

Community Report March 2011

I am writing this report while outside a new afternoon on the farm begins: people are gathering in front of the byre, chatting and laughing and discussing this afternoon's work. How lovely to enjoy the sunshine again and to look at all these bright daffodils on the side of the drive!

Last year's report ended with our wonderful Michaelmas and Harvest meal-celebration and here we are again in, the farmers and gardeners are busy sowing and ploughing and the cooks in the houses enjoy preparing the first lambs-lettuce of the year!

But let's look back at last year's autumn. In October we had a beautiful Greek evening that Lana and Denis prepared out of a wish to share their love for Greece. They prepared an amazing feast for all of us and the hall was turned into a tavern so we all forgot the wetness and cold outside.

We are happy that Hannes , Rike's brother arrived in December to join the Community after having finished his farming training in Germany. Soon after that Advent was approaching, this year rather early. We had a magic snowy morning on the first of Advent and this happened to be the 26th birthday of our Community. We thought it was a good opportunity to look into the future and went to the site of the new farm-shop to get accustomed with the size of the future building.

It was such a joy that there were again so many children coming and enjoying our Advent Garden and its special and peaceful atmosphere. St Nicolas came a little late this year but again a whole flock of children was eagerly waiting for him.

Christmas arrived soon and we had a most beautiful play with a wonderful cast directed by Juliane and Dave. Every year again it makes me laugh and cry because it is such a special event and all the actors are shining so brilliantly and give so much to us. This year it was especially touching because we knew that Bob and Fran's daughter Holly had gone into labour that night and we were all eagerly awaiting the news. And true enough Holly and Christo's Baby Una Derrin was born safely at their home in Northumberland – what a special Christmas gift! The Holy Nights were full with visitors and meeting each other as well as many quiet times because lots of people went on holidays.

We started the New Year in a very exciting way and with many changes. There was a lot of moving going on between St Bride and Stable as many people living in these two houses moved- just Andrew, David and Hannes stayed in St Bride! But it was amazing to see how quickly people settled in and it seemed to have been the right step for everyone. Soon afterwards we welcomed a new member to the Community: Adam, an enthusiastic young man from Cumbria arrived to join Stable Cottage.

For our Candlemas celebration we went in small groups in the evening for a walk guided by candle-light and heard inspiring readings in between until we all met again around a big bon-fire for hot chocolate. It was a peaceful evening and it made us all look forward to the spring and the return of the light.

In the end of February Magdalena left who had been living here for one and a half years and had helped to look after Iona. We wish her all the best for her next step in Germany. And just

after this a new family arrived to join us: Barbara and Willi and their two little sons Emilio and Antonin are now living in Garden Cottage and it is lovely to have this new addition to our lives.

Sadly Steffi who lived in Loch Arthur and worked on the farm now for 5 years left a few weeks ago to try to learn more about working with horses and to do a horse logging course. She will be missed a lot and we wish her good luck and hope for many visits by her and her dog Tosca!

Now it is April already - a time of new life and enthusiasm. There are already 15 lambs on the farm and the garden just got a whole lot of chickens. And the ever growing group of Loch Arthur children is looking forward to another little friend: Christoph and I are expecting a new baby at the end of May.

So I wish you all a lovely spring and summer and let's hope for as much sun as we had snow this winter!

All the best

Susanne