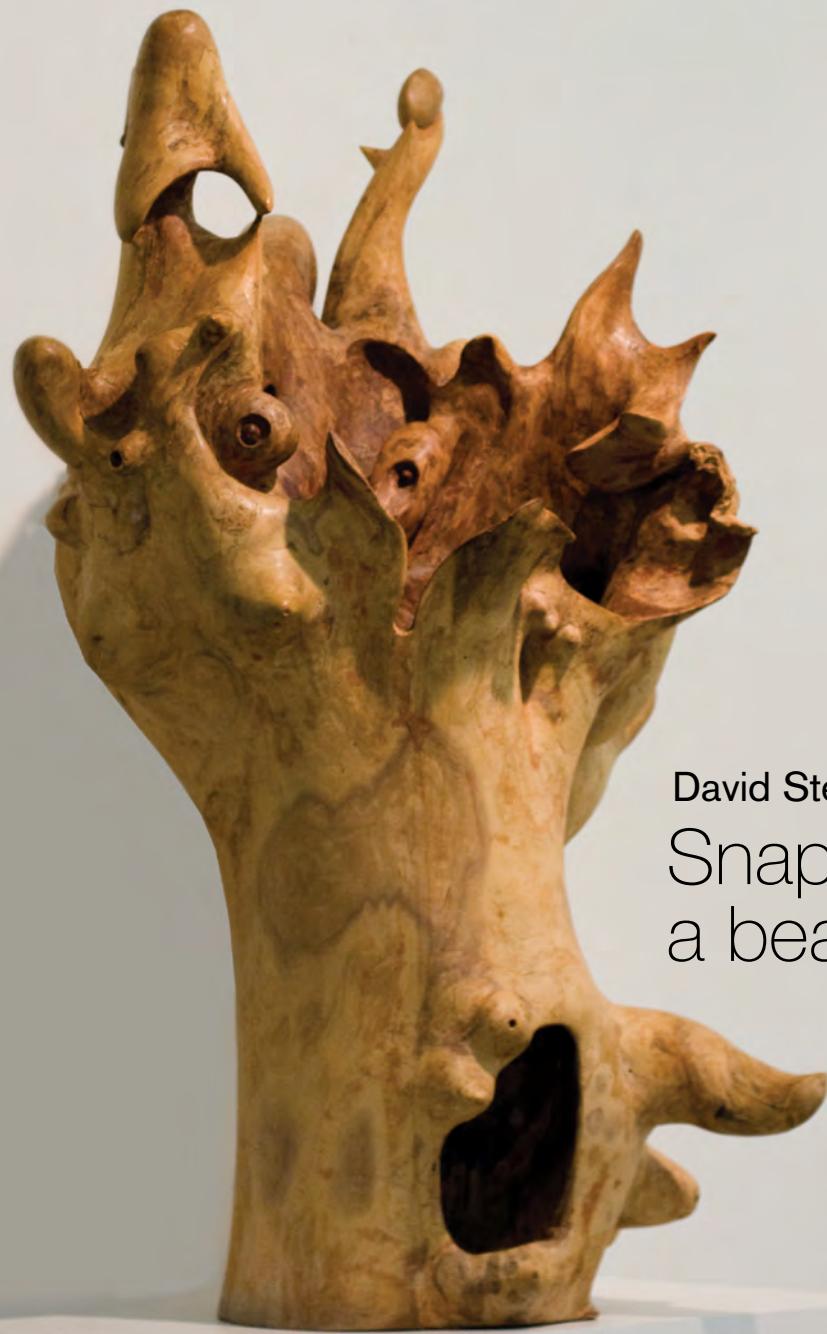


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Corrymeela

www.corrymeela.org



David Stevens

Snapshot of
a beautiful life

Page 23



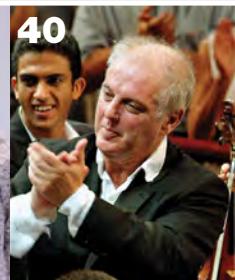
Corrymeela will
donate to Northern
Ireland's Carbon
Footprint Tree
Planting Scheme,
to offset the
environmental impact
of this magazine.



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THE
CORRYMEELA
COMMUNITY

Soon the familiar

Every month for six months
the man with the untended beard

bluntly asks me the following question:

Tell me what you see?

You don't

have much time. Soon

the familiar

will dim your view.

Give me the gift
of a strangers' sight.

Tell me what you see.

And as I stuttered a sentence or three,

the man with the unruly shirt-tail
scribbled notes on tears of paper.

And I never got to say:

Is what
I see true?

Do you
see this too?

and

What are you going to do
with all that you have scribed?

Paul Hutchinson

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Corrymeela meets the West Eastern Divan Orchestra

Susan McEwen is IPC Co-ordinator for Corrymeela she visited Barcelona earlier this year for the annual West-Eastern Divan Workshop and recounts her experience

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LETTERS AND EMAILS

Thank you for all your emails and letters, we love hearing from you. Our summer edition is looking at themes of faith; if you have any personal stories, prayers or opinions around this subject please do get in touch. To submit a letter please post to: The Editor, 8 Upper Crescent, Belfast BT7 1NT. Or email: amcelroy@corrymeela.org

Cover Image: Resurrection by FE McWilliam, one of David Stevens' favourite artists.

A big thank you to The F E McWilliam Gallery and Studio, Banbridge District Council, who gave permission for the image to be reproduced. To find out more about the gallery visit: www.femcwilliam.com

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The place called reconciliation



David Stevens was the Leader of the Corrymeela Community from 2004 right up until his death in May of this year. He wrote this Comment in anticipation of our Winter magazine.

**Mercy and truth
are met together;
righteousness and
peace have kissed
each other.**

Psalm 85:10
Authorised Version

Paradoxes

That the claims of truth and the claims of mercy may conflict and that the claims of justice and righteousness may conflict with the claims of peace.

PSALM 85:10 brings together two paradoxes and embraces them.

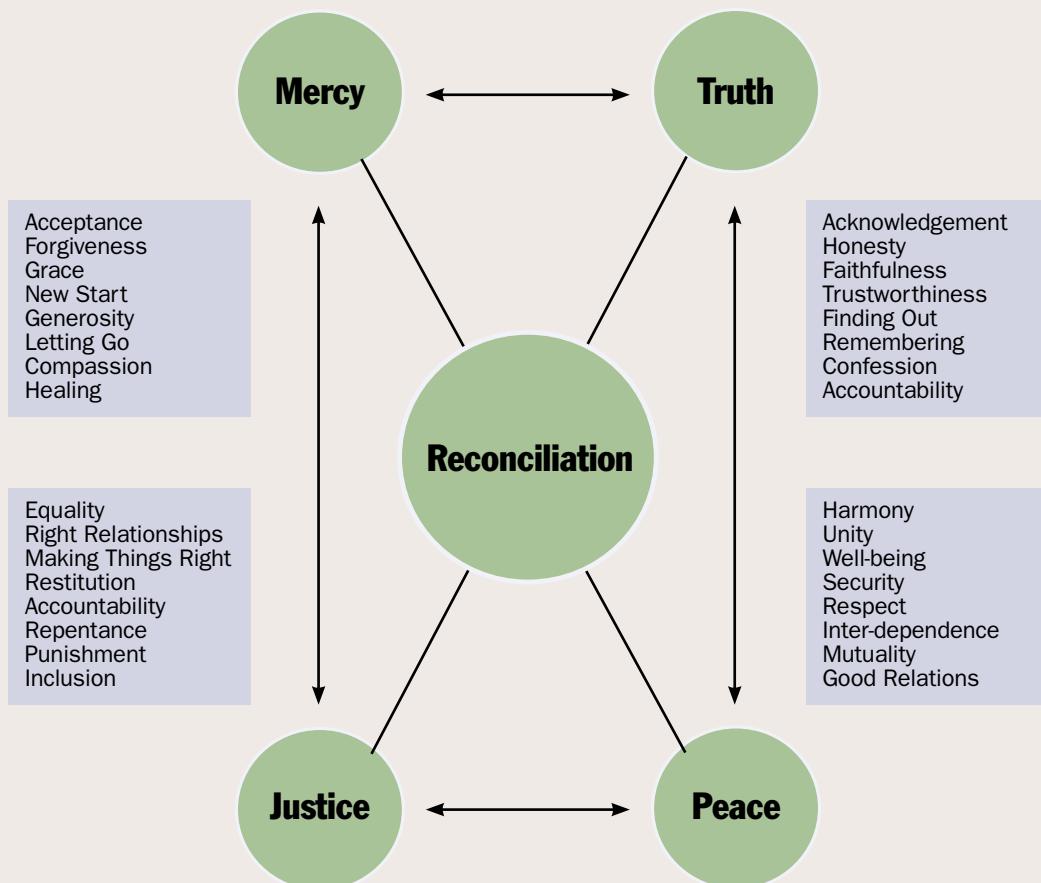
The tension between the moral demands of justice and the political requirements of peace have been very clear in Northern Ireland, with the early release of politically motivated prisoners. Similarly in South Africa amnesty has been granted to those who had been involved in murder and torture, providing their acts were politically motivated and they made public confession of them.

There are tensions between wishing to let go of, or forget the past – which mercy seems to require – and the longing for acknowledgement of wrong, for accountability – which the demands of truth seem to require. Furthermore, although it is not expressed in Psalm 85, there is a tension between mercy and the claims of justice. People may see mercy in the form of generosity, particularly when it is

reciprocated as the only way forward; however, there exists a distaste for treating generously those who have behaved badly, this violates a sense of fairness.

Justice in its punitive form demands the punishment of wrongdoers and so it can appear justice is being violated when wrongdoers are released early and included both in how society is governed and how justice is determined. Tension also exists between the demands of truth and the requirements of peace. The discovery of the truth can open up wounds, create fresh bitterness and reinforce division.

John Paul Lederach suggests that the place called reconciliation is a relational space where the different conflicting parties meet and face together the claims and tensions between truth and mercy, justice and peace. All of this is expressed in the diagram below.





This approach makes it clear that reconciliation is always taking place within a particular context and with regard to a particular set of political and social realities. It also suggests that reconciliation cannot be pursued without the conflicting parties facing each other; for only then can they speak to and hopefully

hear one another. What happens in that space, between the conflicting parties, becomes the critical issue. Thus, reconciliation is a process of social conversation between the parties; it is a quest.

David Stevens

SEASONS GREETINGS and welcome to the winter magazine. Over the last six months we as a Community have gone through many changes with familiar faces parting and the very sad death of our Leader Dr David Stevens.

I really missed David's input this time round; I enjoyed exploring ideas with him and getting his reaction to the magazine stage by stage. Indeed he found my tendency toward tabloid journalistic style and desire to 'sex-up' the magazine very amusing and always used kindness and wisdom when considering my latest suggestion.

In my new role as editor I humbly present this edition – the first that has not had the benefit of Jo Watson's editorial knowledge and David's expert ability to spot an error long before the ink dries.



Jo has moved on to a new role with The Princes Trust and our loss is definitely their gain. The quality of the magazine has undoubtedly reflected Jo's innate sense of

how to communicate and it is my task to maintain the standards she has set. She leaves us with every good wish for the future.

A big thank you to Kate, who worked tirelessly with me on this edition, I hope you enjoy the selection of news and articles within its pages. Themes of justice, forgiveness and reconciliation and the tension that exists between them are very prominent in many of the pieces. David, insightful as always, prepared his Comment (page 5) for our magazine before Stormont launched their Cohesion, Sharing and Integration document in July and wonderfully expresses everything that the document ought to reflect. Jon Hatch's response to CSI also offers some food for thought on page 30 and you can read Corrymeela's full response on our website: www.corrymeela.org.

My personal favourite this month is Paul Hutchinson's reflection 'Soon the Familiar' (page 2) definitely worth a read and of course don't forget to support us by placing your last minute orders for Christmas Cards and Calendars (page 44).

As always I would love to hear from you; you can contact me by email: a.mcelroy@corrymeela.org or by calling 02890 508080.



Aly

The angels were smiling

Kate Pettis MBE, Interim Leader of the Corrymeela Community

WE HAD A BITTERSWEET TIME at La Mon Hotel on Sunday 27 June this year when we held the party that David Stevens wished us to have after his death. We had the opportunity to share with each other not only our memories of David but of others who have gone before us, not all of whom had the title of Leader but had provided significant leadership to us.

We chatted, ate good food, drank good wine and listened to wonderful singing

from Voices Together. The weather was beautiful and as Roel Kaptein would have said, 'the angels were smiling.'

There was a sense that David knew exactly what he was doing in wishing us to have a party and his note to us read by Mathilde needs no comment:

"To all the people who have accompanied me on the Corrymeela journey, which for me started in September 1966, thank you.
As Frank Wright said

before he died, 'it's been great.'

I feel a deep drumbeat of thankfulness. There have been wonderful adventures. Many rare animals have been seen, including the dreaded scapegoat, which Roel Kaptein told us lots about – may you not run into this beast.

Thank you to all those who supported me during my time as leader, sometimes through gritted teeth, but then grit makes good toothpaste. The

mess-ups remain mine and the wrong judgements. A particular thanks to Kate who propped me up.

To all those who I have hurt, particularly those I made redundant, I am sorry. To my successor, blessings, wisdom, courage, creativity and a sense of humour. For me Corrymeela was always about freedom – a little bit of what Jesus told us about in the gospels. But let us not get too pious. Jesus enjoyed a good party. Now enjoy this one and the music."

Introducing Sean Pettis

Sean has recently joined the Corrymeela team as co-ordinator for the Facing Our History project.



I'VE BEEN INVOLVED in Corrymeela's work, either as a participant in programmes or as a volunteer for many years and I am greatly honoured to now be a member of the staff team. After finishing my studies at

school, it became clear that my career as a professional footballer was not going to progress as I had planned, despite camping outside Liverpool FC's training ground, the call to join the squad never emerged. So alas, I went to Queen's University Belfast, where I studied Modern History and Politics.

During this time I was involved in rock band extraordinaire, 'Prospect Road'. Despite several critically acclaimed gigs and an award winning EP, the band split due to artistic differences. So with my studies behind me and the rock n roll dream shattered, I spent an amazing year

at the Corrymeela Centre as a long term volunteer. This was instrumental in shaping my desire to be involved in peace building and reconciliation work, particularly with young people. I then worked for the Community Relations Council and International Voluntary Service NI.

Over the past four years I have worked with Public Achievement, a youth civic education and community relations organisation, as a Training Officer. During this time I also completed a Post Graduate Diploma in Community Youth Work at the University of Ulster.

I am really excited by the challenge that lies ahead of me working with teachers, student teachers and young people to explore and face some of the more

controversial aspects of history, both locally and globally. Moreover, I am thrilled to be working with our internationally renowned partners Facing History and Ourselves, who have a wealth of knowledge and experience in supporting educators and young people to link the past to moral choices today.

So much of what I have learned about reconciliation work has stemmed from Corrymeela and I really hope to be able to combine that with my other experiences to create a deep learning experience for all involved. If you are interested in learning more about our project, or want to be involved please feel free to contact me at the Belfast Office seanpettis@corrymeela.org



Sota and Jude on their wedding day

Introducing Sota Sem McCann

Sota has a one year post with Corrymeela and is based in the Belfast office. You can contact her at sota@corrymeela.org

I WORK as a fundraising assistant volunteer with Corrymeela. Originally from Cambodia I am now living in Northern Ireland and recently got married to Jude McCann. After graduating from Build Bright University, Phnom Penh with a BA in Accounting I spent four years working in Cambodia at the international development agency World Vision as Child Sponsorship Project Coordinator. I also

taught English in my local school.

On a day to day basis I provide support to Corrymeela staff and am currently involved in developing a marketing plan for the new village in Ballycastle. My role involves providing support and information to customers, members and donors. I enjoy greeting visitors to the office and helping in any way I can. This opportunity has

already given me a chance to develop my skills and I have enjoyed meeting new people, especially the good craic with the Belfast team.

I would like to express my thanks to the Rank Foundation who have given me this opportunity to work with Corrymeela allowing me to build my confidence for living and working in Northern Ireland.

Introducing Anne McKay

Interface fieldworker working with Irish Peace Centre through Corrymeela. You can contact Anne at the Belfast office: belfast@corrymeela.org

I STARTED IN MY POST as Inter-community Interface Fieldworker working with Irish Peace Centre through

Corrymeela at the end of June.

Originally from County Offaly most of my career has been in Community/ Good Relations in a shared neighbourhood in Belfast.

I am really enjoying my new post and have met with several groups. It is great to be part of a large consortium such as IPC which has the potential to respond to groups needs in a variety of creative ways.

I am really looking forward to being part of Corrymeela and getting to know everyone.



Introducing Allie Donnegan

Programme Assistant based in Ballycastle. You can contact her at alliedonnegan@corrymeela.org

I RECENTLY GRADUATED from the University of Minnesota with a Strategic Communications degree. At a young age, my parents instilled in me the importance of travel and valuing the vibrancy and diversity the world has to offer. Last year, I

spent several months in South Africa working at a children's hospital. Upon arrival back to the States, I applied for a research program in Northern Ireland, and was fortunate enough to be accepted. I spent last June in Northern Ireland, studying the cultural, historical, socioeconomic, and political climate of Northern Ireland. Two days into the program, I had completely fallen in love with the beautiful country and the people. I love dancing, running, yoga, and any outdoor activity. I'll try anything at least once, and I approach life with a smile.



Sad News

Condolences

Since the publication of our spring magazine former member, Frances Bowring Carr, died in April. Isobel McDonagh's only sibling, John Moore died in May. Margaret Smith, a founder

Community member passed away in June. Former member, Hazel McClenaghan also passed away earlier this year. Anne Grant, a former member died in September. Our thoughts and prayers are with their families.

Legacies

We remember Joanna G Higgs, Mary S Russell, Margaret S Smith, John Morrow, Anne J Duckworth, Jenny Sinclair, Elizabeth Andrewes-Willink, Elizabeth Johnston, The Ivan and Dorothy Wheeler Charitable Trust and William Glass. They are held in our hearts and their legacy gifts will be put to good use.

Gifts in Memoriam

We remember David Stevens, Dr Hylda Armstrong, Hazel McClenaghan, Joan Tomlin, Joyce Neice, Margaret Ritchie, Edna Dick, Mary Elliott, Winifred Johnston, Nicky Mowat, Rose Anne Grant, Tom Sinclair, Wolfgang Durr and their families.



John Fitzpatrick, Paul Hutchinson and David Graham

Davey building on schedule for Easter opening

PHASE 2 of Corrymeela's Capital Build programme is on track for completion in April 2011. The International Fund for Ireland (IFI) and John Fitzpatrick, from the Fitzpatrick Hotels Group in the USA recently joined Centre Director Paul Hutchinson and Interim Leader Kate Pettis on site to check on the progress. IFI Board Member, David Graham OBE said, "The

Fund was happy to offer support for this project through our Leaving a Legacy Programme; we have supported many Corrymeela initiatives over many years, and the new Village complex will help Corrymeela to continue with its very important peace building work with local and international groups." John Fitzpatrick OBE added, "We at the Eithne and Paddy

Fitzpatrick memorial fund are long term supporters of Corrymeela's vision and work. I am delighted to see the progress phase 2 of Corrymeela's capital build is making. The Davey Village promises to be a fantastic resource for staff, volunteers and visitors alike and we are proud to contribute to the creation of a safe space for dialogue, conversation and reconciliation."



John Fitzpatrick, David Graham, Paul Hutchinson and Kate Pettis are joined on site by the talented team of people making the state-of-the-art new village a reality.

Millennium Volunteers feel valued and supported

OVER THE SUMMER MONTHS Corrymeela carried out a Volunteer Impact Assessment on Millennium Volunteering. The aim was to gauge how satisfied our 16 to 24 year old volunteers were with their volunteering experience at Corrymeela. Finishing in March 2011 the Millennium Volunteer Programme is funded by the Department of Education and the Impact Assessment enables us to evaluate the programme's success. In total we interviewed 46 volunteers, hosted two focus groups and asked for feedback from groups. Gillian Chase, a mid-term volunteer, played an



Millennium Volunteers

important role designing the survey, collecting data and bringing all the information together. The results were overwhelmingly positive with short, mid and long-term volunteers feeling valued and supported.

Of course there are always improvements to be made and thanks to the assessment we know what direction to take. The report was completed in October and will be a valuable tool when applying for future funding.

Goodbye Ciara

REGRETFULLY the post of Secondary Schools Worker, held by Ciara McFarlane, was made redundant due to cuts made in grant aid provided by the Department of Education. Whilst we are deeply sorry to be losing Ciara who has contributed greatly to the development of our work in schools, we are delighted she has been appointed as the co-ordinator of the Change Makers Programme, an initiative supported by NICE, CRIS and YMCA We want to thank her for all she



has given to Corrymeela and the wider community and send her every good wish for success in her new job.

Fundraising News

A BIG THANK YOU to you, our faithful supporters who make our work possible. We couldn't do it without you. A selection of the donations are listed below:

- Our friends in Aberdeen raised more than £2,000 for our primary schools work at their annual Corrymeela Coffee Morning in spring.
- Corrymeela's Ormeau cell group raised £620 at their annual book sale.
- Richard Loudon's swimathon has raised £814.19 to date.
- Our Marks and Spencer bagpackers have raised over £1,200 since April.
- Canberra Friends of Ireland Society in Australia raised £400 at their St Patrick's Day Service
- Colin Woodcock in Canada raised more than £1,200 at his Corrymeela Coffee Morning.

Thales donate £1000 to Corrymeela

A BIG THANK YOU to the Thales Staff Charity Fund who donated £1,000 to Corrymeela; our application was supported by Alf Casement and Anne Riddle.



Alf Casement with Astrid Conville, Corrymeela Fundraising Officer



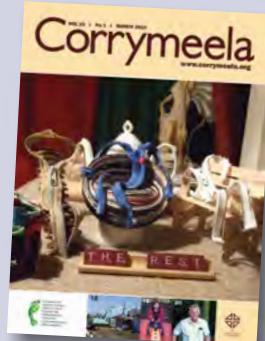
The magnetic force of Corrymeela

VOLUNTEERS always leave Corrymeela with more than they brought with them, new friendships, life changing experiences and wonderful memories. But for some of us a 'magnetic force' is infused, one which draws us to one another and to Northern Ireland; perhaps it slipped in through the morning porridge.

But regardless of how it happened, the attraction for one another and for Corrymeela never leaves. It was that 'force' which brought Becky Mang, Homer Nye and Ronnie Millar to Toronto to attend the annual Paddling For Peace fundraiser planned and sponsored by Colin Woodcock. Colin has been raising money for Corrymeela for many years, and this year the result was not only financial support, but a grand reunion. Time and circumstances may keep Corrymeela volunteers apart, but once infused with the "force" they never lose the connection and draw to one another and Ballycastle wherever they are.

Acknowledgement

A BIG THANK YOU to artist Bonnie Soroke for her zipper image which illuminated last edition's cover. Bonnie is a community artist/educator living in Belfast; she offers workshops and consultation to groups involved with early literacy, adult literacy and community development. Images from her recent show of Zippers can be seen at <http://sites.google.com/site/bonniezippersculptures/> and you can read about her research and work in adult literacy (using zipper sculpturing) at <http://zipperartadultliteracy.blogspot.com/> To contact Bonnie email: bsoroke@gmail.com



Correction

IN PETER SAGAR's Global Village piece La Comunidad de Paz we wrongly referred to Aung San Suu Kyi as a 'he' instead of a she we apologise for this oversight.

Lifetime Achievement Award

DAVID STEVENS received an award for Lifetime Achievements in Community Relations in April. David said, "I see this as recognition for all Corrymeela has done over the years, starting with Ray."

Hope and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland

a book by Ronald Wells

HISTORIAN Ronald Wells, a well-respected scholar who has devoted much of his career to Northern Ireland, was in Belfast on 30 October for the launch of his latest book, '*Hope and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland: The Role of Faith-Based Organisations*' (Liffey Press).

The launch was held at the Ulster Museum and Gladys Ganiel, Lecturer and Coordinator of the Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation Studies

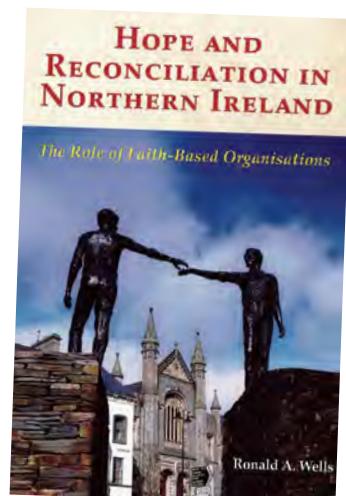
Programme at Trinity College Dublin, was guest speaker along with Brian Lambkin, founding Director of the Centre for Migration Studies at the Ulster-American Folk Park, Omagh.

Wells is Professor Emeritus at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan and the Director of the Maryville Symposium on faith and learning at Maryville

College in Tennessee. He has written ably in this area before, including 'Friendship Towards Peace: The Journey of Ken Newell and Gerry Reynolds' (Columba Press, 2005) and 'People Behind the Peace: Community and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland' (Eerdmans, 1999).

Gladys Ganiel

See her review on page 35





Connecting with culture: Made in China

Content courtesy of Ben Care and The London Institute for Contemporary Christianity. To subscribe to their e-newsletter email: mail@licc.org.uk, citing Corymeela as a reference. Visit www/licc.org.uk for articles and events listings.

SUNFLOWER SEEDS, by the Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, is the latest work to fill the Tate Modern's Turbine Hall and the first ever by a non-western artist. 100,000,000 hand-produced and painted porcelain seeds carpet the floor. It is a beautiful, staggering sight, hard to comprehend in its vastness; offering a quiet counterpoint to the flash and bang Beijing Olympics, that other recent fete of Chinese mass production.

Crunching across the floor, the scene is at first most reminiscent of a busy, grey, gravel beach. Few spend long contemplating the individual seeds, rather

some sunbathe, many take photos, some flick, kick and run across the seeds and some make angels on the floor. Even those of us with a more introverted disposition play games as we sift the seeds through our fingers.

Litter begins to accrue as a couple of yogurt pots lie half submerged in the seeds. Over and again one woman patrols the edge with a broom pushing the scattered seeds back into place.

In a connected room, a short film shows the thirty stage process by which the seeds were produced and the people who crafted them. The town of Jingdezhen once made

porcelain for the Emperor's Court but has since fallen on hard times. Many are unemployed or bankrupt.

With 1,600 people spending over two years making the seeds this artwork became a major industry. Few in the town were unaware of this work, yet few knew what it was for.

Sunflower Seeds offers a poignant parable of our globalised world, Weiwei giving us the opportunity to recognise how we enjoy ourselves careless of others' expense. Idly crunching the handiwork of hundreds of people under our feet, we continue to search for ways to entertain ourselves. Many of us in the West have grown bored, consumerism dulling our appreciation of creativity.

Wandering the hall, reflecting on the work

of hundreds of people and the outsourced monotony that lies at the heart of capitalism, it was Chesterton's words that came back to mind with a new force and meaning,

"It may not be automatic necessity that makes all daisies alike: it may be that God makes every daisy separately, but has never got tired of making them. It may be that He has the eternal appetite of infancy; for we have sinned and grown old, and our Father is younger than we."

Ben Care
LICI

Story update:
The public are no longer permitted to walk on the porcelain seeds for reasons of health and safety...

That you may have hope:

Germany's second annual Ecumenical Churches Day

More than 133,000 people attended the Churches Day weekend in May which stretched across the city of Munich for activities and discussions.

Volunteer Support Worker Sonja Tammen attended with former LTV Elisabeth Beckert. Sonja gives her account of the event here.

ORANGE HAS A DIFFERENT MEANING

in every country. During the second Ecumenical Churches Day in Munich participants wore an orange scarf to show their commitment to Christianity. Themed 'That you may have hope' the weekend's aim was to create mutual understanding between Protestants and Catholics.

Elli and I were based in Ireland House, a venue in the suburbs of Munich which is normally a residential home for the elderly. As Corrymeela representatives, we chatted with visitors about the difficulties between Catholics and Protestants in the north of Ireland and promoted Corrymeela's goals to a German audience. Our stall was side by side with representatives from the West Belfast Festival, the Saint Patrick Centre in Downpatrick, the Irish-German Friendship Club and Gaeltacht Irland Reisen.

What I found amazing was the number of international connections Corrymeela has created over the years - one of the many people we met was Ingeborg Ott, who had been a Corrymeela volunteer 25 years ago.

Besides cultural and music events, there was also a podium discussion on the current situation in Northern Ireland and the overall developments both north and south. Being in another country really brought home to me how little other Europeans know about the situation here and the general misunderstandings and preconceptions that exist. Elli and I worked hard to tell Corrymeela's story, provide information and overcome prejudices.

Sonja Tammen,
Volunteer Support Worker



Sonja Tammen and Elisabeth Beckert at the second Ecumenical Churches Day in Munich, Germany



Corrymeela's Dublin cell group decided on an energetic afternoon in the Mountains as their outing of choice for summer 2010. David Godfrey recounts the experience below

FRANCES AND ALAN MARTIN, who live close to a cairn on Tibradden Mountain, came up with the idea of a gentle hike so, on a not so sunny Saturday in July we gathered at their house and set off up the mountain. The path was steep but when we reached our destination we enjoyed



Dublin cell group takes to the hills

a magnificent panoramic view of Dublin and faraway in the distance the outline of the Mourne Mountains was just visible.

The cairn, an open circle of stones with a flat stone in the centre engraved with Celtic swirls, was fascinating. One of the leading authorities on Irish monuments, Peter Harbison, said this early Bronze Age burial site was discovered in 1849 and explained that the cairn was subsequently erected to allow visitors to gaze in wonderment at the sight of such an ancient burial ground.

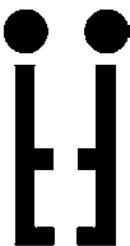
On our return to base, others joined us for a barbecue and chat. Alan Martin spoke about David Stevens and in a prayer dedicated our time together to his memory.

David Godfrey

Member of the Dublin cell group



Face 2 Face, Faith 2 Faith goes from strength 2 strength



THE 2009-10 F2F COHORT won the International award at the Northern Ireland Youth Awards in June this year. Their success came after Kevin McAleenan, a F2F participant, submitted a copy of a short film the group had made at Corrymeela last Easter. The film 'Segregation is our past, Youth is our future' was written, produced and directed by the young people.

Naomi Lynch, another participant said, "making the documentary allowed us to use an alternative creative method to explore the issues of prejudice, discrimination and sectarianism that we had been learning about all year with F2F."

First of all we had to capture all the footage – this was definitely a fun part of the project. We were able to use different cameras, microphones and voice recorders to interview and video Corrymeela volunteers and stage quickly improvised scenes for our film. The editing part was the most difficult, there was so much excellent footage and we didn't want to upset anyone by not using theirs, but we also wanted to make sure our DVD had a coherent theme running throughout it.

After watching all the footage a small group of us broke apart from the others to put together the final documentary. It was stressful and time consuming but after hours of seclusion from the rest of the group we were ready to present our masterpiece. The five minute film summed up a lot of the conversations we had had, not just that weekend, but throughout the programme that

year. And from the sounds of laughter and applause throughout its showing, I think the group enjoyed the finished product too."

It is wonderful to see how both the 2009-10 and the 2010-11 groups are getting involved in social and experimental learning projects. Watch this space to hear of our upcoming exploits.



F2F is an interfaith conflict transformation project for 16-18 year olds. It is a year long programme and includes a two week camp in USA with F2F participants from Jerusalem, Cape Town and USA. Applications are now open for the 2011-12 group; contact emmacowan@corrymeela.org for more information



Emma Cowan

Emma is Face 2 Face/Faith 2 Faith Project Co-ordinator

Your faith has made you well

Jesus turned about in the crowd and said, Who touched my clothes? And his disciples said to him, You see the crowd pressing in on you; how can you say, "Who touched me?" He looked all around to see who had done it. But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling, fell down before him and told him the whole truth. He said to her, Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease.

Mark 5:30-34

MY FRIEND EWAN loves the fifth chapter of the gospel of Mark. He does not consider himself a man overly versed in scriptural know-how, but when he turned up one night at a gathering of people discussing scripture he was thrilled, genuinely thrilled, to discover we were discussing the fifth chapter of one of the earliest Gospels.

A lake is crossed, a man is met, some pigs meet their death, a lot of begging happens, Jesus acquiesces with some bizarre requests and refuses what seem to be reasonable ones, a lake is crossed again, a man is desperate for intervention in the life of his dying daughter and a woman pushes through a crowd and touches the garment of Jesus.

One layer of the fifth chapter is about begging. Read it yourself and count the amount of times the word is used.

And then think about when you have last begged. I last begged someone to listen to me after they had refused to engage with me because I'm gay.

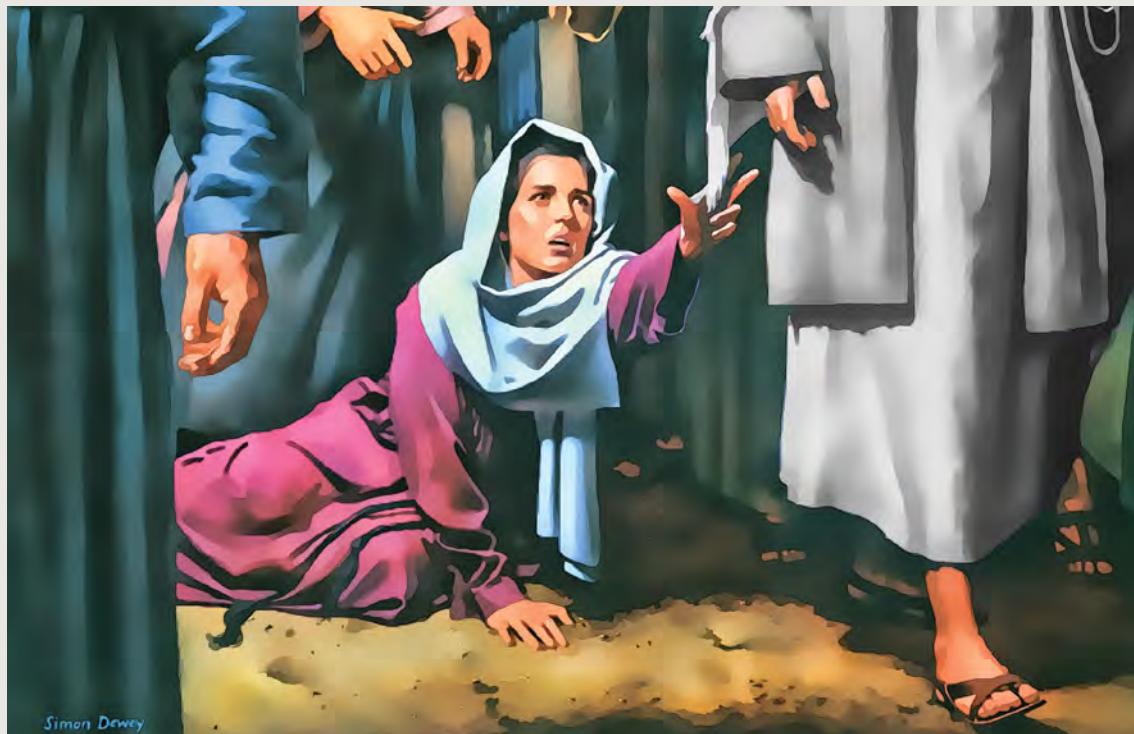
Jesus listens to the begging of some demons who want to die the death of swine.

Yet the very man whose life has been dignified, who is clothed and in his right mind at the feet of Jesus - his request is not listened to. His begging is refused. Instead of accompanying Jesus, he is told to go home to his family. His family were the demons and his home was the tomb. Yet Jesus spoke a truer truth, and by doing so issued a challenge to the wider community - to realize they were the former-demoniac's family and he theirs.

The refusal of an earnest request was for the expansion of the community's self understanding, inclusion and generosity.

Jairus seems to have been something of an important man, and it was right that his earnest request for Jesus to attend to the crumbling life of his daughter of twelve years was listened to. We too, I imagine, applaud this.

And yet, there was another twelve-year experience that was less applauded. A woman had been bleeding for twelve years and she pushed through the crowd, making them ritually unclean as she placed her hand



Simon Dewey



on their tunic or shoulder or rib to edge her way through.

Who is it that we do not wish to be touched by? I remember a smiling man in Uganda once put out his hand to welcome me. I think he had leprosy. Certainly his lack of fingers and his rotting nose implied that he did. I was faced with the question of whether I considered his touch a worthwhile risk.

Was I the charitable one for accepting his welcome? Or was I the beneficiary of his charitable action?

The woman, as we know was healed. And yet, something more happened. The message that the community needed to hear was heard. The man of Nazareth wanted the story of bravery to be heard.

Her bravery had come before her healing. She was brave whether she was healed or not. She had transcended, or just plainly ignored, the oppressive rules made by people whose lives were not chronically limited by the same oppressive rules. Even before her twelve-year-complaint was healed, she had moved beyond a way of thinking that sought to confine her.

There was a man on one side of the lake seeking for family, seeking for a new way of life, and seeking to regain dignity. And on the other side, pushing through a crowd was a woman who had possibly never lost her dignity, despite her twelve years of bleeding.

The woman told him the whole truth. The woman had been living the whole truth for a long time before this. When Jesus heard her tell this truth, he said: Your faith has healed you. What was her faith? Did she articulate a belief in the incarnation of the second person of the Trinity in the person of Jesus of Nazareth? Could she pre-empt the creedal formulations of his human and divine nature? Could she describe atonement, and the second-Adaming of humanity's sins in a spotless lamb?

No.

Her faith was her body. Her faith was her movement through a crowd. Her faith was her innate belief that she was touched, had always been touched by God, even though God's people did not want to be touched by her. Her faith was that she lived the truth that moved her to seek healing.

There was a man who was told to find his home in the community that had marginalised him. There was a woman who had already found her home in herself despite the community that marginalised her. And there was a twelve year old girl – a promise, a potential, a life open to flourishing. May our faith make us well. May we go in peace. May we go in truth. Amen.

Pádraig Ó Tuama

Pádraig Ó Tuama works with the Irish Peace Centres as the Faith in Positive Relations fieldworker. In his spare time he cooks curries for people he loves, writes poetry, studies theology and runs retreats.

Keeping

FOOD is important.

The dining room at Corrymeela is full of people talking and eating.

People from around the world.

Today at the tables are hungry mouths from the Philippines, Germany, the US, Hungary, Ireland, England and Ghana.

The queue at the kitchen hatch has dribbled to a stop. The staff and volunteers who have prepared the meal can take the weight off their feet for a well-earned half hour's rest.

Someone steps up holding a metal Tibetan Singing Bowl and a small carved wooden stick. Those new to the centre ignore the person standing until a high ding enters the room, the bowl rings out over the assembled, hit firmly with the little Tibetan drumstick.

The regulars down sharp tools and stop chewing. Those new look up. The person with the bowl, known affectionately as the Dinger, welcomes people to the centre; new groups are named and especially greeted.

Then, working from a well-used script, the Dinger says,

"We have a tradition here at Corrymeela, where we take a moment of silence to give thanks for the food in our own way. Let's do that now."



up traditions

What people do in that moment is up to their own conscience. There is no police check on the inner life at Corrymeela.

What I say at this time is,
“Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.”

And I am reminded, and I do need to be reminded, of those who produced the food in both fair and oppressive ways. And I feel unfairly blessed. I don't fear hunger today. I can eat when I like, unlike many across this broken-scale world. And I am reminded and give thanks for the men and women who made this food for us today. And I am reminded of the mystery of life behind each breath, and I am caught up in praise for God, the breath within each breath.

And this moment happens every time we eat.

Many people step up to the role of Dinger. Some are naturally gifted, some seriously coy about stopping sixty people from eating by whacking a Tibetan bowl with a twig. We create a platform for people to practice, giving praise for what they intended as much as what they achieved.

And so we get the script variations of the nervous novice and the tongue-tied traveller mumble-stumbling over a painful sentence...

“Let's shut up our eyes and give thanks, now.”

Or,

“Hello everybody let's pray for thanks. Inside I mean. Quietly. I mean into yourself. Ok?”

Or,

“We have a moments silence to give you, in your own way a tradition of thanks.”

The words don't always make sense. They don't always need to.

Sometimes tension reduces the silence to a millisecond, the quicker to finish and escape the burning limelight.

Sometimes the silence is so long, people start to shuffle with the strangeness of a shared silence.

Every day at every meal, someone stands and dares to ask us to stop and give thanks. It's a beautiful and un-pious tradition.

And after the moment of silence, there is a request for people to help with the dishes.

And then the day clinks on, with perhaps the awareness that in pausing for a collective silence, a compass point might have been found for the next part of the journey.

Paul Hutchinson Centre Director



Prejudice & Pride launch Irish Peace Centres

The Irish Peace Centres (IPC) project was officially launched in Belfast earlier this year, at the first IPC International Conference attended by more than 150 delegates. Roisin McDonough, CEO of the Arts Council, opened the conference weekend with a thoughtful reflection on art and conflict.

THE CONFERENCE entitled 'Prejudice & Pride,' explored the role of prejudice and its impact on peace building in Northern Ireland and other conflict regions. Peter Sheridan, Chairman of IPC commented, "Throughout the conference, listening to contributors, it was evident that there are serious challenges. History, attitudes, structures, real and imagined oppression, shape our views of the society in which we live and which we strive to understand. The conference very successfully set people thinking, it helped inform and it sought to influence and support debate."

As part of the story-telling session, Teya Sepinuck, a film director, previewed her recent film, 'We Carried Your Secrets.' This dramatic and challenging piece raised questions on the validity of story-telling as a peace-building methodology. It questioned whether the form challenged prejudice or reinforced it.

Is it possible to truly undertake a peace and conflict evaluation of a method as personal and existential as story-telling? The film provoked much discussion.

International speakers included former





Corrymeela on air

THIS YEAR both BBC Newsround and Songs of Praise have featured the younger members of Corrymeela's extended family. Back in May the Newsround team interviewed children who were on residential at the Ballycastle Centre wanting to find out about their cross community programme and what it meant to work and live together. While in September Corrymeela featured in an episode of Songs of Praise that was looking at the work of Corrymeela as a leading centre for peace and reconciliation filming the schools groups taking part in activities and worship time together.

Nicola McKeown, Primary Schools Worker for Corrymeela

combatants Chen Alon from Israel and Nouraddin Shehadah from Palestine who now work together in the Middle East for the peace-building group, Combatants for Peace. The view from the Middle East created a comparative framework to judge the challenges of our local anti-sectarian and anti-racist work.

The conference was accompanied by two photographic exhibitions, the first being the international Israeli/Palestinian collaboration 'Beware the Cost of War' followed by the locally developed youth project 'Draw Down the Walls'.

IPC is a consortium of leading peace-building organisations from across Ireland. It is made up of Co-operation Ireland, The Corrymeela Community and the Glencree Centre.

Funded by the EU Peace III Programme and administered by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) the partner organizations are committed to extending and embedding reconciliation with and between communities. You can find out more about the programme by visiting: www.irishpeacecentres.org

A critical analysis of the conference is being carried out and the document will be published as part of the Experiential Learning papers. You can find out more about the programme by visiting www.irishpeacecentres.org





Inclusive Neighbourhood Project awards celebration



INP is a project supported by the PEACE III programme managed by a special EU Programme body by the Community Relations Council/Pobal Consortium

AT THE Ionad Uibh Eachach awards in Belfast, 10 young mums from the Chinese community celebrated their growing understanding of life in Belfast as they learn to live in a shared neighbourhood.

AS ASYLUM SEEKERS and refugees living in west Belfast, the young women attended a four week programme run by the Inclusive Neighbourhood Project (INP) which is supported by the EU's PEACE III programme. The award ceremony recognised their commitment and participation in the INP Orientation and the Barnardo's Parenting Support Programme. In partnership with Ionad Uibh Eachach, Barnardo's BMEF Support programme, Sure Start and the Falls Women's Centre, the Orientation course was led by Ann Marie White, project worker for the INP and supported by Gloria Da Rocha, Barnardo's BME Support Worker, who co-facilitated and provided language support for the group. INP will continue to work with Chinese mums to support a growing understanding of the

neighbourhood and to explore possibilities of how they can contribute to their new community.

This marks the beginning of similar Orientation programmes for asylum seekers and refugees, which will be rolled out by INP this year, across the west, south and east of the city.

INP Project Worker, Ann Marie White said, "It has been the beginning of a journey of mutual understanding between asylum seekers and refugees as newcomers in the neighbourhood, wanting to really understand life in Belfast; and local men and women wanting to learn more about their new neighbours and find ways to get to know them." Guests enjoyed traditional music and refreshments and Tom Hartley from Sinn Fein, presented the certificates to the participants to celebrate their achievement.

Summer Programme Success

A big thank you

CHILDREN ARE RUNNING AROUND, mums are chatting and a group of young people get busy outdoors with the volunteers. This year with only one unit available, the Summer Programme was still busy but less hectic for staff and volunteers, giving us the opportunity to build up strong relationships within the summer staff teams and to engage on a deeper level with the groups on site.

Our eight week Summer Programme offers a large number of groups, families and individuals the chance to spend valuable time at the Ballycastle Centre and volunteers put a lot of hard work and enthusiasm into making it happen. This summer



Summer Programme 2010 Welcome Concert with Yvonne Naylor, Edwin Thorpe, Ethan Young and Anna Doherty

alone more than 500 people visited the centre including: 14 residential groups, family respite groups, retreats in Cedar Haven, a special week long summer club and many day groups on site.

46 community members and friends and 70 local and international volunteers got stuck into their temporary roles covering everything from Programme Co-ordinator, to bus driver and receptionist to kitchen staff, to ensure the Summer Programme was an enjoyable experience for the guests. A super team.

In addition, the 2009-10 LTV team took on special responsibilities. Eamonn Maguire did a great job as Weekly Programme Co-ordinator and Lindsey Pike was a brilliant support as Assistant Volunteer Support Worker. Yvonne Naylor took the time to develop a Worship handbook, which proved to be very useful and well liked.

The Centre received positive feedback from the groups about the programmes available, the accommodation and hospitality. A big thank you to everybody who helped make it happen.

Sonja Tammen

Volunteer Support Worker

We at Corrymeela, are very grateful to the following trusts and foundations who made the Summer Programme possible this year. This includes the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs, BBC Children In Need, Steel Charitable Trust, W F Southall Trust, St Anne's Cathedral Black Santa Appeal, Austin and Hope Pilkington Trust, the Nicholas Knatchbull Memorial Trust, the Rhododendron Trust and Moyle District Council.



Snapshot of a beautiful life

David Stevens 1948-2010

ORIGINALLY FROM HOLLYWOOD, County Down, David Stevens was born in 1948 and educated at Royal Belfast Academical Institution and later, Queen's University Belfast. It was here that he met Presbyterian chaplain, Revd Ray Davey and became involved in the then newly established Corrymeela Community. After gaining a PhD at university he decided not to pursue an academic career research or lecturing, and instead worked full-time at Corrymeela from 1973-75.

David continued working in the field of religion and was General Secretary of the Irish Council of Churches from 1992-2003 where he was actively involved in servicing the various inter-faith structures and working groups. He worked closely with Fr Brian Lennon in the Inter-Church Faith and Politics Group which produced '*Breaking Down the Enmity*' in 1985 and '*Understanding the Times*' in 1986, following the signing of the Anglo-Irish Agreement. Over the following sixteen years he was a key member, often the main draftsperson, of the group as they produced a dozen further publications to help advance thinking on the situation in Northern Ireland from a faith perspective.

He was inspired by the work of a group of Dutch theologians and activists involved with groups from Northern Ireland, particularly Roel Kaptein who worked intensively and controversially

with a number of Corrymeela members. In 1981 David initiated a five day conference in Holland bringing together the key players in education to promote co-operation on peace education.

In the late 1980s David became involved in the setting up of an inter-church working party on sectarianism, co-chaired by Mary McAleese and Quaker, John Lampen. The Irish Inter-Church Committee was very nervous about publishing the controversial report, but did so in 1993, inspiring further work on sectarianism by the Irish School of Ecumenics. In 1992 he was one of the key instigators and initial trustees of the Churches Peace Education Programme.

David was a regular contributor to the Corrymeela News. In 1995 he contributed an article on forgiveness, entitled '*Liberty to Captives*', in which he said,

"Forgiveness is not an issue for public policy. Nevertheless, it is something of vital existential importance. Its centrality can be located by asking three questions. How can we forgive those who have hurt us irreparably? How can those who have murdered forgive themselves or find forgiveness?



“

It was with great sadness that we heard about the passing of the Leader of the Corrymeela Community, David Stevens.

David was a forward thinker in the arena of Community Relations. His gifts were revealed to us all in his capacity as General secretary to the Irish Council of Churches and lately as Leader of Corrymeela. His wisdom and energy will be missed by us all here in Belfast and I'm sure beyond. Our condolences to you all as a community and also to his family; Mathilde, Thomas, Naomi and his wider family circle.

”

Belfast City Council
Good Relations Partnership



Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God Matthew 5:9

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It is with great sadness that we in the World Council of Churches secretariat have received the news of the death of Dr David Stevens, the leader of the Corrymeela Community.

With others in the international ecumenical community who have had the privilege of walking with David, we would like to honour and celebrate the faith, integrity and passion that David shared with many and to a wider world. His constructive analyses, theological insights on forgiveness, reconciliation and peace, and great compassion enabled him to guide churches and lead communities to approach conflict resolution with honesty, courage and love. His work mirrored his profound involvement in the plight and the potential of the people of Northern Ireland.

His wise, warm and forthright approach challenged and spurred change even in the most difficult situation. His life of ministry is an inspiration. We stand with all who hold David Stevens in high regard and his memory will continue to inspire us.

Revd Dr Olav Fykse Tveit
General Secretary World Council of Churches

“

How can those who have murdered and wounded, and those who have suffered the consequences of murder and woundedness, co-exist in the same land? Thus the issue of forgiveness is one of vital necessity so that people can live with themselves and with others.”

In 2004 David became the leader of the Corrymeela Community. At this time he was also a member of the Northern Ireland Community Relations Council and the Faith and Politics Group.



In 2004 he published '*The Land of Unlikeness – Explorations into Reconciliation*', in which he explores the meaning of reconciliation for societies in conflicted space. He accepts that the word reconciliation can be used to 'slide away from issues of injustice and rightful disturbance' but wants to reclaim the word from 'vacuity, false comfort and misuse.'

He explores reconciliation, amongst other things as, "Living together in difference... the inter-related dynamics of forgiveness, repentance, truth and justice; a set of attitudes and practices that are necessary for dealing with plurality, for fair interactions between members of different groups, for healing divisions and for finding common purposes" and creating and sustaining conversation.

He recognises that reconciliation at a political level requires, "Fair interactions between members of different groups; the overcoming of antagonistic divisions and the discovery and creation of common ground; and the presence of a society in which all citizens have a sense of belonging." He also examines the concepts of forgiveness and dealing with the past but recognises the challenges to reconciliation from the pressures for revenge and loyalty to the heroic sacrifices of the past.

In a paper to the Irish Social Studies Conference in 2004 on the religious changes to Irish society he concluded that religion was becoming more rather than less divisive.

The following year in a paper on '*The Churches and Ten Years of the Peace Process*' he gave a typically thoughtful reflection on the role of the churches,

"Religion plays a profoundly ambiguous role in conflict situations. On the one hand, it can encourage hatred; anti-Catholicism is particularly potent in Northern Ireland, and has political consequences. Churches can reinforce community division and harden boundaries; Catholic views and rules on mixed marriage and the importance of church schools have had significant consequences in Northern Irish society. Religion can give divine sanctions to nationalisms, political positions and violence.

On the other hand, religion can be a force for

66

David was a man of integrity, courage and Christian faith. He did not shirk making difficult decisions and he has surely made a significant contribution not only to Corrymeela but to the wider Northern Ireland community. It has been an honour to work with him.

Kate Pettis MBE
Interim Leader of Corrymeela

“

restraint... Without the churches the situation would have been a lot worse; the preaching and living out of non-retaliation, forbearance and forgiveness have had real social consequences. The churches opposed those who espoused violence and the gods of nationalism. Churches working together have been a force for good... The developing pattern of church leaders and others meeting together over the last thirty years in Northern Ireland, of clergy visiting victims of violence together, has been a significant social witness. Churches have been encouragers to politicians seeking political compromise. There

“ I am writing to offer my deepest sympathy following the death of Dr David Stevens. On behalf of the United States, we honor David's great legacy in promoting reconciliation and peace-building and helping the community of Corrymeela play an essential role in sustaining Northern Ireland's peace process. David's work helped Corrymeela establish an international reputation around the world, including in the United States, but more importantly, he inspired many people from other nations in conflict to see a way forward to peace. His life and service truly demonstrate that the rewards of peace far outweigh the risks.

Kamala Lakhdir
American Consul General

”

have been individuals and groups working for peace and reconciliation. Contacts were established by church groups with paramilitary organisations; clergy and others acted as go-betweens. The Irish Council of Churches, together with the Roman Catholic Church, have had a peace education programme working in schools, and so on. And, nevertheless, the picture is very mixed and deeply ambiguous. Some black, much grey and a little white. Churches are part of the problem and struggle to be part of the solution.

The problem is that politics appears to dominate the churches more than vice-versa. This is one very significant factor in inhibiting churches in being agents of co-operation and raises profound questions about what is more important – religious commitment or political commitment. In theological terms, we are talking about the issue of idolatry. Churches tend to reflect people's fears, reflect community divisions, and reflect a community experience of violence and threat, rather than act as agents of change or transformers of conflict.”

David died on Sunday 23 May 2010.

Roger Courtney

Former Community member and personal friend





David Stevens

As one of the foremost peace and reconciliation practitioners and theoreticians of his generation, the death of David Stevens removes a great man from the scene in the North.

WHEN DAVID STEVENS succeeded Trevor Williams as the fourth leader of the Community in 2004, the post-Troubles era was beginning in earnest. Funding became a major issue and job losses followed. David had to make difficult decisions but was very aware of the human cost of those decisions.

"I would imagine he would have stressed the impossibility of reconciliation without justice. Justice was prophetic, biblical, and the sine qua non of reconciliation."

David Stevens was one of those people who you believed deserved a long and happy retirement because they pushed themselves so hard in their working life. Sadly he died a few years before retirement age. One retirement project that will now not be accomplished is his definitive story of the churches in Ireland and 'the Troubles', a task for which he would have been eminently qualified, through both his knowledge and his contacts. In addition to the many papers and Faith and Politics pamphlets which he drafted, or had an influential role in, he had two books on reconciliation under his own name.⁽¹⁾

David was not a practical person in the handyman sense, but when it came to analysing finances or the strategic steps an organisation needed to take to reach an objective he was

immensely practical and pragmatic whilst at the same time holding on to a vision of what could be. His role as practitioner and theoretician was important; he tried to walk the talk and talk the walk.

While in public he might have been seen as serious and intellectual, his social persona was rather different. In personal interaction or in party mode, his loud laughter, glass of wine in hand and legs akimbo at some unusual angle, which might be distressingly uncomfortable for someone else, was also part of his being. Well read in theology, politics and fiction, he could discourse on many subjects and took a keen interest in fine art. His sense of humour with a very well developed sense of the ridiculous, was displayed in closely analysing some recent and totally absurd manifestation of politics or religion and being in Northern Ireland there was an ample supply of such manifestations. But as his recent piece on Iris Robinson in the Corrymeela magazine showed, he only laughed at the ridiculousness of life and not at the persons concerned, for whom he retained respect and understanding. He was personally extremely



“ We were very shocked to learn of the death of David Stevens. In the relatively short time he was a member of the Commission he brought great richness to our work. His intelligence, humour, integrity and insights were evident in many ways and he made a substantial contribution to every element of the Commission's activities with which he had any involvement.

Bob Collins
Equality Chief Commissioner

their demands, both a pragmatic and a loving response. David had heard about Thomas completing the Edinburgh marathon in aid of Corrymeela just an hour before he died.

When his final illness was diagnosed David threw himself into activity with his family and sorting out his personal affairs, plus those of Corrymeela. His time was limited and sadly much shorter than he and others hoped, but he was undeterred. The day before he died he visited his local library to read the Saturday papers, as was his custom when free of other duties. Every working day for 25 years David passed ‘The Family’ a sculpture by F E McWilliam, and this same Saturday he journeyed to Banbridge with Mathilde to the F E McWilliam sculpture garden there.

Art is partly about transcendence, stepping out of space and time to see things differently and as they truly are. David Stevens was a practitioner in that art and although not an ‘artist’ he was a writer and analyst. We are poorer, in many ways, for his death but are thankful for what he achieved and what he has meant to so many people.

Rob Fairmichael

Rob is co-ordinator of INNATE, an Irish Network for Nonviolent Action, Training and Education. This article is courtesy of NonViolent News. To find out more about INNATE log on to their website: www.innatenonviolence.org

(1) “The Land of Unlikeness: Explorations into Reconciliation”, Columba Press, 2004, and “The Place Called Reconciliation: Texts to Explore”, Corrymeela Press, 2008.



“Art is partly about transcendence, stepping out of space and time to see things differently and as they truly are and David Stevens was a practitioner in that art and although not an ‘artist’ he was a writer and analyst.”





United by a Common build bridges of peace

This summer Belfast hosted the international Project, Common Bond that brought together 66 international teens, each of whom had lost a family member to a senseless act of terrorism, some from opposing sides of the same conflict.

THE PROJECT, an intensive eight-day camp designed to build conflict resolution and communication skills, worked with the young adults aged 15 to 20, who came from Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, Israel, Palestine, Argentina, Spain and the United States. The group spent a full day together at Corrymeela's Ballycastle Centre.

Now in its third year, the programme was developed by Tuesday's Children, the premiere United States based nonprofit organization serving the needs of the 9/11 community. Terry Sears, Executive Director of Tuesday's Children said, "Northern Ireland has shown the world that better days are possible. We could think of

no better place for these kids to start building an international community based on peace and trust."

Run in partnership with Harvard Law School's Negotiation and Mediation Clinical Program (HNMCP), Project Common Bond was led by a professional faculty of psychologists, educators, social workers and health care professionals trained in leadership, peace-building, traumatic loss and resilience.

Robert C. Bordone, international expert in negotiation and dispute resolution and Director of the HNMCP said, "After spending a week with these extraordinary young people, I sensed in them a real commitment to use the skills they learned in Belfast for positive change in their communities. It was a great honour for those of us in Harvard's Negotiation and Mediation Clinic to be witness to a transforming experience to participants who have endured much but who also have much to give in building a better world."

Sears added, "Project Common Bond is creating an international community of young people devoted to a more peaceful world. These are the world leaders of tomorrow."

Planning and fund-raising are currently underway for 2011 Project Common Bond. Sears noted that next year's programme will take on



an added measure of significance as Tuesday's Children marks the 10th anniversary of the September 11 terror attack on the World Trade Centre. For more information go to: www.tuesdayschildren.org/help

Bond teens work to



"The world changed us, now it's time for us to change the world."

A participant

A shared future

On the 27th July this year the Northern Irish government launched their Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration (CSI) for public consultation. Along with other leading peace and reconciliation bodies The Corrymeela Community submitted a response that was put together by the newly formed Writer's Group.

Below is Jon Hatch's analysis of the document, this was included under section 14 of the joint submission. Jon is a provisional member of the community. To read Corrymeela's full submission go to www.corrymeela.org

THE CORRYMEELA COMMUNITY has a long history of actively working to promote peacemaking, dialogue, understanding and reconciliation across the many divisions in our society. It is worth noting that Corrymeela's formation in 1966 predated the period that has become known as the 'Troubles'. Our vision of active peace-building and reconciliation was always both relational and structural; it involved the need to address inequality as well as distrust and fear; and it was broader than the problems that were about to engulf Northern Ireland, though it was the realities of that conflict that most often put that vision into action. Our vision remains the same today.

We recognise that Northern Ireland is slowly emerging from a long and painful period of civil conflict. Anyone with even the most cursory knowledge of this island will know that it is not the first period of conflict that Ireland has endured. What unites us all – perhaps the one thing that unites all people across this island – is the hope that it will be our last.

The pain, sorrow and fear that so many have carried for so long left us, after three decades, in a place of exhaustion, with the vast majority of our population saying with one voice, 'never again'. With the worst of the conflict subsided, it has become necessary to assess where we are as a society and, more importantly, what type of a society we wish to be.

We certainly recognise that the progress that has been made throughout the peace process up to the present has been tremendous. The paramilitary ceasefires and decommissioning of arsenals, the devolved power-sharing structures that form the basis of our multi-party Assembly and Executive, the economic stability and revitalized city centres

as well as increased tourism and economic and academic migration have led many in our society to conclude, 'this is satisfactory; this is enough. The conflict is over; we can now draw a line under the past and move on.'

However, closer inspection of our society reveals a much more complex picture. Our political institutions function- just; our economy functions-just; the PSNI reports more than 30 sectarian incidents a week; the summer marching season each year uncovers a deep well of bitterness and resentment regarding our various identities, rights and cultural expressions; paramilitary factions, while diminished and marginalized, continue to profoundly and negatively impact our society out of all proportion to their numbers; and, with few more creative or dynamic ideas put forward, separation barriers continue to be constructed and expanded, often through the most deprived and polarized areas of our capital city.

This closer inspection of these complexities has led many to soberly admit that we remain, in many ways, what we were prior to the outbreak of civil conflict: a deeply divided society. The process of dealing with those divisions will continue to require a great deal of time and a great many difficult conversations. The peace process has created an environment where there now exists the possibility of having those difficult conversations in public and in safety and building true peace and reconciliation in our society. The process has been long, difficult and painful. And it is not over; it is ongoing and must involve the United Kingdom and Irish Governments, the Northern Ireland Assembly and civil society.

There is so much that is involved in reconciliation after violent conflict- developing a shared vision of an interdependent and fair

society, underpinned by equality and human rights; acknowledging and dealing with the past; significant cultural and attitudinal change; building positive relationships; substantial social, economic and political change – that it can seem both overwhelming and naive to even attempt to fully comprehend it.

But we believe that the fundamental idea is about living; living together; living together in a very different way. Reconciliation is, at its most basic, the process of living together well.

With this in mind, having carefully read the Cohesion, Sharing and Integration document, our question remains: does this document contribute to the ongoing process of living together well? It would be a fair assessment to say that many of us would look at this document with a great deal of concern, wishing it to be more honest, comprehensive and strategic.

The fact that the word ‘reconciliation’ does not appear in the document is one of our greatest concerns. The term ‘mutual accommodation’ is perhaps an attempt to address the same concept in a different phrase; it does not, however, convey either the richness, complexity or indeed the full vision of transformation that reconciliation conveys. Simply put, it does not encompass a holistic idea of living together well; it is quite possible to mutually accommodate all the various parts of our divided community with facilities, amenities, cultural programmes and social projects and leave our fundamental divisions unaddressed.

As uncomfortable as it is to contemplate, there is considerable risk in settling for a vision of Northern Irish society that is little more than a divided society, albeit with no direct violence. Given our long history of division on this island, punctuated by periods of violence and disorder, we soberly wonder if such a vision is sustainable in the long term. All members of our diverse society deserve the possibility of envisioning something more, to expand our vision of what kind of place Northern Ireland can reasonably hope to be.

Corrymeela remains committed to the process of actively working to foster this vision, and we welcome the opportunity to add our voices to all those involved in the ongoing discussion concerning the government’s contribution to the peaceful future of Northern Ireland. We wish a cohesive, shared and interpretive society and we wish to add our effort, again, to those elements in political, public and civil society who are likewise committed to this.

Calendar of Events



Ballycastle

December 2010

Sunday 12th December
Christmas Open Day at the Centre
Everyone welcome

April 2011

Friday 29th April to Sunday 1st May
Community Weekend



Belfast

March 2011

9th -13th March 2011
Trauma & Spirituality:
An International Dialogue
The Journey Towards Healing International Conference will take place in Belfast at the Europa Hotel. For more information about the conference please contact Colleen Brown at c.brown@niamhwellbeing.org



Knocklayd

December 2010

3rd – 5th December
Advent Retreat:
Preparation for Christmas with the Knocklayd team

The Hill Family

1 Year Residential Volunteers

Andy Hill, Project Assistant based in Ballycastle

ANDY, a native of Houston Texas, has been married to his college sweetheart Mary Lynne for 22 years; they have one son, Andrew James, aged four.

Andy is a postgraduate research student at Trinity College Dublin, where he is studying human rights through the Irish School of Ecumenics. He earned a BA in English and Philosophy from St Mary's University, Texas, where as an undergraduate student he spent summers doing volunteer work in Mexico and Costa Rica. He earned an MA in Philosophy from the University of St Thomas, Texas and the Doctor of Jurisprudence degree from the Loyola University School of Law, Louisiana.

Andy was a senior lecturer of Law and Ethics at St Mary's University where he taught courses on international law and treaties, and on international legal systems. He was also the Director of their

Service Learning Centre. In addition, whilst at St Mary's he served as a member of the University's President's Peace Commission, the Center for Social Justice and Global Awareness, and the Marianist Social Justice Collaborative.

Over the years Andy has gone scuba diving, hot air ballooning, and run the Houston Marathon.

Mary Lynne Gasaway Hill, PhD.

Having served as a tenured associate professor at St Mary's University of San Antonio, Texas, Mary has spent the last few years staying at home with her young son, A. J. enjoying the flexibility of being an independent scholar and writer. Along with continuing her academic research and writing, she has branched out into other genres including the writing of a novel set in post-Katrina New Orleans.

'Women Reinvented: True Stories of Empowerment and Change,' which contains her essay 'My Elephant-Child Life,' has just recently been released by La Chance Publishing. All proceeds from the book's sales go to The Healing Project, <http://thehealingproject.org>, which is dedicated to promoting the health and well-being of those with life-threatening or chronic illness and their caregivers.

Her background includes: Ph.D. Political Linguistics; MA Anthropology; MA English Literature and Language, MA Political Science, BA Political Science with a minor in Communications.

She said, "I am thrilled to have the opportunity to be part of the Corrymeela community for the next year, for the chance to add a verse to the rich poem of forgiveness and reconciliation which the vision of Rev. Ray Davey has animated since 1965. What a gift it is for my family and myself to participate in such a hope-filled endeavor."

Andrew James, (AJ), Hill, 4

AJ is the son of Andy and Mary Lynne he loves trains, especially Thomas the tank engine and all of his friends on the Island of Sodor. He also loves animals including his kitty Molly, and his horse Maverick. AJ is excited about living at Corrymeela because he has heard about the kittens and the bunnies who also live on the property.



**YAEL FREIDMAN, 22 (USA)**

I'm from a suburb of New York City but was born in San Francisco, California. I also spent much of my childhood in Israel, where my mother is from and where my interest in peace and reconciliation was first cultivated. While attending Scripps College in Los Angeles, I majored in Humanities and Spanish and spent my third year of university abroad studying human rights and conflict studies in Argentina and Ireland. During my time in Northern Ireland I spent a weekend at Corrymeela and I realised it was a place I wanted to come back to. Since graduating from university in May 2009, I have been working as an assistant teacher at a school for emotionally disturbed children. Coming to Corrymeela is thrilling for me and I'm so grateful for the opportunity to be a part of this community.

**ANDREW VAN BUREN, 23 (USA)**

I am from Hudson, Ohio and recently graduated from Swarthmore College, Philadelphia with a degree in Religion. Running is a big part of my life – it provides me with a spiritual time when I can be alone with my thoughts and also works as a de-stressor and a release for any anxieties that build up from day to day. In short it helps keep my life balanced. I am incredibly excited about my year at Corrymeela. I first visited the centre when I studied peace and conflict work in Derry during the fall of 2008 and immediately knew I wanted to come back. I'm eager to become part of the volunteer staff and create a welcoming atmosphere for future visitors.

**FRANK FRU MOKOM, 22**

(Cameroon)

I am from Cameroon and the fifth in a large family of eight. I am a friendly and open guy. I love working with young people and having good conversations. I feel very fortunate to have a place as a LTV at Corrymeela and am enjoying getting stuck in. My country is very diverse with more than 215 ethnic tribes, each with different languages and cultures; inter-tribal wars are still common. I know my year at Corrymeela will be very important for me when I go back home.

**VALENTIN MAURATH, 19**

(Germany)

I come from Riegel, a small village in southwestern Germany. I have always wanted to be an actor and took up acting at a small, traditional theatre in Freiburg. I am also involved in the Christian community in my village, leading youth

Long Term Volunteers

Meet this year's team

groups and preparing trips and meetings for the young altar servers. Doing sports and being with my friends and family is also an important part of my life. I feel ready for change. I recently stayed at Corrymeela, got to know the way of life there and really want to be part of it. I have experienced short-term community life before but what I am most looking forward to is living everyday life as a volunteer at the Centre.

**MICHAELA MCGUIGAN, 22**

(Northern Ireland)

My name is Michaela and I was born and raised outside Armagh with my two sisters. I have been living in England for the last four years, studying Maths at the University of York and then completing an internship in Cambridge at a theology college which trains Catholic women for lay ministry.

I have a passion for music, particularly folk music, I play the bodhrán and love playing at folk music sessions and was lucky enough to sing in a gospel choir at university, which was a lot of fun! I love writing whenever I have the chance, as well as travelling, especially to Taize which is one of my favourite places.

I'm excited to be back in Northern Ireland and am looking forward to becoming a part of the Corrymeela Community.



SÁRA CSEPREGI (Hungary)

I am from Budapest, Hungary and was brought up in a big Christian family. I studied English language and literature at university along with Irish studies and cultural anthropology. I love travelling and exploring, getting to know local people and learning languages. I enjoy folk music a lot, Irish and Hungarian especially, and my favourite hobby is folk dancing. I spent last year in India and Nepal volunteering and travelling and I learnt a lot about various religions and cultures there. These experiences made a great impression on me and taught me how we are all one despite all the differences on the surface. Since then I have had the desire to work for a better understanding and peace between people of different views and backgrounds. Corrymeela is where this goal and my longstanding love of Ireland meet.



KAT ORR, 24 (England)

I am from a very small town in England but moved to Northern Ireland in August 2009 with my boyfriend who is from Lisburn. I recently graduated from the University of Bradford in International Relations and Security Studies. During my degree I also had the opportunity to get a good grounding in Peace Studies, Politics, Conflict Studies and Development. I first visited Corrymeela as part of a Conflict study tour with university and immediately loved it. Conflict resolution is something I am very passionate about and it really inspired me to see all the hard work going on at the centre. I've been looking for an opportunity to join the community ever since and can't wait for this year to unfold.



JENI MC GUFFIN, 19

(Northern Ireland)

I was born in Belfast city but have moved around Northern Ireland quite a bit. I have slight OCD over numbers and toothpaste and also like drawing pictures and going to the beach. For the last year I've been on a gap year with the Church Army; I did five months in Sheffield and five months in New Orleans, Louisiana. I learnt a lot about myself, living with people and the injustice of the world. I'm delighted to be in Ireland for a whole year as part of the Corrymeela Community.



ROLAND YNION, 27 (Philippines)

I am from the province of Davao del Sur in Mindanao, Philippines where I was raised by my parents with love and discipline. At university I studied Philosophy and recently gained a masters degree in Management. I am open and willing to learn, I look for learning in everything life throws at me and I do my best to bring this knowledge with me as I journey through life to become a mature, holistic and better member of the community. I am athletic and I love outdoor and extreme games like rappelling, wall climbing and mountain climbing.

Knocklayd Volunteers



Mary Anne and Chris Busch (USA)

We live most of the time in Greensboro, NC, USA and are both retired professors. At home we volunteer in various capacities; Mary Anne works with refugees and I volunteer with Meals on Wheels and the Master Gardener programme. We have four children and six beautiful grandchildren. We love the Corrymeela Community and its volunteers and have been coming here for 14 years. We served as resource couple in 1997-98 and at Knocklayd in 2002-3 and 2007-8. This time we are filling in for four months until Christmas at Knocklayd. We look forward to having the volunteer team up for rest, relaxation and some home cooking.

Hope and Reconciliation

I was surprised and honoured when Ron Wells asked that I say a few words at his book launch. It's a testimony to the quality of the book that it has helped me not only to think about the role of Northern Ireland's faith-based organisations in new ways, but has also reignited in me a sense of urgency about all that remains to be done for hope and reconciliation to reign in Northern Ireland.

I WANT TO SHARE WITH YOU three of the instances where 'Hope and Reconciliation' has prompted me to think in new ways.

First, as I read the book it occurred to me that it is an ideal text to accompany the lecture I give every year for students taking the Reconciliation in Northern Ireland module as part of their Conflict resolution and Reconciliation Masters.'

During that lecture, international students usually ask for more information about the Catholic Church and its role in ecumenism and reconciliation – noticing right away that the Catholic Church doesn't have a programme that is roughly equivalent to the Hard Gospel or the Gospel in Conflict, or an organisation like the primarily evangelical Centre for Contemporary Christianity.

I'm happy to report that this book has given me a new way to respond to that query. In his chapter on the organisation that I actually work for, the Irish School of Ecumenics (ISE), Ron offered me a new perspective on how the ISE itself has been as an impetus for encouraging Catholic involvement in ecumenism. Ron helped me see not, that I was missing the elephant in the room, but in the case of ISE, perhaps the elephant literally is the room.

Ron notes that in 1970, Ireland's, "Catholic Church had not really signed on to the ecumenical movement," and goes on to argue that the ISE helped open up Catholics to ecumenism and reconciliation in the same way that ECONI



DR GLADYS GANIEL is a lecturer in Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation at Trinity College Dublin in Belfast and spoke at Ronald Wells' recent book launch. Below are extracts of her speech. To read her full reflection go to: www.gladysganiel.com

and The Centre for Contemporary Christianity helped to open up evangelicals to ecumenism and reconciliation. Don't get me wrong, I'm not saying ISE can take all the credit for Catholic involvement in ecumenism, I'm just saying I had never thought about it this way before.

Second, 'Hope and Reconciliation' brought 'forgiveness' back onto my radar screen. Some people say that there cannot be reconciliation without forgiveness, so the two concepts, while complex, are obviously related. Demanding that people repent, forgive and reconcile can be problematic, perhaps even immoral. But Ron prompts us to again ask ourselves, do we agree with Desmond Tutu – that there can be no future without forgiveness?

In Northern Ireland, I don't think discourses about forgiveness have ever had as much prominence as discourses about reconciliation. As those of you who have ever applied for cross community funding know, you may be expected to explain how your work will promote reconciliation but not how it will promote forgiveness.

As many of you will be aware, the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister has abandoned the 'Shared Future' strategy, which at least conceived of reconciliation as a worthy process to pursue, and has released for consultation a 'Cohesion, Sharing and Integration' document. This document makes no mention of reconciliation and seems to assume that the way forward for Northern Ireland is a kind of



Brian Lambkin, Ronald Wells and Gladys Ganiel at Ronald's Ulster Museum book launch in October.

separate development based on demands to respect each other's rights. I would rather see serious engagement among communities that could result in all the diverse peoples of Northern Ireland enriching each other's lives, not simply demanding rights and concessions. Could the gentle balm of forgiveness somehow contribute to a process of mutual enrichment?

I fear that the fruits of the work on forgiveness and reconciliation, whether the ECONI papers or the books of Corrymeela's David Stevens, may never have reached those with political power, or even the Christians who sit in our pews each Sunday. Ron's book – the first to seriously engage with the theological writings of David Stevens – challenges Christians in Northern Ireland to think again about what the churches can say and do about forgiveness and then to say it, and to do it.

Third, Ron's analysis of the difficulties surrounding shared Eucharist or communion made me ask if Christians really have the 'street cred' to be contributing to public debates about forgiveness and reconciliation.

Ron wrote of the pain that the prohibition against shared Eucharist in the Catholic Church causes for people in the Clonard-Fitzroy Fellowship, as well as of the awkwardness that

Clonard's Unity Pilgrims may feel about inviting the Protestants whose churches they regularly visit to join them in Clonard. I'm not saying that the churches' credibility stands or falls on the one issue of shared Eucharist, but what does it say to those outside the churches when the Christians inside them cannot even share the most basic symbolic act of reconciliation with God and with one another?

Can Christians really say anything meaningful in public debate about social or political reconciliation when such a profound and deeply symbolic division remains?

While thinking about shared Eucharist might be cause for despair, 'Hope and Reconciliation' does provide inspiration that despite their differences the churches can say and do something meaningful for reconciliation.

The book is chock full of moving stories about people who have made a difference for reconciliation in this small corner of the world. Their stories are a living reproof to those who would tell us that reconciliation is impossible, an unachievable goal.

Despite the divisions that remain and are reflected in Christians' inability to share the Eucharist, their ability to achieve so much reminds us that reconciliation doesn't mean that everything has to be perfect but reconciliation does mean that relationships can be transformed.

But I also hope we read the book as a warning that there is a lot more left to do.

I recommend 'Hope and Reconciliation' for any who want a thoughtful analysis of the role of key Christian organisations during Northern Ireland's peace process, up until our present 'post-conflict' phase.

'Hope and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland: The Role of Faith-Based Organisations' (Liffey Press) can be purchased for £15 from Corrymeela's Belfast office, contact Bernie Magill on belfast@corrymeela.org or 02890 508080 to order your copy.

A few thoughts from Brian Lambkin

Brian Lambkin is the Director of The Centre for Migration Studies at the Ulster-American Folk Park, Omagh and former Principle of Lagan College, Belfast.

The activists of the Northern Ireland peace process deserve a scholar of the calibre of Ronald Wells. Although the violent conflict seems to be over, debate about what caused it, particularly about the importance of religion, remains frustratingly stuck – as does the consultation

about how to ensure a lasting cure. This is the paradox that Wells grapples with and his well-researched, elegantly written and nicely judged book gives a good push to the conservation.'

Women, power and education

What does community development look like on the other side of the globe? What are the similarities, what the differences? The British Council and Volunteer Service Overseas organised the Global Community X-Change Programme: A cross border, cross community exchange between the UK and community workers from Mindanao, an island in the Philippines. Sonja Tammen was one of the participants.

IN APRIL OF THIS YEAR a delegation of 18 Filipinos from Mindanao visited Ireland to meet their counterparts on both sides of the border. All the participants were volunteers with various organisations and Sonja was working with the HURT group in Lurgan. During their three-week stay the Filipino participants spent their time shadowing the Ireland based volunteers, visiting community projects in border areas and studying the conflict in this part of the world. They were able to visit Corrymeela for the day with four Filipino participants who were staying on to volunteer at the Ballycastle centre. One of

them was Roland Ynion, who is now a long-term volunteer, one of the many positive results of the Community X-Change Programme.

In September this year Sonja spent two weeks in Manila and Davao, visiting 14 organisations and 27 projects. She offers insight into her experience below.

The Philippines has a population of more than 94 million, a figure that is rising by almost two per cent every year. More than 90% of the population are Christians, but in Mindanao, which has a high percentage of Muslims, the latter are fighting for



“Filipinos hope their newly elected president Benigno Aquino will fight corruption and support the peace process”



Many indigenous people live under especially poor circumstances. Children often go to bed hungry

This boy is from an indigenous community. He dived for more than three hours in the sea to catch this small handful of fish.

Many children in his village have damaged ears caused by deep diving at a young age

“Up to 30 children squeeze on the floor in her bamboo house, excited to study even though resources are limited with pens and paper a luxury”



Alma Garbe (middle, green t-shirt) offers her house as a classroom

a separate state. Entire communities are caught up in the fighting between paramilitary groups, including: the Moro National Liberation Front, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the communist New People's Army. Although peace initiatives are working to push the peace process forward, people are still living in fear with kidnappings and murder



Meeting participants in Davao: Beth Arcena, Donna Celebrado, Bimbay Eliab and Sonja Tammen

a common occurrence of everyday life.

Filipinos hope their newly elected president, Benigno Aquino, will fight corruption and support the peace process. The common view is that he is a good president - all they have to do is, 'Keep him alive.' Back in June 2010 Aquino promised to tackle corruption, and his government has taken steps in the right direction with anti-corruption classes taking place at universities and government departments across the country.

At Ateneo University in Davao, a university run by Jesuits, students are trained to deliver anti-corruption classes to their student colleagues. Beth Arcena, a participant in the X-Change Programme and teacher at Ateneo, is one of the trainers and is involved in projects on the outskirts of Davao which help communities in need. Arcena said, "Sometimes students use their degree knowledge to support the villages. Recently engineer students built a bridge for some villagers, cutting two hours off their travel time to the local market where they sell their products."

Education is high on the social agenda, even among the poorest families and NGOs are working hard to establish schools in the areas worst affected by poverty and hunger. Sometimes the primary schools are run by professional teachers but often by mothers, with classes taking place in houses across the neighbourhood. For these women this is a very empowering role, many of them did not

finish secondary school but now, having received training, are able to teach their own children a process which raises their confidence and self esteem and allows them to make a valuable contribution to their community.

"I am very proud to teach the children," said 41-year-old volunteer Alma Garbe. She is married to a fisherman, has four children, one grandchild and lives in a small village close to Davao. Alma had to leave school when she was very young, to look after her nephews. Now, several times a week she empties her one room house and puts educational posters on the walls. Up to 30 children squeeze on the floor in her bamboo house, excited to study even though resources are limited, with pens and paper a luxury. Alma explained, "When I started volunteering as a teacher I was very shy, but now I feel far stronger." She gets invited by other communities to talk about her experiences in community work and even flew to Manila to share her experiences with other women.

Filipino NGOs regard female empowerment and economic development in the communities as an important step forward. In another fishing village 70 women have started a co-operative braiding pandan grass to produce all kinds of bags. Working from home they are able to look after their children, while at the same time they sell the bags collectively at the market; for many of them this is the first time they have had the opportunity to earn money. Elsewhere, a group of women have



Women's co-operative producing bags

set up a simple mango factory, producing delicious dried mango, puree and juice; last year they received a national award and this year won an international prize, from Switzerland, for the best mango production.

In terms of the peace process, the Philippines still has a long way to go but umbrella organisation, Peace Weavers, insists more and more groups are joining the peace movement. With many Filipinos holding peace concerts and rallies the hope is that a peace agreement could be reached within ten years.

Sonja Tammen

Volunteer Support Worker



Private school bus transport

Corrymeela meets the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra

Over the course of the last year a number of opportunities have presented themselves that have enabled me to travel and meet with individuals and groups interested to hear about and learn from our work. These invitations often come as a result of someone having had the Corrymeela experience and feeling that others from their background would also benefit from it. The Corrymeela experience is difficult to quantify, never mind to replicate and therefore, there is always a question for me as whether to accept such requests.

DO WE HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY to other areas where conflict is so much the fabric of society? What can we realistically deliver to a group in a one-off situation that might only last a brief time? These were some of the questions that went through my mind as I pondered over an invitation that came from former Olive Tree student, Dimi Reider, to go

to Spain to meet and deliver a presentation to the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra.

The Olive Tree is a project that Corrymeela has supported on an ongoing basis since 2005; it brings together young people from Israel and Palestine to City University in London to study, whilst also participating in a parallel process of relationship

“Practically speaking, young musicians build upon their musical knowledge while living side-by-side with people from countries that may be engaged in conflict with their own.”





Co-founder Daniel Barenboim performing with the Orchestra

building and development of mutual understanding. Our role in the project has been to work with the students three times a year, and to explore, at a very human level, the impact of their conflict on their lives, simultaneously creating opportunities for them to engage with individuals from our conflict, through frank discussion and structured dialogue.

Dimi was one of the first students to go through the Olive Tree programme and for him the connection with Corrymeela has continued to grow. In 2009 he undertook Dialogue for Peaceful Change (DPC) training in Ballycastle and later that year, brought the trainers from TIDES to Jerusalem to deliver DPC there. Although a full time journalist with Haaretz, he is also a founder member of a conduit organisation called Causeway. Its aim is to connect people and projects from Northern Ireland to similar ones in Israel/Palestine.

The idea of the West-Eastern Divan was conceived in 1999 in the minds of two artists and intellectuals – the Israeli, Daniel Barenboim, and the Palestinian, Edward Said, the former a close personal friend of Dimi and his family.

Almost 12 years ago, a year before the 2nd Intifada and six years after the first, Daniel Barenboim and Edward Said decided to create a workshop for young musicians from the Middle East where they could combine musical study and development with the sharing of knowledge and comprehension between people from cultures that traditionally have been rivals, and so the West-Eastern Divan was born.

This is not only a musical project, but also

a forum for dialogue and reflection on the Palestinian-Israeli problem. Practically speaking, young musicians build their musical knowledge while living side-by-side with people from countries that may be engaged in conflict with their own. The first sessions took place in Weimar and in Chicago and in 2002 the workshop was established in Seville thanks to the institutional and financial support of the Junta de Andalucía.

The West-Eastern Divan Workshop, to which I was invited, unfolds each summer in Andalusia. With an intensive work plan, each session lasting an entire day, the young artists develop their musical abilities within a peaceful and fitting environment. They also discuss different topics and offer different points of view on the Arab-Israeli conflict. On a physical level the orchestra allows the students to get close to each other, by sitting in the same room together.

It was in the context of these sessions, that I, along with three other panel members from Ireland, was asked to contribute a perspective. At an emotional and psychological level, studying our conflict gave the students the space to ask questions and ultimately engage with their own situations through a distant lens.

On the discussion panel with me were Prof Joe Cleary, Conor McCarthy from NUI Maynooth and Jon McCourt, a former combatant and former Community member, now a community worker. We were able to talk with some of the students and also sit in on one of their sessions. In the light of the flotilla to Gaza and on-going attacks, there

"In the room that night as she spoke the energy shifted, and a different voice was heard, that of possibility and hope; it is a tiny voice, but as we know from Northern Ireland, actions such as this begin to create what we now call a 'Climate for Change.' "



was a real tension in the group – some just wanted to play music, others wanted to solve the problems in the Middle East. What became apparent as our time with the group came to an end, was their real hunger and even need to develop their capacity to engage in real and safe discussion with each other.

On the final day, Daniel Barenboim approached me and we began to explore the possibility of developing a relationship with Corrymeela that would provide facilitated support for the full two weeks that the orchestra come together to rehearse.

For me, I feel that there is always a moment when a trip such as this makes sense. Often it is as a result of some random conversation or meeting and this time it was hearing the story of one young woman from Lebanon. She has been coming to the Divan since she was 13, she is now 19. During that time she has never spoken in one of the group meetings and in fact, having talked with other students many had never heard her speak at all in that time. Fortunately I was sitting behind her at this session and could see through her body language that she was preparing to speak. The conversation at that time was about the vision of the orchestra and whether it should be more overtly political – a very contentious issue.

When she eventually rose to speak she said she

had been trying to make sense of what it meant for her to be part of the orchestra. She went on to tell of how, because of her involvement, she had decided to go to the South of Lebanon, a place she had never been before and play her cello on the border with Israel. This is an incredibly dangerous area where there are still cluster bombs buried and the threat from both the Israeli and Lebanese soldiers is very real. Somehow she made contact with the Hezbollah to try and gain some sort of level of safety and eventually she managed to drive to the border and play her cello.

In the room that night as she spoke the energy shifted and a different voice was heard, that of possibility and hope; it is a tiny voice but as we know from Northern Ireland actions such as this begin to create, what we now call a ‘Climate for Change’.

In the big picture it may appear to change nothing and even while we were all together in Seville, the Israeli army fired into Lebanon where she had played killing a journalist; but I think this young woman’s testimony shows how creativity and courage do make a difference. In the context of the Divan, her act seems to embody what Edward Said meant when he said, “Nobody is going to sign a declaration at the end. It’s just a kind of peculiar mix which has a cultural centre to it and all sorts of unforeseen and possible consequences that might be political. But since none among us are politicians, we’re not really interested in that aspect of it.

What we are interested in is the power of music and discussion and culture to create a sense of equality and fellowship otherwise unavailable to us in the anguish and tension of polarised life in the Middle East.”

We will wait to see what the future holds, but at the moment it feels another relationship has begun for Corrymeela. It is a testimony to Dimi that he had an idea and made it happen. The big dream would be to bring the orchestra to Corrymeela in 2013 to rehearse for their two weeks and then do their first performance in Derry during its year as UK City of Culture.

In the interim, I am very glad I accepted the invitation to be part of the Divan experience. I learned from and was impacted by them and certainly through the distant story of one young Lebanese woman. I experienced a closeness once more, to my deep belief that the Arts have a power in peace building that moves beyond dialogue and can speak hope into the most desperate of situations.

Susan McEwen

IPC Co-ordinator for Corrymeela

Paying attention

To see a landscape as it is when I am not there. Simone Weil

COMING NEAR BALLYCASTLE there comes a moment when Fair Head rears up ahead. Sharp, in clear, stripped down light, its beauty does not require me. But my attention is compelled.

I have received a lot of letters and e-mails, sometimes out of my poems. One particular e-mail from David Quinney-Mee resonated with me. He writes about a young woman who was a physiotherapist to his daughter, Lucia. The young woman had been a small child in the Girls Brigade in a church where David had been minister. He says, "How much more attention would I have given her if I had glimpsed how one day our particular paths would cross."

I have been thinking about how we make the effort to pay attention, particularly to children, the vulnerable and the afflicted. Paying attention, how we give a loving gaze, is critical to how we give care. It is important that we are not giving sentimental attention, the sugar gaze. Children shout me, me, me. The afflicted and the vulnerable are often profoundly not nice. There is the pain and hard slog of paying attention and this is particular attention, to a person in their circumstances, this is not to the whole of humanity.

Some of what L'Arche has to say is about the vulnerability of the normal. The presence of people from L'Arche decentres the normal. In the sense the normal are being spiritually stripped, if they can only receive it, they lose their normality.

We are in a form of exchange, of mutual giving between the one who attends and the one who is attended to. Finally, creative attention is a form of prayer. And it is important not to be too pious here. Usually this is unuttered prayer, beyond petition and intercession and often very secular people know more about this form of prayer because they have a clear view beyond the nonsense of pious religion.

David Stevens



David Stevens was the Leader of the Corrymeela Community from 2004 right up until his death in May of this year.



Corrymeela Christmas Cards ...

SEND seasons greetings and support Corrymeela this Christmas with our range of Corrymeela cards. There are four designs to choose from and all cards come in packs of 10 complete with envelopes. To order yours just email Bernie Magill at Corrymeela House email: belfast@corrymeela.org or call 028 90508080. **A pack of 10 is £3.50***



... and Calendars

Corrymeela 2011 Calendars are also available. Each one is in a CD style case with one inset for every month, the calendar is self-standing and come with a quote and photograph for each month.

Portrait Calendars are £4.00* Landscape Calendars are £6.00*

* Please note prices are exclusive of postage and packaging

