



Janie Brown
Executive Director

Words from Janie

"I tell you this
to break your heart,
by which I mean only
that it break open and never close again
to the rest of the world."
- *Mary Oliver*

I met Liz in 2001 when she came on her first Callanish retreat, one that has always been remembered as the Mothers' Retreat, because all eight retreat participants happened to be mothers. Liz had two children, Eva had two, Danara had one and so on; eight mothers and thirteen children. What became clear on the first day of retreat was that if the group members were going to be able to focus on their own emotional work for the week, they would have to switch their focus from worrying about the effect of their cancer on their children, to turning their attention towards themselves.



I suggested that each person write the name of one child on a smooth, round rock with a black marker pen, and then tell the group a story about the child. Soon all thirteen children had been introduced to the group.

The thirteen rocks were then nestled

together in a mound of soft, brightly coloured wool and placed on our group altar for the week. The woollen nest symbolized a safe place to hold the children while their mothers could have much-needed space to attend to their own heartaches brought about by cancer.

We never know when we meet someone at Callanish how long the relationship will last. The friendship may stretch out over many, many years or it may be cut short by circumstance, or by death. At Callanish, we enter into each relationship as fully as we can, for as long as it lasts, knowing that life is always unpredictable. We don't let the fear of loss prevent us from connecting wholeheartedly with each person whom we have the privilege to meet. Each relationship brings immeasurable wisdom.

Janie's story cont. on pg 3



Courage Wrapped in Hope by Eva Matsuzaki

Where did this courage come from?
You knew, somewhere in your depths,
that life is shorter than we ever imagined.
From your mother and sisters,
and their early deaths?
From hearts shared with Callanish friends?
You knew, and it gave you courage.

When others tread cautiously,
you were willing to dive into new places.

New job at Callanish? Sure!
Stay some nights on a couch? Sure!
Explore your creative side? Sure!
Writing, painting, quilting? Sure!

What weren't you willing to try?
Cook for 20 on retreats? Sure!
Learn to play the ukulele? Sure!
Teach ukulele to participants? Sure!
Cycle uphill to Whistler? Sure!
Plan a trip to Scotland? Sure!

Didn't matter if it was familiar or not,
you were there in full energy,
for yourself and for others.
But it wasn't courage in a knot.
It was always full of grace,
and wrapped in hope.

Dedicated to dear Liz.



Carol Sutcliffe & Liz Evans

Words from Carol

I always loved arriving in the Callanish retreat kitchen after morning Qi Gong to find Liz delightfully decked out in colourful scarves and aprons that accented her lovely red hair. She always added such a bright spark to our days. I fondly remember pancake day - no one could pour as much love into a four-inch millet, rice and spelt pancake as our dear Liz - it was like we were all kids again come to Liz's table for the best treat ever!

We cooked together on retreat for eight years and each day was a remarkable journey into the senses of colour, textures and aromas. Enchilada night was one of Liz's favourite meals to prepare and no one could pile as much cheese onto an enchilada as Liz - comfort food to the max. Beet hummus, roasted tomato soup, lemon cloud and quinoa cauliflower patties were Liz's signature dishes - loved by participants and facilitators alike.

Liz joined the Callanish cooking team in 2008 right when we most needed to add a whole new level of care and understanding to everything we did in the kitchen. Her past experience with cancer helped us to relate to that reality with greater compassion for the complexity of each individual's needs. Liz's devotion to her family instilled a greater awareness and understanding of the added pain our participant group with children face every single day. And her love of home-style cooked food inspired us to slow down and smell the parsley in a cup of freshly-picked Brew Creek parsley tea!

Great cooking aside though, what really epitomized Liz in the Callanish kitchen was the whipped cream heart she lovingly piped onto each individual chocolate mousse. This was truly how Liz nourished this whole Callanish community - with her full, beautiful, fun-loving and compassionate heart. I'll miss her in our kitchen and on our retreats and know that she left big shoes to fill. I hope to carry forward her legacy of a light, playful heart filled with grace and a deep well of compassion.

Resurrection of Spirit Within

by Liz Evans

A new relationship
A trinity is forming
Mind and body now share space with spirit
A new-found love encircling each other
Soaking up and sending out the metta
Beloved spirit has revealed itself
Hooray, hallelujah, give praise and pass the sauce
The feast of life
All the flavours have found their way to the pot
The palate tastes the balance
Sweet, savory, acidic, spicy & salty
It's all here at the table now
Revel in the nourishment and the harmony
This meal feeds the body, clears the mind
And strengthens the spirit
Time to digest
Consider the sacred recipes yet to be explored.



Drea Wonnacott

Words from Drea

I attended my Callanish Retreat in November 2015. As I am sure many that have gone before me, and will go after me, have said the retreat experience defies easy explanation. I truly believe each participant could write a book, to say nothing of the facilitators! What I can say is this: I feel strongly that cancer is providing me

a second chance at this life. My experiences at Callanish have reinforced this perspective. I remember clearly the morning I wrote this letter to Death. I remember where I was sitting in the beautiful room, the sound of the rain on the roof and how quickly the words came out of me on to the page. Like so much of Callanish, writing this letter gave me permission to feel and explore a place that so desperately needed to be felt and explored. Janie may thank me for sharing this letter for the newsletter but as always the thanks is truly due to Janie and the amazing team at Callanish for giving those of us living with cancer a safe place to be. With an open and healing heart, I thank you.

Dear Death,

November 10, 2015

You have become my companion in life. You offer me encouragement to live my life fully. You remind me that I can't take today for granted. In fact, I can't take this moment for granted. You are the gift of life I needed to live fully, be fully alive.

When I first met you in that doctor's office, you terrified me. I couldn't sit beside you without shaking. You were cancer to me. Cancer was death, I was dying. Slowly I have learned I am not dying. In fact, I am very much alive. Death, you are separate from the cancer that was in my body. Cancer doesn't equal death. I reject that connection. I choose life. Everyday I choose life. I will not choose death.

You do not frighten me any longer. Death, you teach me what I want to live for. Thinking about my fear of death showed me I was actually sad for all the experiences I would miss when dead. Well I am not dead now, so I get to be present in those experiences. I get to make plans, have parties, enjoy putting my children to bed and doing the dishes, because you are by my side. Before I met you I didn't value my life. I was deeply unhappy. Now I hold my life sacred and close to my heart, aware it can slip through my fingers.

When you and I become one Death I know I will be surrounded by my entire family, holding the hands of those I love. Husband, children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, friends, all who love me. Tyler and I as our older selves, sitting on the front porch of a house. I have long grey hair. I am holding Tyler's hand. Our children are beside us, their children surround us. This image in my mind is love, it is life; the life I will live, fully. Thank you Death for opening my eyes and my heart.



Liz Evans piping hearts on our famous Callanish chocolate mousse



Susie Merz

Welcome Susie!

I am delighted to introduce you to Susie Merz, a wonderful new addition to our counselling team. We feel she is a perfect fit here with her extensive counselling experience, her personal foray into cancer, and her huge and lovely heart. I look forward to you meeting her.

In Susie's words: *"It is an honour to be part of the staff team as a counsellor at Callanish. My work as a counsellor over the past 14 years has been in a variety of areas including work with clients with depression and anxiety issues, addiction issues and managing major life transitions. I have had my own experience with a cancer diagnosis, and being a retreat participant with Callanish. It is my hope that even as I continue my own healing, I can help others with what it means to live with cancer. I very much look forward to continuing to be a part of this remarkable community."*

Susie will be offering individual, family and group sessions. She can be reached at 604-732-0633 or susie@callanish.org. Counselling is offered at Callanish by donation on a sliding scale \$40-\$120, or less if necessary.

Pure Joy

by Susie Merz

When I think of inspiration I think of moments of pure joy. And when I think of pure joy I think of playing the ukulele. About two years ago a friend talked me into signing up for a ukulele class with her, as something new to try. It was within the first year of recovering from the four months of chemotherapy and a stem cell transplant that was hopefully to keep the cancer in remission. Often I felt decidedly uninspired as I was recovering, struggling through days of extreme fatigue and aimlessness, under a cloud of anxiety about how I was supposed to carry on.

At the first ukulele class, with a fairly short introduction to the instrument and to a couple of simple chords, we played and sang our first song as a group. *"You Can't Always Get What You Want."* And isn't that the truth. *"But if you try sometimes, you'll find, you get what you need."* And in that moment there was a spark of pure joy, singing, playing together, learning something new. A feeling that grew into hopefulness. I can carry on, my body will continue to heal, I will find my way back to my life, or even just to life.

About half a year later, I was on my way up to spend a week at a Callanish retreat. I had tucked my ukulele in beside my other bags, having taken the chance that when it said under the list of things to bring, musical instruments, that my humble uke would be acceptable. About three days into the retreat, having neither spoken about nor brought out my ukulele, by happenstance I discovered that two other participants had brought their ukuleles as well. The three of us played together that afternoon. That night, ukuleles were brought out for everyone, donated thanks to the generosity of Ruby's Ukes, the very school that I had taken my class with. And again, with just a short introduction to a couple of simple chords, we played and sang our first song as a group. *"Lean on me, when you're not strong, and I'll be your friend, I'll help you carry on."*

As if almost too good to be true, it was there again. This time bigger than a spark, more like a wave of joy, of gratitude crashing over me, washing out a few more corners of painful sadness in the rooms of my heart. It brought me to a place of being inspired, appreciating the simplicity and pure joy that existed in the music, with those people, in that moment. I could believe then that somehow, I would be able to carry on.

Words from Janie cont.

My friendship with Liz lasted fifteen years. She died on May 17th, 2016, from a third primary cancer diagnosed just one year before, almost to the day. I wanted much more time with Liz as did everyone who loved her, most especially her husband Doug, and her children Jaqueline and Will.

Liz came on three retreats for herself over the next several years, and attended day retreats and other programs in the city. In 2006, she became a staff member at Callanish, both as a cook on the residential retreats, and our full-time office manager at Callanish in the city. We worked very closely alongside one another for ten years and she made my work and my life deeper and richer and better.

When someone we love dies, our future life is unimaginable for a while and that space of the unimagined makes way for the heart to break, allowing the whole world to enter. I welcome my heartbreak, as a measure of my love for Liz, and I welcome the whole world in, the ones who understand what it means to keep opening to life, and to love, even when everything hurts.

I will be forever grateful to Liz for her dedication to a life of service to her beloveds, and to Callanish, and for the countless blessings she bestowed upon all of us who had the great honour of crossing paths with her in this life.



PLEASE SUPPORT TEAM CALLANISH FOR THEIR CYCLE FROM VANCOUVER TO WHISTLER

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 10TH, 2016

For the second time in three years, Team Callanish will don their blue Callanish Cycle kit for the 122 kms uphill cycle from Vancouver to Whistler to raise funds for our charity. As Callanish relies entirely on individual donors and foundations to raise all of our annual operating costs (no government or corporate funding) we please ask that you sponsor our team with even a small donation.

The team is comprised of Callanish retreat participants, their family members, staff, Board members and friends. We will ride in honour of all those people with cancer who have inspired us to live the lives we have been given as best we can, especially when times are tough. Special thanks to our 30 team members who have spent months training for this ride!! You are amazing!!

Visit callanish.org/community-initiatives to donate.



From the Callanish Kitchen Quinoa Cauliflower Patties (Makes 12)

1 cup quinoa
 1 ½ cups cauliflower florets
 4 eggs
 6 scallions– white and green parts
 ¾ cup rolled oats
 sea salt and pepper
 1 ⅓ cup sheeps milk feta
 zest of one large or 2 small lemons
 ½ cup roughly chopped parsley
 canola oil for frying

Rinse quinoa, put in 2 cups water, bring to a boil and add salt/pepper. Simmer and cook for 15 minutes, fluff with fork, turn off heat, and set lid ajar to rest. Pulse the cauliflower in a food processor until it resembles couscous about 10-15 minutes.

In a large bowl, whisk 4 eggs together well and add the cauliflower couscous. Using the food processor again, pulse the oats and scallions to a rough chop. Add this to the egg bowl with the cooked quinoa. Add a generous pinch of salt/pepper, the crumbled feta, lemon zest, chopped parsley and stir to mix well. Let mixture rest in fridge for 30 minutes.

Form the quinoa mixture into patties about 4” wide and 1” inch thick. Heat oil in a frying pan and cook for about 4 minutes on each side until just crisped, covering them after the flip to completely warm through. The patties will keep covered in the fridge for 3-4 days.



Al Jones

Thanks to a
Donor/Volunteer
Al Jones

Al Jones headed up the Tip a Wee Dram (www.tipaweedram.org) fundraising team once again, on March 6th, for the 7th year, raising an incredible \$35,000 for Callanish, which was matched by the Kitty J. Heller Trust. Tip A Wee Dram has become a highly-sought after whisky-tasting event in

Vancouver and sells out 300 tickets each year. Next year's event will be on Saturday March 4th at the Scottish Cultural Centre. We will be looking for volunteers to help out again next year!

Thank you Al and your team of amazing volunteers for adopting Callanish as your cancer charity of choice and for becoming dear friends in the process. Your dedication, hard work and generosity means so much to us and we look forward to our continuing partnership next year. Al has also joined Team Callanish to cycle in the Whistler Gran Fondo on September 10th to raise funds for Callanish. You really are a star!

We Remember with Love

Liz Evans
 Susie Frank
 Ingrid Murphy

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

Special Thanks to:

The family and friends of **Barb Dickinson, Louise Didyk, Liz Evans, Susie Frank, Jill McIntyre, Lily Murphy, and Nicole Siemens** for their generous memorial donations.
Suzanna, Pierre and Alex Cam Hoa Van, and their family and friends for raising over \$4000.00 for Callanish at Suzanna's work retirement party!!
Joni Denroche for her hugely successful personal fundraising event, "50 for Friends" ski race to benefit Callanish.
Dax Naples for applying for a \$2000.00 donation from RBC and getting it!
Bowen Island Gives for their amazing hike and party, in honour of Liz Evans, with proceeds to benefit Callanish.
Jan Kaspavec for donating the proceeds of the sale of his art to Callanish and for power-washing our parking area.
 The **Brear Family and Keep on Swimming** for their ongoing generosity in memory of Ashley Brear.
Thirty Team Callanish cyclists for donating hours of training time and fundraising for Callanish for the 2016 Whistler Gran Fondo ride.
Jeanette Frost and Andrea Taylor for donating time to lead our cycling groups.
Martha Lou Henley for her steadfast commitment to bringing food and flowers to our young adult group every month and for her donation of many Vancouver concert tickets, and her ongoing generosity.
The Lotte & John Hecht Memorial Foundation for their generous scholarship support and matching funding.
Eva Matsuzaki for writing such beautiful thank you cards to our donors.

Racquel Welsh and her dedicated RBC volunteers for their donation and hard work sprucing up our patio.
Michael Luco of Earthrise for providing stunning flowers for retreats and city events.
Bruno & Sally Born and Graham Pap at Finest at Sea for the gorgeous fish for our retreats.
Stephanie Sauvé for all her generous support in continuing to back us up with our website and admin needs.
Laurel Murphy and Margaret Bacon for the gift of healing sounds and touch for our relaxation group.
Bill Sutherland for taking such good care of our garden and our roof, and along with **Buddy Sakamoto, Don Matsuzaki and Doug Evans** helping us with retreat pack-up and clean-up.
Karen & Barry Coates of Fraser Meadow Organic Dairy for donating their fabulous yoghurt for retreat.
 The generous and supportive team at **The Brew Creek Centre**.
Jim Glen for making a special trip to Brew Creek to take his beautiful photographs for our website.
 Our fabulous baking team of **Sherri Silverman, Janet Silver, Susan Stine and Karen Hoffman** for donating their time and the ingredients to bake the much-loved Callanish cookies.
Lynn Buhler, Tori Cook, Caroleena Khayatte and Nirit Rozenberg for volunteering to wash dishes on retreat.
Suzanne Hong at Granville Island Florists for bringing beauty to our retreats through her flowers.