

Dear Friends, near, far and wide!

As ever, it is amazing that a year has passed since we last wrote to you with Christmas greetings. It has been a tumultuous year in Ireland. The financial collapse at the end of 2010 led to a change of government in the spring, with a deep uncertainty and anxiety affecting almost everyone. Austerity is supposed to be the route to recovery so we are all tightening our belts and giving up hope of major developments for the time being. The need for Change is a constant theme among us; some changes are forced but there is also a welcome opportunity to question many of our assumptions and focus more clearly on our priorities for the years ahead.

And yet, Life goes right on! And looking back, 2011 has been a busy and stimulating year. New Year's Day itself brought a great change – the birth of Holly Amber to Valti and Colum. It was a very hectic time for their family: Fionn had been gravely ill in November and spent two weeks in the National Children's Hospital in December where he began his dramatic recovery; he came home for Christmas, Holly was born, and then the whole family moved to a lovely new house in Friary Walk before January was finished. The plan was for George to join them and this move took until October to finalise, but now they are all well established and thriving in a new dimension of our community.



January also saw the arrival of an old Ballytobin/Jerpoint friend and colleague, Bel Mullen, who came from Australia with her two children, Eliona and Lughaidh, who were a great addition to community life, especially in the Workhouse. Bel's presence allowed Sara and Stefan to move into Valti and Colum's rooms plus the empty space beyond which they beautifully renovated into a kitchen/sitting room (special thanks to Urs, Sara's dad!) in time for the birth of Samuel on March 31st. The joys of young children has certainly been a welcome theme of the year!

Theatre and cinema has been another enjoyable theme. During February, Equinox Theatre Company's 'The Lost Prince' premiered in Cleere's Theatre in Kilkenny starring three of Camphill Callan's actors –Shane, George and Fintin – and received rave reviews. February also saw the premiere of Eamon Little's *Living Colour* at the Jameson Dublin Film Festival, featuring our very own Andrew Pike.

After many stressful months, John Carroll came to agree that he needed a change from life in the Granary and in April he moved on and has settled well into a different lifestyle with the Brothers of Charity in Clonmel. We are keeping in touch and he sends you all his greetings.

Easter breakfast at Kilree was again a highlight of the season, with a glorious sunrise for all to see. In May, Camphill Callan took on the Plant Sale that has been a Ballytobin fixture, and it was a huge success in the KCAT car park. A BIG 'Thank You' to the people of Callan and neighbouring parishes who supported this event so well. The fundraising coffers were also boosted by the valiant efforts of some Camphill ladies and friends and family when Gladys, Alana, Janna, Clara, Liadan, Marti-Ann and Bel, plus Brigid Pike and Aine Kelly, travelled up to Dublin to participate in the Women's Mini Marathon. They were all generously sponsored and we would like to send warm thanks to everyone who pitched in – we are still saving for an updated wheel-chair mini-bus for Nicky. We have also been fortunate to secure some very generous donations that have allowed us to finally renovate the Workhouse kitchen – there is now a new window and a double sink, at long last!



Nicky graduated from the Journeyman in July and is now attending the weaving workshop at Grangemockler – and is sporting a fine black beard! A highlight of the summer was the 2nd annual Abhainn Rí Festival that was held at the end of July. It was a wonderful week for locals and visitors alike, with Camphill taking a leading role in the amazing night-time Spectacle. This summer we also welcomed another baby when Chai, a co-worker through the year, gave birth to a beautiful baby girl named Zoë at the end of August.

August also saw Narumi celebrate her 50th birthday.

The garden and farm had very good years. After two winters of killing frosts, a special project was the construction of a frost-free storage shed in Westcourt. Now the harvest is safely in and the modest farmyard is taking shape, after so many years. And in October we welcomed two young landscape designers, Delia Kulukundis and Erica Thatcher, who developed plans for a wheel-chair friendly footpath from the Granary, over the Moat Fields, to Westcourt – so we are looking forward to making Westcourt a more active part of our community's geography.



The 29th of October saw our first double birthday – with Iarla, turning One, joining in MJ's festivities, masterminded by Martina and the Scallan clan. We were delighted that it fell at a weekend when Bryan was with us – and we had party after party!



November was another cultural highpoint with Andrew Pike being selected to exhibit a painting in Inclusion Ireland's 50th celebrations in RDS Dublin – with an opening by our new Taoiseach Enda Kenny TD. And Fintin, Shane, Eoghan, Jenny, Michael, Sara and Serafima all joined the Dingle Music Week whose final concert was broadcast on the national Irish language radio. And our American members – Sulkee, Andrew and Patrick – collaborated with many other helpers to serve a festive Thanksgiving meal for the whole community; a worthy

tradition. Alas, we also accompanied the illness and untimely death of Mette Winkel, a valued co-worker and friend who lived in Camphill Callan in 2003-5. We send our warmest wishes to her son Johannes and family in Denmark.

Exciting holidays were also a feature: Peter and Michael travelled to Germany to visit Magnus and Sonja and family; Patrick, Gladys Elaine and Monique had a great time in Sardinia, and Michael undertook another strenuous cycling holiday, this year travelling through Turkey. Fintin travelled to France with his family. We have seen more wedding celebrations as MJ had the honour of escorting his grandmother up the aisle when she married. A huge highlight for Marti-Ann and her family was when Marti-Ann was part of her sister Melanie's wedding early this year.

So, in spite of the doom and gloom all around, we all kept busy and many a good time was had!

Patrick, Fintin, and Jenny

Fintin is founder and head reporter of the Camphill People. You can see the latest edition on our website <http://www.camphill.ie/callan-News-s-64.html> or just email callan@camphill.ie and we will add you to the list.