

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 at 604-732-0633 if you would like to purchase a copy.**

OATMEAL RAISIN COOKIES

makes about 3 dozen cookies

3/4 cup rapadura sugar, or natural evaporated cane sugar
 1/2 cup butter
 1 egg
 1/2 tsp. vanilla
 1 cup whole spelt flour
 1/2 tsp. powder
 1/2 tsp. baking soda
 1/4 tsp. salt
 1 cup organic quick-cooking rolled oats
 1/2 cup raisins (or to taste)
 1/2 cup pecans or sunflower seeds

In a large bowl, combine sugar, butter, eggs and vanilla. Beat well. Stir flour, baking soda, and salt in another bowl and add to the butter mixture. Mix well. Stir in oats, raisins and nuts. Divide dough in half. On waxed paper, shape each half into a roll 1 1/2"-2" in diameter. Wrap and refrigerate for at least 2 hours or until firm.

Heat oven to 375 degrees F. Cut dough into 1/4" slices. Place 2" apart on ungreased cookie sheets. Bake for 8-11 minutes or until golden brown. Immediately remove from cookie sheets.

Note: Substitute half of the nuts with ground sesame and/or flax seeds for more fibre.

ENJOY!

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

All of our anonymous and monthly donors who give with such quiet generosity

Aban Security for their generous support in monitoring our building

Kirsten Anderson for her heartfelt leadership in facilitating the Callanish Writes group

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Suzanne Hong at Granville Island Florists for the beautiful flowers for our retreats

Keep on Swimming and the Brear Family for their continued donations in memory of Ashley Brear

Honoring a Volunteer DYMPCNA DEVLIN



We have been blessed with having Dympna on a number of retreats over the past 4 years. Dympna is a highly qualified palliative care nurse with over 18 years of experience. Each retreat she has devoted a week out of her busy life to help in our kitchen, spending long hours washing pots & pans. Over and above her kitchen contributions, she makes herself available as a nurse when needed. She also has been known to sing songs using her beautiful lilting voice. We are always grateful to have Dympna's help, care and tender Irish heart with us on retreat. Thank you Dympna!

WE REMEMBER WITH LOVE

JOANNE TELFER
 LISABELLA
 WERTH VON DEICHMANN
 KATHERINE BOURKE

We send our love and thoughts to the family members and friends of these truly inspirational people.

Chor Leoni and Diane Loomer for their generosity through the proceeds of their 'Healing Voices' CD

Les Amis du Fromage for their delicious gift of cheese platters for our fundraiser

Michael Luco of Earthrise for the gift of retreat and special event flowers

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Laurel Murphy & Lorna McGhee for the gift of their healing words and sounds for our twice monthly relaxation group

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Callanish Society is a non-profit organization providing retreats for people living with cancer and their families.

Winter 2008
 NEWSLETTER



Marlene Mills

I had never been very brave when it came to exploring the spiritual side of life. I had had a hole in my soul for so long it felt like my significant other. It invaded my entire world, years of days when my insides screamed for something more - like the day I learned my cancer had metastasized. It was the loudest, blackest, longest scream of my life.

I couldn't procrastinate any longer on fixing this hole, I had to take a leap of faith. I had to open myself up to this task, to risk becoming vulnerable now that time was so precious. I so very badly needed to understand what living was all about -

surely the essence of life was not what I had lived so far. I wanted to feel complete - I wanted to find 'IT'.

But I knew this wasn't a journey I could take alone. Where to start? What questions to ask? Connecting with the Callanish community changed my life - I had found a refuge where I didn't feel threatened or scared or judged. Never before could I have imagined opening my heart and trusting my thoughts while exploring ideas of what makes living living and dying dying. Where else could the hole in my soul have morphed into a window into my heart?

Sitting in the wisdom of Callanish circles has profoundly changed the way I view life and death and all things in-between. I am constantly reminded to show up for my life, to keep stepping in and keep asking questions. I understand that light and dark are simply part of living - it's how my spirit copes that's important. Knowing that peace and love can co-exist with the sadness in my heart gives me the strength to meet each day without despair.

I have found a freedom being able to talk about what is and what isn't, about how to live with love and laughter while living in the shadow of dying. I've experienced the generosity and compassion of friends as we dry each other's tears and hold each other's fears, and when we grieve the loss of our friends together - there is a substance to my life now I never thought possible.

I love the words I've learned, the books I've read, the friends I've made and the silence we sit in. Staying committed to finding peace in my heart while staying connected to my life is what I aspire to now. I don't have to be a spiritual superhero.

And I even can feel gratitude for the cancer itself - I'm aware of how precious my life is, it has given me permission to live and love better and to see the important things in life more clearly. In a perfect world I would have reached this state of mind another way but that was not possible. I feel blessed - my life is so much better than it was before cancer.

So while I have doctors who look after my physical health, I now have a community that tends to my spiritual well-being - and for that I will be eternally grateful.



June 2008, Pilgrimage to Callanish

When we were first looking for a name for our Society, we knew only one thing for sure. We did not want to use the word cancer in the name. We have learned that cancer is the name for the physical disease of the body, the diagnosis of which precipitates profound changes in a life, in a family and in a community. How one adapts to these changes, and how one can open to both living and dying is the work of Callanish. Cancer is the access point, but it is the emotional and spiritual work done in our community that brings us home to ourselves.

The name "Callanish" came to us in a rather surprising way. A CD by Jon Mark called "The Standing Stones of Callanish" was given to me by a friend who thought I might like the music. The music was OK but the name "Callanish" grabbed my attention. I liked the sound of the word, as well as the image of a circle of standing stones, in the country of my upbringing, Scotland. It occurred to me that we have been sitting in circles with people for several years, listening to their stories of how it is to live with cancer. We have drawn upon the wisdom of many communities before us, in many different cultures over many centuries, who have created circles to hold stories of pain and struggle, of healing and celebration. The name "Callanish" seemed to be the right one, and was unanimously supported by everyone involved. We took on the name and unbeknownst to me, we also seem to have taken on a specific lineage.

This past summer five Callanish team members (Daphne, Gilly, Gretchen, Maryliz and myself) decided to visit the Callanish standing stones on the Isle of Lewis in Scotland. As plans developed the journey began to feel more like a pilgrimage than a vacation. (A pilgrimage is defined as "a journey of moral significance to a sacred place"). We knew we wanted to take something with us from our community that could be left at the stone circle (had to be biodegradable and light to carry!) On the summer solstice just before we left, a gathering of about 35 Callanish friends ceremonially created a mandala made up of multi-coloured flower petals from peoples' gardens. These petals were then carried with us to Scotland, and offered into the wind one night as the sun was setting over the stones, as a symbol of our gratitude. I wrote this piece to read at the Fall Equinox gathering at Callanish, where we came full circle to share our photos and to tell our stories.

PILGRIMS

One 9-hour plane ride
 Vancouver to London
 Plus one 1-hour plane ride
 London to Glasgow
 Plus one 8-hour car ride
 Glasgow to Ullapool
 on the northwest coast of Scotland.
 With one breakdown
 due to filling a diesel car
 with unleaded gas. Oops!

One 2 and a half hour ferry trip
 from Ullapool to Stornoway,
 across the wild North sea
 to the Isle of Lewis.
 A boatload of drunken,
 accordian-playing Scots lads.
 Greasy fish and chips at the
 Church street chippy on arrival
 "10p for each ketchup"
 the spotty-faced Scot said.
 Ketchup's free in Canada.
 We thought.

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