



Penelope Baring

## A Lifetime with Camphill

The Camphill movement thrives because of individuals coming together to build communities. These communities are brought to life throughout cycles of time. Dedication and inspiration are integral to build a sound foundation that the physical community can grow from. The Camphill movement is fluid and takes shape as those monitoring the structure set forth ideas that will support its growth. Camphill California is lucky to have a very special individual who has dedicated her life to expanding the Camphill philosophy brought

forth by Karl Konig and the teachings of Rudolf Steiner. Penelope Baring has been connected to Camphill California since 2014, but her story with Camphill far precedes that time.

After graduating from University in the 1960s, Penelope Baring decided that instead of taking on a Journalism career and be an onlooker, she wanted to do some good in the world by responding to the needs of society firsthand. She had a friend at a Camphill in Ireland, so she decided to give it a try. "It clicked. I loved being able to throw myself in and not to worry about myself."

Upon deciding that the Camphill movement was her calling, Penelope joined Beaver Run in the 1970s where she would train in Curative Education for 3 years, then went to Ireland to work at Camphill Mourne Grange for 2 more years. She raised her children at Camphill Copake, where Penelope also worked as a householder that served 13 people. In 1988 when a colleague from India expressed a desire to bring the Camphill movement to Asia, Penelope found herself journeying to the East as part of the Asia-Pacific Initiative Group that brought the first Camphill Community to India. She spent 10 years traveling to a different country in Asia every November, on top of being a householder, a mother, and held a leadership role with the Anthroposophical Society.

Penelope underwent a lot of reshuffling throughout the first decade of the 21st century. Being the accomplished woman that she is, it's no surprise that Penelope was offered the position of President of the North American Association. While she started teaching for the Camphill movement in the 1980s, in 2005 Penelope helped transform Anthroposophical education into the Camphill Academy with other members and was a part of the team that introduced Social Therapy training to the movement. She attributes her ability to teach authentically to her time spent working in India, where she gained real life experience outside

of the Western setting.

After traveling throughout the North American region and riding the internal transformations for several years, Penelope finally settled near Camphill California in 2014 with her husband John Baring. Today, she travels to other Camphill communities regularly to teach various courses for the Camphill Academy. When asked about her students, Penelope said "I am very inspired by younger groups. Not just by their practical work, but their ideas of what it means to be a human being."

This past January, Penelope turned 70 years old, and Camphill California is incredibly grateful for her presence and contributions to the community. Thank you for sharing the wonderful person you are with our community, Penelope!

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## Regenerating our Earth Mother with Native Plants

One of the beautiful things about having a unified land base is the opportunity available for the community to help heal the Earth. Naturally, we behold a symbiotic relationship to the land, especially as gardeners and landscapers. Here at Camphill California, then, it's no surprise that the garden crew took on the task of reviving



Native plants in Marimi garden.

the Marimi garden this Spring with California native plants. A gesture to help regenerate the land, incorporating native plants supports the flora's ability to thrive and the land's capacity to flourish rhythmically with its human caretakers.

In 2016, coworkers and friends who work in the Land Crew attended a gardening conference at Camphill Kimberton Hills. Josias, one of the co-leaders of the Marimi garden crew, notably recalls the biodiversity workshops. Since then, he has had a vision of introducing more native plants into the Camphill California land. He was interested not only in how this vision would support and encourage bee populations, but also in attracting other insects to the land and gardens. "Supporting bees during this time is a great thing to be doing, but I also wanted to attract a variety of insects." As winter began its descent and spring unfolded, Josias saw an opportunity to bring his vision to fruition.

"There was a chunk of land on the Marimi property that wasn't being used, so during common work week we dug the side of the property that wasn't being used and got to work." The crew went on a trip to three different nurseries searching for plants that would support a biodynamic and biodiverse vision. For five days, twelve people worked together weeding, digging, mulching, building, seeding, and watering. "It was tons of work and so satisfying. Now we just have to pray that everything comes up," said Josias.

Clara, a new coworker who arrived from Kimberton Hills last month, says how much she enjoys working with the Land Crew. "Josias' passion makes it fun and it's great learning from him."

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### [There's still time to donate.](#)

You can help our community participants reach their goals by donating on their fundraising page. You can either donate directly to an individual or to one of the Camphill California houses. Once you click on one of the houses below, each individual team member will be listed on the right hand column.

[Sunrose](#)  
[Marimi](#)  
[Ishi](#)  
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[Chrysalis](#)

We hope to see you there!

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Camphill California is thriving especially due to the continuous interest and support from you all.  
Thank you so much, we couldn't do it without you!

We have added new items to our [Wishlist!](#)



