was never going to be easy as this meant rebuilding our staff team, keeping the Ballycastle Centre running effectively to meet the demands of the 11,000 people who visit us each year, and moving out of our historical base at No 8 Upper Crescent just to name some of the things we had to deal with. YIKES!

So, happily, the major phase of our restructuring has now been completed. Sometimes in the busyness of the now it is easy to lose sight, but when we glance back we can truly see the distance gained.

We have been blessed with a wonderful and talented range of new team members arriving to join us, who have added depth and strength to our work as we move forward. In particular, I would like to acknowledge the arrival of Pádraig Ó Tuama as our new Community Leader. With no surprise he has brought to us a new and profound voice, an energy that helps us all, in his own gentle way, to hold and guide our Christian commitment as a source of inspiration. However, none of this would have had any meaning without the dedication, knowledge and

experience of the team of people, who stood ready to welcome us all to join with them in the work of Corrymeela.

“The only certainty for the future is the certainty of change. It is completely obvious that life will never be the same as it was in '66 or '68. History never goes into reverse.”

Ray Davey 19/2/75

The only validity that makes this collective effort meaningful and worthwhile is that together our team has become more focused and fit for purpose. As you all will have witnessed through the range of media inputs we are bombarded with on a daily basis, we face with an ever-expanding challenge of how we can “live and learn well together”. This was Ray’s calling to us, and it remains just as critical now. To be true to this call of Ray’s, that now echoes down this 50 years, we need to also ensure this is true for how we work together both as a Community and staff team, in order to meet our day to day programme commitments with all those who join with us in the work of reconciliation and peace building.

In his 1975 article, Ray’s prophetic voice still rings through. In the complexity of today his clarity remains ever valid.

“I should add that when we speak of the Christian message of liberation and hope, we also imply that great word “Peace”, which means far more than a permanent “cease-fire”. It means all that makes for the total health and well-being of society...In a word it means that we all must work for a new society based not

on privilege or power but on the quality of people”.

It is clear that we still face significant challenges in Northern Ireland around the issue of sectarianism. We have, I think, unwittingly bought into a “hollowed out peace”. Our politics is too often binary in choice and operating on a “tit for tat” basis of one-upmanship. The cost of this zero sum game unerringly tends to close down any sense of constructive civic space and sends more and more of our young people hurtling away from any involvement with our civic and political life. If this was an isolated Northern Ireland issue that would be one thing but we can often see this same pattern replicating itself and gaining strength across our global community.

As part of our 50th year Celebrations, we will welcome back over 100 of our former Volunteers at an Easter Gathering under the title “Making a World of Difference”. As wonderful as this is, it only represents a tiny proportion of the thousands of volunteers from across the world who have gifted us with their time, energy and skills. This 50 year Corrymeela journey could simply not have been achieved without this support and what was true of 1965 remains even more true in 2015.

The need for our work is not diminishing but expanding. To meet this need we must use this foundational history to call forward a new generation of those committed to and skilled in building out a civic space, rather than settle for the diminished reality of our current hollowed out centre ground. This will not be easy. In our work we find many who feel that the centre ground is tired. It needs renewal. We need to bring our knowledge and experience to this revitalisation work. The journey is stretching out before us.

Colin Craig

Executive Director, Corrymeela



Garden Thanks

MY GRANDA HAD GREEN FINGERS. He colonised various other gardens during his retirement and the fruit of his labour was evident both in the earth he worked and on the table when we ate with him. Over the past seven years I've watched various individuals commit themselves to nurturing the gardens and grounds at Corrymeela Ballycastle. Some have more experience than

others, some are fair weather labourers, others never fatigue, some work alone, others in pairs, all work in harmony with the growing that occurs when new life is stimulated by the presence of light. In my current temporary position, I have been finding ways to get comfortable in the shoes of our friend Shane O'Neill. As I look at the centre grounds with new eyes it has been particularly evident that these folk who garden among us are an incredible gift. In our community liturgy we often agree in the Croí, "that while we have different tasks we are working for a common purpose." On behalf of the many other workers at Corrymeela, I'd like to say a simple but heartfelt "THANK YOU" to our faithful gardeners ~ you each know who you are.

May flowering fruit follow your joyful labour and heaven's light shine on you.

Matt Scrimgeour
Acting Head of Hospitality & Facilities

Corrymeela Scholars-in-Residence in San Antonia, Texas

COMMUNITY MEMBERS
Richard and Yvonne Naylor are spending 3-4 months in San Antonio, Texas from January to April next year 2016 on the invitation of Dr Andy Hill and as a result of a successful application to the Fulbright scholar-in-residence programme supported by John Hunter, Colin Craig and Pádraig Ó Tuama. They will be involved in Corrymeela-style workshops and group work on a range of subjects from conflict transformation and peace-making to politics, religion and reconciliation.

They will also be sharing stories about who we are and what we have learnt at Corrymeela in any one of the five colleges in San Antonio as well as some schools and community groups so those months promise to be busy and also enriching for all

involved. This exchange gives us a great opportunity to strengthen our collaboration and build further networks with partners in the US in general and Texas in particular and we look forward to this wonderful opportunity and ongoing contact.



Congratulations to Brendan



CONGRATULATIONS TO COMMUNITY MEMBER
Brendan McAllister on his new job with the UN. He has been appointed to the UN Standby team of Senior Mediation Experts, a full time commitment from February 2015-February 2016. The downside is that he has to be on standby to be deployed anywhere in the world at short notice. There are 8 members of the team and his portfolio is Process Design, Dialogue, Reconciliation, Gender and Social Inclusion.

The Standby Team is recruited by the Norwegian Refugee Council and works under the authority of the UN Department of Political Affairs in New York.

The UN has committed to maintain a team of experts who can be deployed to the field in less than 72 hours - mainly to UN missions where envoys and officials have asked for expert assistance before, during and after peace processes. Brendan is the first Irish person to serve on the Standby Team.

SAD NEWS

John Mowat

It is with great sadness we bring you news of the death of John Mowat who passed away peacefully on Monday 9th of March. John was the husband of former staff member Nicky Mowat, he volunteered onsite in the gardens and also as a bus driver for Corrymeela for many years. He will be fondly remembered.

Legacies

William Glass
W. T. Orton

Gifts in Memoriam

Helen Anderson
Bob Purdie

COMING UP

Corrymeela Dublin Event

Friday 8 May - Sunday 10 May 2015

Living Together Well in a Culturally Diverse Society

A weekend of encounter and engagement with the realities of diversity, prejudice, upstanding and community, across the island of Ireland and beyond.

Including: a fringe event, a day conference at All Hallows College, an evening of poetry, music and reflection at Glencree, a guided walk through Dublin City Centre, a community picnic, and a Sunday Service at St. Patrick's Cathedral.

Be a part of the conversation with

Pádraig Ó Tuama
Corrymeela Community Leader

Joan Burton TD
Tánaiste of Ireland

Tiffany Allen
City of Sanctuary UK

Katherine Dowds
Dublin's interfaith community

Sergiu Pruteanu & Nadette Foley
Musicantia

Sean Pettis
Corrymeela

Rev. Dr. Sahr Yambasu
City of Sanctuary Ireland

Philip McKinley & Uche Gabriel Akujobi
Discovery Gospel Choir

Vivian Ní Chuív
Dublin Historian

Discovery Gospel Choir

Dr. Jasbir Singh Puri
Sikh Representative on Dublin City Interfaith Forum

Rosaleen McDonagh
Leading feminist within the Travelling Community



Everyone is welcome to take part in this event.

There is no fixed charge, however if you can afford it, a suggested donation of €20 would be appreciated. You can make this on the Corrymeela Dublin Just Giving page.

Space is limited and registration is essential.

Please register at www.corrymeela-dublin-event.eventbrite.ie where you will find full details of the weekend event, including speakers.

For more information email: dublin@corrymeela.org or phone Pádraig: 086 683 6494.



Corrymeela Connections Weekend

(formerly called Corrymeela Friends Weekend)

29th - 31st May, 2015 | Corrymeela Ballycastle

“Faith and Tension: dialogue in a time of deep difference”

We will collate a team of experienced thinkers and practitioners with theological and political expertise to help Corrymeela Friends, Associates and new friends consider questions about faith and political tensions in the post-election days of May 2015.

A programme and booking form for this weekend are available on our website www.corrymeela.org or call our Belfast Office 028 9050 8080 and we will post them out.



Taking This Troubled Beauty Forward

Building Capacity for Participatory Leadership

6 - 9th August 2015 | Corrymeela | Northern Ireland

An invitation to explore & practice the art of participatory leadership

We live in a rapidly changing world and struggle to find the time for meaningful conversations or the space to take responsibility for the future. Can we find a way to bring our fractured societies together and create a better future?

Perhaps you've also been asking yourself these questions:

- *How can we invite others and ourselves into a civic democracy 2.0, and work in ways that create a sense of hope and engagement?*
- *How can we create spaces for people to come together in meaningful conversation that helps us shape and take wiser action together?*
- *What are the capacities we can practice together that will create a foundation for a different future?*

What will we learn & practice together?

Meaningful conversation, participatory leadership, effective democratic practices and learning how to work collaboratively into wiser action together.

The Art of Participatory Leadership is a 4-day residential training designed for learning simple yet powerful practices that build community, activate collective intelligence and foster individual and collaborative leadership practices that will help us navigate the complexity of our world today. During the training we will explore a range of participatory tools, concepts and methods, including:

- 4 Fold Practice
- World Café
- The Art of Harvesting
- The Chaordic Path
- Circle Practice
- Storytelling & Collective Story Harvesting
- 8 Breaths of Design
- Open Space Technology
- Appreciative Inquiry
- Designing for Wiser Action

Whether you work in the private, public or NGO sector or are simply an engaged citizen, this cross-sectoral training is a vibrant learning space. During the 4 days your thinking will expand, your projects will be honed and you can build lasting relationships that can support your work in the future. We invite you to join us and to connect with other practitioners, leaders and social innovators seeking to build their leadership capacity and serve their community. We look forward to welcoming you, your questions, your projects and your contributions.

Cost. This training is residential and prices include all food & accommodation for the duration of the training
Professional*: £600 - £800
Early Bird (until 1st May): £500
Student Scholarship: £300

For more information & to register:
www.aohcorrymeela.weebly.com

The Prayer of Courage

I USED TO BE A SCHOOL CHAPLAIN at the De La Salle pastoral centre in West Belfast. There, classes of pupils came for a day of reflection, retreat and fun. I loved the job. Each day, we'd ask the young people to design a time of prayer to end their day. They could choose a reading, write a few prayers, choose a song from one of their phones, talk about why they like that song. I sat through hundreds of these services - each simple, forgettable and beautiful.

At one of those prayer services, a young person wrote the following prayer:

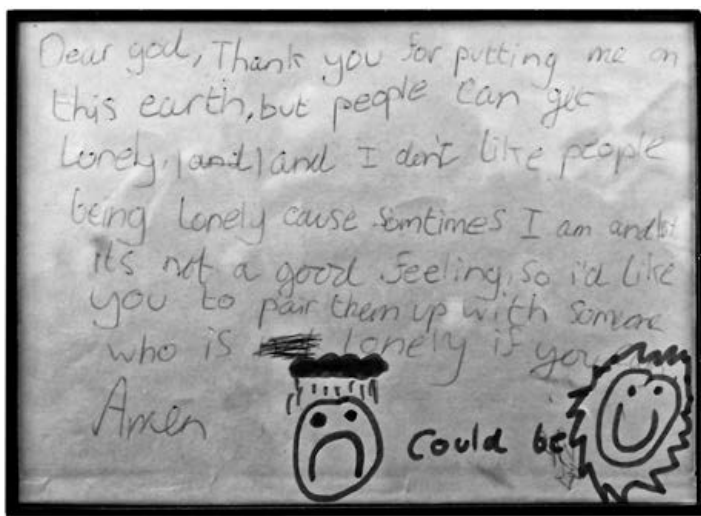
"Dear God, thank you for putting me on this earth, but people can get lonely and I don't like people being lonely cause sometimes I am and it's not a good feeling. So I'd like you to pair them up with someone who is ~~not~~ lonely, if you can. Amen. Sad can be happy"

He read it out, seemingly without much self consciousness, then crumpled it up and put it in a bin. I fished it out, framed it and have thought about it for years. His words are so strong, so clear, so humble. He tells the truth about human loneliness and

he tells it without shame.

I love that he initially had the remedy to loneliness to be an encounter with someone who is not lonely, but then he remedied his remedy and suggested that loneliness shared with another is loneliness transformed, in a little way. And his humble petition, too, appeals to God - he says "if you can...". There are many great prayers recorded in the sacred texts of our world. This one is worth living a life by.

As part of our Corrymeela Community worship rhythm - taking time to think of the names of the members each day, the volunteers and staff, holding some intentions or our world and reflecting on a gospel text, I wanted to write a prayer for us. The young person's prayer here is a prayer of courage, humanity and story. May we live by this witness. At Corrymeela, we know that welcome is the first word of our witness, and that we bear witness to this in our actions, our love, our admission of our own complicity and our looking toward a hope that is both greater than us all and deep within us. May we find courage and love in this shared endeavour of Corrymeela.



Courage comes from the heart
and we are always welcomed by God,
the Croí of all being.

We bear witness to our faith,
knowing that we are called
to live lives of courage, love and reconciliation
in the ordinary and extraordinary moments
of each day.

We bear witness, too, to our failures
and our complicity in the fractures of our world.

May we be courageous today.
May we learn today.
May we love today.
Amen.

Pádraig Ó Tuama

Leader, Corrymeela Community

APERTURE

A Space Through Which Light Travels



A Festival Like No Other
Friday 31st July - Sunday 2nd August 2015
Corrymeela Centre, Ballycastle

Corrymeela is celebrating 50 years of peacemaking this year with a unique summer festival.

Aperture is a festival of diversity, arts, debate, politics, faith, music and celebration.

Poets, Musicians, Politicians, Circus Acts, Theologians, Debates, Games, Food, Surprises and Unexpected Opportunities... The Aperture festival will be a wonderful and temporary community for three full days on the north coast.

This festival, marking Corrymeela's 50th anniversary, will give shape to a wide range of ideas and the authentic personal stories behind Corrymeela, placing it all in the context of a celebration of fifty years of community.

The family friendly festival will feature local artisanal food and as well as the stunning views of Corrymeela's six-acre North Coast site.

We will celebrate local and international peace building. We will celebrate our common ground and our differences and we'll explore how far we've come and how far we have to go. We will listen to voices often ignored and in a space of celebration, dialogue and diversity talk about our differences and celebrate the amazing work of community.

Aperture will be engaging, fun, provocative, refreshing and inspirational.

Aperture will also be a party. Bring your dancing shoes. Bring your politics. Bring your opinions. Bring your hope. Bring your friends. Bring your life. We'll bring the rest.

Full Festival line-up will be on our website www.corrymeela.org

NB. Ticket price does not include camping or accommodation - please visit www.causewaycoastandglens.com for accommodation options in the local area. Children under 5 are free.

To book tickets go to www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/aperture-festival-tickets-16058568611

Corrymeela acknowledges the support of the following:

