Camphill Spirit
Newsletter of Camphill Communities of Ireland Issue 7

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Ireland to Austria by bike

by Tom Dunne

6 weeks, 2 days / 3,180 kilometres

Tom leaving Bray (Picture Barbara Flynn / The wicklow People)

What drives someone to spend over six weeks cycling 3000 km plus across Europe, passing through seven different countries, on all sorts of surfaces, in every type of weather and to top it all on his own? Well not all the reasons as to why have been revealed as yet, but how I succeeded, well that's a different matter. Primarily the hope was to raise as much as possible for The Camphill Community in Callan, while in Austria volunteers would raise funds for Dorf St.Anton, which provides facilities for people with a range of intellectual disabilities. Although at no time did I contemplate giving up, the fund raising aims are, without a doubt, a great incentive to keep going. So let the journey begin.

The intention was to follow as close as possible the route of Saint Fergal who left Aghaboe in County Laois in 742, and after some time in France traveled on to Salzburg, where he was eventually appointed Bishop. On leaving Ireland the journey took me along the dramatic and hilly south Wales coastline, before crossing the Severn, and the first of the many rivers and canals I would travel along. The Thames and its estuary brought me through London, before cycling on through Kent, and catching a ferry in Dover to Calais.

Crossing the Channel

From Calais to Paris was mainly on roads, and sometimes the traffic was more than a little hairy, and paradoxically the cycle through Paris itself was relatively smooth. South to Orleans and The Loire where I joined Eurovelo 6, Europe's longest cycle route, which stretches from The Atlantic to The Black Sea. The Loire route was stunning with its Chateaus and beautiful villages.

A view of Salzburg from the Salzach river

The weather improved dramatically compared to the storms and rain of the earlier part of the journey, and I was able to make up some lost time even as I gradually climbed along canals and rivers towards Switzerland. I cycled along The Rhine to Lake Constance and after a steep climb made it to the upper reaches of the mighty Danube. I followed The Danube as far as Passau where I changed to The Inn, as it swiftly flowed down from The Alps. The climb to Salzburg along The Salzach was gradual and really apart from the autumn chill, easier than I had expected. Two days on from Salzburg I arrived in Kaprun and the end of the journey, for the moment at least. One of the most common questions I've been asked since returning was how did I cope with being alone? True you have to urge yourself on to reach your goal, ignore strange sounds outside the tent at night, be lost on your own or simply have no one to talk to for days, apart from passing words in shops, campsites or hotels. But strange as it seems I never felt alone, and no matter how many times I was lost or needed help someone always turned up to assist. Although I was so privileged to experience Europe with all my senses as I moved through her on my bike, unrestricted and open to all the elements, it's the true kindness of people that will stay with me.

If you would like to read more you can follow the complete journey on **www.fergalsjourney.wordpress.com.**

A very Happy Christmas to all our friends

And here's a bit of fun.....A Camphill Volunteer and a Lawyer died and arrived together at the Heavenly Gates. St Peter asks the Volunteer to wait and lets the Lawyer in first. As the gates close he sees the Lawyer greeted with fanfare, music, cheering crowds,and a warm embrace from the Great Lord Himself. Things begin to die down and the Volunteer is granted entrance. No Fanfare. No Choir. Confused the Volunteer asks Peter for an explanation?

"Oh he said, we get Volunteers in here all the time, this was our first Lawyer"

Increase your chances.....Support Camphill

Michael Hilary Editor

Camphill Cafes

Camphill continually strives to make a wide range of training, work opportunities and cultural and artistic activities available to a broad range of people. Camphill have successfully created enterprises and centres, that combine these aims.

Of great relevance are the cafes run by various communities in Ireland. These outlets are very popular in the local towns as meeting places, income generators, and a source of healthy organic fair trade produce. All these shops promote participation and inclusion through community empowerment and represent genuine social enterprise providing work and social activities for people with special needs and a shopfront for Camphill in Ireland.

An Tearmann

In Kilcullen in Co.Kildare, An Tearmann is a very successful Camphill run shop and café with support from The Bridge and Dunshane communities.

For many locals The Watergarden is their favourite coffee shop

Some of the Watergarden crew

Watergarden Cafe

The Watergarden, is a famous culinary hotspot located in Thomastown beside a beautiful streamside garden, along a tributary of the Nore. It is a café, gift shop and garden centre open to the public. It operates as an all ability centre, providing work for up to 20 day attendees with special needs as well as those on community employment schemes.

The beautiful garden offers a therapeutic backdrop to the workplace of the Watergarden and gives everyone an experience of the changing seasons. The principle impulses of the Watergarden are to create meaningful work for adults with special needs, and to bring the Camphill ethos into the wider community.

Holywood Café

In the busy town of Holywood on the Bangor Road out of Belfast is the award winning Camphill Community Holywood Organic Bakery Café and Shop. In the bakery they pride themselves at making the finest bread, cakes and scones including a range of healthy gluten free and sugar free options, fresh every day.

In the café they aim to provide the best organic food possible.
A lunch service is run five days a week and includes soup, sandwiches and daily specials plus a variety of cakes, pies and sweet treats, teas, herbal selections and bottomless cups of organic coffee. Well worth a visit.

The exterior of the Camphill Home Baskery

The Holywood Bakery

Meiteal

In Dunlavin, the Grangebeg Community has supplied the initiative for Meiteal, an exciting new coffee and craft shop enterprise, and fast becoming a popular meeting place in the town.

Camphill Greenacres in Dublin, also has a strong impulse and vision to be 'out there', active participants in the wider community and are currently on the look out for a premises. Watch this space!

Meiteal is a focal point in Dunlavin

A regular customer enjoying the excellent coffee

Dunnamaggin GAA Club and Camphill enter Guinness Book of Records by Mark Dwan

It all began in spring with a phone call from Bill Heffernan, a senior member of the local Dunamaggin GAA club and one of the 3 farmers that work together with us on the Biogas plant. "I have a fund raising idea," he said, "a Guinness World Record with hundreds of ride-on lawn mowers". A detailed presentation of plans and strategies followed. Mr. Tony Brady of Husqvarna Ireland got on board to sponsor the entire event with PR, prizes and a visit by Husqvarna executives from Sweden to Ballytobin. There was a TV3 appearance, Irish Times and local newspaper spreads, lots of posters around the South East of Ireland, a Web Site, promotion with help from Mick Galway rugby international, and James Finlay, Ireland's strongest man and a host of Kilkenny's finest all Ireland champion hurlers.
On the day 766 ride-on mowers thundered off cutting the luscious grass of Ned Kirwan's 50-acre field to golf course standard. When the chequered flag was reached the field erupted into cheers and celebration, when the Australian world record of 100 ride-on mowers was beaten. The mowers proceeded to do a lap of honor. Ballytobin's Open Day Games were sprinkled about in nearby fields, and the fun and games continued with stalls, hurling games for kids, a stage for entertainment, a dog show, a rodeo bull ride machine, commercial displays, tents, ice cream vans, and BBQ's. All who were there witnessed the historic event. Check it out on YouTube. What a day!

Line-up for Ride-on Record

Trip to Tuscany

by Fergus FitzGerald (Resident of Camphill Carrig-on-Suir Community)

I went to Tuscany on 23-6-2011 for the first time. It was my third visit to Italy.
My mother and my aunt Eleanor travelled with me.
We flew to Bologna and we stayed in Oltrarno which is in Southern Florence and means the other side of the River Arno.
Florence is a beautiful Roman-founded city, even if it is in Tuscany and Tuscany is named after the Etruscans.
The city became prominent during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. It is the birthplace of the Renaissance.
I took three day-trips: one with my aunt to Siena and another with my mother and my aunt to Fiesole and on another day, I visited Pisa with my mother.
We explored Florence evert day, especially Il Ponte Vecchio. It means the old bridge in Italian and is the oldest bridge in Florence.
We saw Il Palazzo Vecchio and Uffizi. Palazzo Vecchio means an old palace in Italian. The Palazzo was the home of the Medici which means medical doctors in Italian. They were mostly bankers in Florence and supported art and science in Italy during the Renaissance. They once ruled Florence and most of Tuscany.
I went to see Dante's birthplace on my first proper day in Tuscany, and it was St. John's Day. John the Baptist is the patron saint of Florence and is important for Camphill.
We also went to many churches where there was wonderful art.
It was a good week in Tuscany and we enjoyed every minute of our time there.

AUTUMN CLOSES

The door of Autumn closes
at Halloween,
and we walk through mourn?fully
into another long winter
of colds and overdressing.
Christmas is the only light
in the darkness,
illuminating
like the gold of ancient? manu scripts
to run through our veins
leaving us shine.

Quote from Mairéad FitzGerald, Fergus's mother:

"Camphill has given meaning to Fergus's life. Camphill embraces people and enables them to develop in their own unique way. Fergus has such a rich quality of life that I am overjoyed at how his life has turned out. His interests in books, gardening , music and painting are being encouraged and allowed to grow in the most natural way. I see Camphill as a quiet and deeply effective force for good in this world."

Fergus in Florence with the Ponte Vecchio in the background

Fundraising

What can YOU do !!

Cut-backs in funding from the HSE, budget cuts, stalled grants, and a fall-off in donations have meant that all Camphill Communities are facing significant financial shortfalls.

With this in mind, the Camphill PR and Fundraising Group and the Parents and Friends Association are calling out to **YOU.**
Given that the essence of Camphill is its community approach, we are asking all of our members – friends, families and other supporters – to collaborate with us and participate in our fundraising efforts.

To encourage and facilitate this initiative, we will support you with a fundraising kit and a list of suggestions and ideas. On the right are ideas to get you started:

- **Find 10 people to run in the Mini-Marathon**
- **Hold a box collection outside a supermarket this can easily raise €500 in just one day**
- **Get support from a school to do bag packing in a supermarket**
- **Secure help from local Lions club, ICA, sports club etc.**
- **Organise race night at racetrack or dog track**
- **Organise a golf classic (parents could combine to do this)**
- **Hold car boot sale, auction or cake sale**
- **Find some friendly retail outlets to place four collection boxes.**
- **Hold a "Women's Lunch" where Camphill will make a presentation**
- **Sell Camphill Christmas cards or calendars**
- **Make a donation of gifts, shares or property**
- **Write a cheque for any amount!**
- **There are many more ideas at www.mycharity.ie**

Our team can support you with sponsorship cards collection boxes, tee shirts or vests, DVDs or promotional stands and equipment, letterheads, mailing and an input of time and support from our people.

Please contact Michael Hilary, Camphill Fundraising and PR Group, Greenacres, 1a Farm Park, Dublin 14. 087 2568810, fundraising@camphill.ie www.camphill.ie

A BIG THANK YOU

A big thank-you to the nearly 200 ladies who ran, jogged and walked around Dublin in this years' 10K Flora Women's Mini Marathon on Bank Holiday Monday 6th June. Parents, Siblings, Friends, Co-Workers, and Residents came to Dublin from all 18 Communities in Ireland and supported the Fun Day out, and helped raise over €20,000 for Community Projects.

Thanks also to the Sandymount Hotel who hosted 130 of the runners before and after the event.
We do hope to see you all again (and more) next year, and don't forget to prepare early.

New Minibus for Ballytobin

The Lords Taverners Ireland is a thriving Club and Charity, drawn mainly from the cricketing and entertainment fraternity, supporting disabled young people and those with special needs. Sport and Recreation are essential to its mission, which is to give "a sporting chance to those in need with disabilities." We achieve this by focusing on two key areas by donating….. Minibuses, specially adapted where necessary plus sporting and recreational equipment.

The Lords Taverners envisage a future where all young people irrespective of their background and ability have the everyday opportunity to play competitive sports and enjoy physical activities to the benefit of their self esteem, health, education and future socio-economic potential

Camphill Community Ballytobin is the grateful recipient of this years' Minibus, and the Ballytobin and the local Communities of Callan, Kyle and Grangemockler will all hugely benefit from extra transport opportunities in sport and recreation.

Pupils and Teachers from the integrated Steiner School in Camphill Ballytobin admire the bright new minibus

The Ever Lasting Big Day and Forever Will Be

by Siobhan Humphreys

On Saturday 11th June 2011 Shane and I had our Blessing in Dunshane Hall. Our day was incredible. The weather was lovely and warm. After the ceremony a friend of ours drove us out of the Dunshane grounds in his Jaguar with his wife. When we got back the guests gave us around of applause and cheer as we stepped out of the car. Our Jaguar driver Herbie had a long ribbon especially put on the bonnet.

At our blessing everyone had the best tasting food and free flowing alcohol and minerals. Then after the whole meal Shane and I firstly made a speech about each other followed by Mary Kenny making a speech. We made our own Blessing cake with Katri, Betty and Oona.
The cake had flowers sprinkled on the marzipan icing.

Shane and I had our amazing first dance to a song called From This Moment by Shania Twain. We had a DJ, Mischa from the Bridge Community, playing music. Everyone was dancing and drinking and having a good time. Shane and I really enjoyed our memorable big day.

Shane and Siobhan with the whole Greenacres Community

Camphill time, my prime time

by Khung-Ah *(Co-Worker in Camphill Greenacres)*

Khung-Ah with Andrew

Last winter, it was my last semester and I needed to decide what I will do after that. I wanted to see huge world and live with people from different countries and cultures. And I wanted to grow up myself more, doing something special which can be important for my life. When I was in university, I was interested in helping people. So I searched about volunteering abroad. Finally I found Camphill which is my ideal type of place to volunteer. I imagined working and living together, i.e lifesharing, would be much more fascinating work than other volunteering, as a result, Camphill was exactly what I wanted to do for this year.

Application process was a bit complicated, but I got reply from Greenacres and confirmed to start volunteering from June. In June, I came to Dublin after studying English in Canada for 3 months. My first impression about Dublin was interesting. Low buildings, green tree and grass, lots of Irish pubs which can listen live music and nice street musicians. And my first impression about Camphill was also interesting. Smiling people, candle on the table (It's unusual in Korea!!), Singing and playing music and various workshops. My Camphill, Greenacres is tiny community which has only 6 villagers. So I could get along with them quickly and join various workshops which are cookery, pottery, drama and music. In the beginning of working, it was a bit difficult and I had a pressure that I should do well. But I tried to think positively and co-workers were around me and helped me a lot to settle in this life.

Now I already have been here for 6 months. I think Camphill is the most beautiful place to live together co-operating each other, as a result, I really enjoy living and working together with people here. And I learned lots of useful things for my life and I'm still learning and growing up myself. Also I like to meet people who are in Camphill, so sometimes I join workshops in other communities even on my day-off. Having a time with the people of Camphill is always so nice and also I can make good friends and memories.

Khung-Ah, Andrew, Mary and Tom at Powerscourt

A Day in my Life

I woke up at 7:30. And I joined morning gathering and went shopping to buy some food for the lunch.
Tom chopped vegetables and I cooked them nicely. And we had a big lunch altogether chatting. Everyone complimented and enjoyed my food and I was so happy Then afternoon workshop started and after tea break we went to Deer Park. We picked beautiful falling leaves for decoration of autumn and looked at birds and dogs. Andrew looked up the sky to see airplane and chased the birds, and baby valentine picked small branch and played with that on the grass with smile.

That's a part of my today. It's normal but like a nice drawing picture and what I dreamed before. And I can't and won't forget this beautiful life that spends time in Camphill at my prime age (time) forever.

Camphill Carrick-on-Suir Workshops

Camphill Carrick-on-Suir is a community where people with and without learning disabilities live and work together with a mutual relationship. It was established in 1996 by a group of co-workers from the nearby Grangemockler community and the guiding principle from the beginning was that the community would be formed by the individuals, meeting the diverse needs of all. It's town site has an ideal location, adjacent to the park and Ormond Castle on the river Suir, two minutes walk from the main street. We also occupy an idyllic 13 acre small holding half a mile from the town centre. All the local amenities are therefore available for the 40 plus members of the community. Besides sharing home life, common work activities include all elements of home care life skills, farming and gardening, weaving, basket making, and arts and crafts.

We share our cultural and recreational life to quite an extent with the local communities, pubs, cinemas, swimming pool and library. Music singing and drama are part of our daily life and we are able to give performances to the people in the area either in the local theatre or in our Community.

Pictured below are some of the workshop activities including painting, felt making, mosaics and weaving. We produce rugs and materials for making such as oven gloves, scarves, bags and even tea cosies.

Camphill Community Carrick-on-Suir is at Castle Street, Carrick-on-Suir, County Tipperary. Phone 051 645080. carrick@camphill.ie

Evelyn Morressey from the Journeyman

Jackey Hickey creating a mosaic

Smadar O'Connor and Carol making cards together

Hye Young working on a rug

Belinda concentrating

Maureen

Pamela Byrne at the loom

If you would like to be kept informed about our work and would like to receive subsequent issues of Camphill Spirit in electronic form (pdf), please send your email address to: Michael Hilary (087-256 8810), Camphill Spirit, c/o Camphill Communities, 1a Farmhill Park,Goatstown, Dublin 14, or email to: fundraising@camphill.ie