



Winter 2014

Today a Callanish baby was born. Esme Anne Prinsen Naples, born 6 lbs 14 ozs at 3:56 am, is a Callanish baby because her Mom Allison came on her first weeklong retreat after a bone marrow transplant for leukemia ten years ago, and her Dad Dax rode with the Callanish Cycling Team last summer, and Esme's sister Hazel who turns three in December runs through our building, looks at the wall of retreat photos and looks for her Mom, and has the word Callanish in her vocabulary. Allison wasn't able to carry her own babies because of medically-induced menopause caused by side-effects of chemotherapy, but she and Dax chose to have their babies through the generosity of a surrogate who knew it was her destiny to help a couple become parents.



Janie Brown
Executive Director

When the fog hangs low in the city of Xalapa, Mexico, and when the air is heavy and damp, and when the clouds make the mountain peaks disappear in the distance, this is when my Mexican host mom from so many years ago would call the weather *chipi chipi*. When someone feels raw, eyes pregnant with tears, heart wide open and the sting sharper than when you scrape your hands on cement, this is when my Mexican host mom from so many years ago would call the mood *chipi chipi*.



Chelsey Hauge

Today there was sad news, news that matched Vancouver's *chipi chipi* weather, news that felt like the cold air and the big, fat rain drops falling onto the sidewalk. Someone who was a bright spot in the world, someone with a heart full of love and care, someone who was most certainly present in the world only a few months ago—that someone isn't here anymore. Kathy's gone. She left. Her hands are not chopping onions in the kitchen, she is not mixing pancake batter or planning meals or singing songs in community. She is gone. How oddly final.

The Art Therapist Who Presides Over Feathers and Sand and Acrylics called today, about something else entirely. I knew something was wrong as soon as I picked up the phone. Her voice was heavy and measured and sad, as she shared the news that her dear friend- and the woman that had beautifully, hopefully, awesomely cooked stunning meals for us when we were on retreat this summer, was gone. Kathy was a nutritionist, a cook, a woman who filled plates with green, with heart, with vitamins, with love. She sang with us in the evenings. She gave us apples and coffee filters so we didn't have to walk to the kitchen for a pre-breakfast snack. She cared deeply, and she poured her love into the food she made at each meal-time, and the magic, the friendship, the love, the hope- you could taste it. She nourished us, she cared for us, she helped us heal.

And she is gone.

I didn't know this woman well. She explained to me one morning, as she stood beside the bread-toaster at breakfast, why spelt flour is OK even though it has gluten in it, and why it is so different from wheat. She told me about her love of cooking Mexican food, and how she found its whole, diverse ingredients to be so healthy even decades before healthy food was trendy, and we bonded over our shared love of Mexican food. She sliced an apple for an injured mouse I was caring for, and reminded me to make sure the mouse had water, too. She cared.

I know she cared because she made me meals without mushrooms. That's right. Not because I'm allergic, or because of something serious like that, just because I hate mushrooms. Everyone else had their mushroomy meals, and she made mine, separate, waiting for just me, those enchiladas without mushrooms and that bowl of leftover veggie soup instead of cream of mushroom. It seems insignificant, but it isn't. Rarely have I felt so cared for, so carefully accounted for, so visible, as when Kathy lovingly prepared me something different, just because

This past month one of the founders of Callanish, Kathy Fell, chose to end her own life after years of mental illness that ran through her family genetics. Living became more of a challenge than facing death. She was a woman who made soup for the other patients in the acute psychiatric ward at VGH when she herself was admitted as a patient, because she wanted people there to be nourished properly. Kathy's help didn't come from the system but from remembering that her human heart could still be generous and loving to her fellow patients. It gave her purpose. She showed up retreat after retreat and gave everything she had when she too was living with a terminal illness. Kathy took exquisite care of her Callanish team members, all of us, in her last weeks of life by strengthening her own dignity.

There are so many people in our community who make dignified choices everyday that may be judged negatively by others with their well-reasoned, well-intentioned opinions. At Callanish we just try to listen as deeply as we can, to make space for a person to figure things out for themselves, as they share their fears and longings with the circle. We trust that each person has an intelligence that guides him or her to their own truth even when it can require going against the status quo or prevalent opinion. We try to enter each relationship without an agenda or a prescription for another person, just a deep trust in his or her wisdom.

Callanish is made up of peaceful warriors who discover their own truths through much soul-searching and hard work, not by whims or impulses. They uncover surprising ways to enjoy life even when the body is fading and can find the strength to die with grace without being accused of giving up hope. Some choose to bring babies into the world, when it seemed impossible. Others live well with metastatic cancer for years through choosing to activate their will, determination, patience, generosity and a vast love of life.

People often ask me, "How do you keep doing this work when you lose so many people you care deeply about? Don't you live in perpetual grief?" I do it by trusting my sorrow, giving it space, being with my team, doing my own therapy, and promising myself not to let the light inside me fade or the joy dissolve, and to keep laughing at the

Kitchen Corners

As a child, I witnessed my mother's dedication to cooking for our family mostly on her own and often searching for motivation and inspiration. As an adult and a parent, my understanding of what creates good nourishment has shifted over the years, particularly during my time in the Callanish kitchen.

I attended my first Callanish retreat as a participant in 2001, when my children were 7 & 9 years old. I had not had someone cook for me for an entire week since I was a teenager. The meals I most remember from that retreat were the lunches, they followed our deeply emotional morning group sessions where we explored our losses, fears, mortality and each other's stories. The comfort of hearty soups, fresh bread and huge salads are still clearly imprinted all these years later.

A number of years later, after starting to work for Callanish in the Vancouver space, I was invited to step into the kitchen as a cook. I recall filling huge Rubbermaid bins with our week's supply of beautiful organic vegetables and fruit. I remember how vibrant the colours were as I chopped and prepared and the appreciative 'oohs' and 'aaaahs' as the food was laid out at each meal.

I have come to deeply appreciate one of our Callanish founders Kathy Fell, for her vision of the importance that both food and the kitchen team play in the retreat process. The Callanish model of team, I believe, is unusual where the kitchen crew is involved. We begin each day by joining participants and fellow teammates in meditation and Qi Gong and again at the end of the day, sit together as a collective to reflect on the day. This integration, allows the kitchen team to feel the pulse of the retreat and share the group experience. It allows us to 'cook into' the corners of the hearts that most need nourishment.

After 30 retreats as a Callanish cook I have also come to deeply value the kitchen's role in retreat as a hub and gathering place - a place to land regardless of one's present state. There is always someone to connect with amidst warmth and great aromas. I realize that if we cooked behind a closed kitchen door for the week, the food would come out differently. It is the shared experience, relationships and collective vulnerability that creates the alchemy during these weeks and infuses the food with love and deep care.



Liz Evans

The Callanish Kitchen

The recent loss of our beloved Kathy Fell, pioneer of the Callanish kitchen and its community heart has made us all reflect deeply on what the Callanish kitchen means to us. Here are some of my thoughts.

What is it that makes our kitchen so loved by all? Is it the homemade granola at breakfast, the organic vegetables colourfully displayed, the soup and biscuits after a morning of emotional work? Is it the caring actions of someone clearing our plates or the warm smiles of the cooks? Yes it is all of these and still there is more - something unseen, intangible.

Underpinning all we do in the kitchen is the creation of community, the act of coming together with a common purpose. At Callanish our common purpose is to nourish and to be of service to the participants and team. That means more than good food served well. It includes developing relationships, taking care of each other, enjoying ourselves and collaborating. For me this requires leaving my ego at home - it's not about who I am or how I've done things before. Each retreat is a new experience and my best tools include an open heart, a curious mind, a spirit of inclusion and love for all, and the ability to accept others and myself just as we are.

Our kitchen team is comprised of strong individuals who have managed widely differing lifestyles, from raising families to running commercial kitchens to managing successful careers, and we come into the kitchen as equals. We bring large, open hearts - that's a given and is why each of us was attracted to Callanish in the first place - it gives us a place to express our love through nourishing and serving others. We also bring our personalities, preferences, avoidances, past hurts and habits. This is where the real work of developing community begins and we do it daily. Nicola can create a delicious soup, Eva can run dishes through "Buster" like no one else (her nickname for the sprayer hose) or Liz can make a fabulous enchilada, ... but who is collaborating, who is asking for another's input, who can say "when you said XXX, I felt a bit XXX, can we talk about it?" This is the art of collaboration: this is the building of community.

Community is about caring, nurturing, creating, laughing and weeping - any one of these aspects adds invisible but palpable nourishment to whatever we do in the Callanish kitchen. And it is creating community that keeps me coming back. It is the expansion of my heart and spirit that brings me back to Callanish. And I thank our dear friend Kathy for introducing me to this wonderful team and assure her that I'll carry on her legacy of love and caring.



Carol Sutcliffe

Poem in Honour of Michelle

by Patricia Stoop (retreat participant)

We arrived
We moved slowly
We spoke honestly
We waited oh so patiently for the stories to complete themselves
We left judgement and criticism behind to hitchhike back down the highway
We rode the tsunamis like skilled surfers
We dove deep under the stormy, undulating ocean
We entered the underworld
We became intimate with our three-headed dragon death, fear and loss
We stayed there holding hands tightly
We mourned completely
We were soothed by the angels
We sent our intentions, swirling and playing together, to our higher power
We crawled back up to the world and placed our feet solidly on the ground
We connected with the pure and perfect natural world
We created in words and art and music and movement
We laughed
We sang
We sat in silence often
We ate, boy did we eat
Until our tummies were almost bursting full of love.
Then we returned to the world more trusting, more accepting, more loving
We survived
We thrived



Patricia Stoop

Words From The Cookie Team

The word cookie can mean several things...there is the 'tough' cookie and then there is the one we, the Callanish Cookie Team (CCT) pride ourselves in making: the sweet and friendly type.

We delight in making our cookies organic, comforting and nurturing, all of which represents Callanish.

It is our honour and pleasure to contribute in this way to an organization that does such enriching, inspirational and important work to the community it supports.

We supply our cookies for the Callanish retreats four to five times a year.

With tunes blaring, draped in colourful aprons and ovens preheating, we focus on the task at hand. With much gusto and determination we bake 40 dozen cookies of five healthy varieties.

Within our own lives each of us have been touched by cancer as many others have and are grateful to have this opportunity to help out in this delicious, bite-size way.



Karen Hoffman, Susan Stine, Janet Silver & Sherri Silverman (l to r)

Update on our Young Adult Documentary Film

by Danielle Schroeder

We are very happy to report that the first phase of our documentary film project was a huge success! In September we made our way up to Brew Creek for a 'mini' three-day retreat with an incredible group of 6 young adults living with recurrent cancer, two film makers, and members of our Callanish team.

As you can imagine, at first we were all a little nervous and unsure as to how it would go to bring a video camera and microphone into the safety of our group sessions. However, thanks to the skillful, sensitive, and discreet work of our filmmakers, Jenn Lee and Robin Pascoe, both participants and facilitators were put at ease right away. We were all so impressed by how comfortable they made us feel in front of a camera.

As a result, over the course of three short days, our filmmakers were able to capture over 18 hours of rich footage from the retreat process, about the experiences of the 6 young adults that were brave enough to participate and share their honest, heartfelt stories about what it is like to live with recurrent cancer and how they keep choosing to live life to the fullest. We know it is truly a privilege to now have such personal stories on film, and therefore, as we keep moving forward with this project we are doing so with the utmost care and respect for those involved.

At present, the editing process is well underway! Jenn, Robin, and their fabulous intern, Alex Van, have been spending an unbelievable amount of hours diligently and sensitively going through all the 18 hours of footage and collaborating with us around our wishes and hopes for the film. Janie and I have been fortunate to sit in for some of the editing process and it has been such an interesting experience, and makes us realize just how much work and detail goes into documentary filmmaking. Our aim is that a 50 minute documentary will be created from the footage. Quite the feat if you ask me!

So we want to put out a HUGE thank you to Jenn Lee, Robin Pascoe, and Alex Van, for giving so much of their time, heart, and expertise to making this film possible. We couldn't have asked for a better filmmaking team to lead the way for us to embark on such an important and meaningful new project.



Robin Pascoe & Jenn Lee



Alex Van



Marlene Mills

Hands

by Marlene Mills (retreat participant)

A helping hand was extended by a beautiful woman with a simple but so sincere smile, by her look that said, "I am trustworthy, you don't have to fear me."

And so I accepted that hand and all the hands that have been offered to me since that day.

Hands that belong to people who love me, comfort me and nurture me. These are new and different hands in my life belonging to my new and improved inner circle. Hands that guide me down this unknown life path I have stepped into. Hands that help me write and draw and paint; hands that stroke, hands that hug, hands that hold, so many hands in my life to support me now.

What if I hadn't accepted that first out-stretched hand? I hate to think.

Janie Brown cont. from page 1

strangeness of life including the bizarre things people say when you lose someone you love. I keep doing the work because of the spirit I see everyday in the eyes of people who dare to be honest, who take risks, who choose to include cancer without making it the centre of their lives, those who take time to find out what matters, to care about each other. I do this work because I am inspired everyday, even when I am on my knees with my own sorrow, by the people in this community who don't forget how to put an arm around another person, pick up the phone to say hello, write a poem, sing a song, or make soup from Kathy's cookbook and tell me about how important she was to them. I do it because people like Allison and Dax were tenacious in making their dreams come true and Kathy knew what was right for her. I couldn't and wouldn't do this work without all of you, my friends. Thank you.

Chelsey Hauge cont. from page 1

I didn't like "what was for dinner." I come from a family where what was for dinner was what was for dinner, and there wasn't a second option. Take it or leave it, but don't expect to have ice cream if you leave it (sound familiar?). And so imagine the care, the surprise, the relief at being so seen, so visible, so tenderly accounted for- that someone made me food without mushrooms. The first time she gave me a special plate my eyes got wide, and I thought "This is for me? Really?" It was, it was for me, those plates without mushrooms. It was one of the times in my life I felt most cared for. No mushrooms. Not a single one. How kind. How special. How thoughtful. I was so touched, so loved, by Kathy. And so it feels *chipi chipi*. My heart aches for her, and I wonder who was taking care of her, I hope someone held her close and gave her fuzzy blankets and made her warm tea, I hope she knew how very loved she was. And I am afraid she was alone, I am afraid she didn't get to share those last moments with loved ones, I am afraid she didn't know how loved she was. Maybe she did, and I will hope so. My heart aches for her colleagues, the other facilitators at the retreat who worked with her and loved her, and who have lost a grand friend. My heart aches for her family, for those closest to her, those with a big giant Kathy-sized hole in their hearts, a hole that will never quite be filled again, a hole who's edges will always ache, even after they have scarred over and formed a new shape where Kathy was.

Chipi chipi because the world feels cruel and harsh and cold, *chipi chipi* because it doesn't seem fair or real or believable, *chipi chipi* because she was so full of life, and knowing that she won't ever inhabit the world again, move again, love again, laugh again, is so very dissonant that it sounds like two young musicians playing what should be a lovely sound, but instead one is playing B and the other B-flat, and it scorches the ear. It sounds wrong. *Chipi chipi* because someone great isn't here anymore. Someone I didn't know well is gone now, but she was someone I knew well enough to know we should be remembering, mourning, missing, and again remembering. I knew her well enough to know she was great. *Chipi chipi*, indeed.

In this afternoon of *chipi chipi*, I did a few things. I closed my laptop and took a deep breath. I talked on the phone to a good friend. I walked to yoga in the rain. I practiced hard, and hot, and whole, and it felt good. I walked home from yoga in the rain, and I made a chicken and tomato dish for dinner that was topped with piles of fresh herbs and parmesan, and I think Kathy would have approved.

<<http://chelsincancerland.wordpress.com/2014/09/19/chipi-chipi>>



Kathy Fell

Grains of Wisdom: The Callanish Cookbook was inspired by our nutritionist and cook Kathy Fell and is full of great ideas for healthy and delicious meals. It also features photographs and quotes from many of our retreats. Proceeds from the sale of the cookbook will help support Callanish retreats and programs. Please contact our office if you would like to purchase a copy.

Fruit Crisp

This has long been a retreat favourite! Every season reveals a different crisp! In the winter we use apples and pears and in the summer, berries. A plum crisp in the autumn is delicious.

3/4 cup flour (we use spelt flour)
3/4 cup rolled oats
1/2 cup organic brown sugar (or alternative)
1/2 tsp cinnamon
1/4 tsp salt
1/2 cup butter
2 Tbsp minced candied ginger
juice of 1/2 lemon

TOPPING:

Cut or rub butter into flour, spices and sugar until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Add rolled oats and minced ginger. (If the fruit you are using is sweet then you can reduce the sugar to 1/3 cup).
 Mix fruit (*about 4 cups e.g.: apples, peaches, blueberries or a mixture*) with lemon juice.

Fill a 9" deep pie plate with the fruit. Sprinkle prepared topping on fruit and bake in 350 – 375° F oven for 45 minutes or until fruit is fully cooked and the top is a crispy golden brown.



The Callanish Quilt

by Rose Chung

The quilt for Callanish was inspired on retreat in May 2012 (completed Nov. 2014) as a tribute to the staff and volunteers who show so much kindness, compassion and dedication to all of us. Thanks to all the quilt participants – your enthusiasm and creative energy made this quilt fun and colourful.



Rose Chung with Liz and the Callanish Quilt

And thanks to Susan Weir for her intricate quilting in finishing the project, her experienced eye for colour, ideas and guidance, plus her donation of the silk fill and blue floral backing.

My gratitude to Linda Kinney who has given me great encouragement as she communicated travel dates, ferry schedules and hosted Susan and I in White Rock to discuss the ideas for the quilt and a second meeting to hand over the unfinished quilt for completion.

With thanks and love,
 Rose.

We Remember with Love

Kathy Fell
 Linda George
 Val Hamilton
 Rod Lemay
 Janice Miller
 Marlene Mills
 Michelle Pammenter-Young
 Adair Patterson

We send our love and thoughts to the family and friends of these remarkable people.

Special Thanks to:

All of our anonymous and monthly donors who give with such generous and ongoing commitment

The family and friends of **James Coverdale, Louise Didyk, Kathy Fell and Michelle Pammenter-Young** for their generous memorial donations
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