



# NEWSLETTER

AUTUMN 2013

## THE LABYRINTH SOCIETY 15TH ANNUAL GATHERING:

Labyrinths for Global Healing, Landscapes for the Soul  
Vancouver Island, September 16-22, 2013

**T**he labyrinths of Vancouver Island linger in the memory and in the senses. The scent of lavender. The light of the moon and the sound of the waves of Cowichan Bay. Offerings of sunflowers, eagle feathers, pebbles and shells. Luxuriant greenery and open beaches. And always the walking: one foot in front of the other on grass, bark, paver and sand.

Jo Ann Stevenson and I felt strongly that we should support the initiative of Canadian co-chairs, Holly Carnegie Letcher and Janett Etzkorn, as well as bring word of the Labyrinth Community Network to a wider audience. We looked forward to connecting with, and learning from labyrinth devotees from around the world.

We joined two labyrinth pilgrimages, one pre- and one post-conference. Our band of about 30

participants - including Robert Ferre and his wife Linda - travelled from Victoria, where we experienced two labyrinths, to Cowichan Bay. There, on the beach under a full moon, accompanied by chanting and drumming, we helped to inaugurate a new hand-painted community labyrinth. Other pilgrimage highlights included walking the labyrinth at the Damali Lavender Farm, and the healing labyrinth at the O.U.R. Ecovillage. Our thanks go to Holly and Janett, Renee Lindstrom and Patricia Fenske.

The conference itself, held at the spectacular Tigh-Na-Mara Seaside Spa Resort, was intellectually rich and varied. Presenters and registrants came from Scotland, Ireland, Japan, the Netherlands, and many parts of Canada and the United States. We were privileged to hear Dr. Jean Shinoda Bolen share her insights about the labyrinth and the journey of the soul, and her passion for the Millionth Circle project. Session topics ranged from Jim Buchanan's presentation on Projected Light Labyrinths to Jacqueline Gauthier's talk on Therapeutic Applications for Healing.

After the conference, we joined the half-day Peace Pilgrimage bus tour where, on the International Day of Peace, we sang and danced Universal Dances of Peace with Joanne and Richard Sales, and walked the Carpe Diem Labyrinth, created by Holly and children out of hand-painted rocks and sticks.

The sights, sounds, people and labyrinths of Vancouver Island will stay with us, and we remain grateful for the new knowledge and new friendships brought to us through The Gathering.

– CAMILLA GRYSKI

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Photo credit: Camilla Gryski

Beach labyrinth at Tigh-Na-Mara Seaside Spa Resort, Parksville, B.C.

## LABYRINTHS AROUND ONTARIO



Belinda Beer Labyrinth, Kennisis Lake, Haliburton. Petite Chartres design. 7-circuit. 24'x24.' Paint on wooden floor.



Jubilee United Church, Don Mills. Public. Wheelchair accessible. Petite Chartres design. 39-ft. diameter. Patio stone surrounded by trees. Features a burning stone and bubbling water rock.

### WALKING THE CAMINO

In early May, my husband and I joined a group to walk a portion of the *Camino Portuguese*, from Tui in northwest Spain to the Galician city of Santiago de Compostela. To qualify for a Camino certificate, one must walk a minimum of 100 kilometres, and our walk was about 120 kilometres.

On the *Camino*, we stayed overnight in modest hotels, and shared wonderful dinners and camaraderie. Each evening was a Grail gift, with food, drink and company brimming with abundance and grace.

I often thought about the similarities between the *Camino* and the labyrinth, including the meditative quality that walking evokes. And, in an echo of the labyrinth's path, on the *Camino* we often met the same pilgrims each day, but at different stages of the journey. Under the spring sun, we encountered a rich variety of seekers: people walking solo, in pairs and in groups; Portuguese students and Spaniards on bikes; seniors wearing Tilley hats, and German retirees with walking sticks.

When we finally arrived in Santiago, there was a boisterous assembly of pilgrims in the square. The situation allowed me to reflect on

the nature of journeying. I concluded that the centre of the labyrinth is often imbued with imagination and promise, while the journey to other destinations is more about following the path.

– CATHARINE CARROLL

*Though we travel the world over to find the beautiful, we must carry it with us or we find it not.*

- Ralph Waldo Emerson



Photo Credit: Steve Authier

Parkview Village Seniors Residence during the Stouffville Peace Festival 2013.

### LABYRINTH WALK AT STOUFFVILLE PEACE FESTIVAL

After helping to install and dedicate a lovely 7-circuit Circle of Peace Labyrinth at Willowgrove Farm in Markham, Ontario, and attending the Veriditas Facilitator Training with Lauren Artress in June, I suggested to the committee planning the inaugural Stouffville Peace Festival that a Labyrinth Walk would be a great addition to the list of events that were being planned. I said I would be happy to organize it, and in spite of the fact that none of the organizers had walked a labyrinth, they said 'Yes!'

The Peace Festival came about as a response to a local event commemorating the War of 1812 - an event that many in the Mennonite, Brethren in Christ, and Quaker communities felt did not accurately represent the heritage of the founding groups of Whitchurch Stouffville,



Photo credit: Catharine Carroll

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Please share your labyrinth memories with us. We need photos, stories and articles for our website, this newsletter and our Facebook page. labyrinthnetwork @sympatico.ca.



Rural Rootz Nature Reserve, Warton. Rainbow Serpent Labyrinth. Australian aboriginal design. 3-circuits. Exit from the centre. Path of sawdust outlined with different coloured river stones.



Broadview Garden, Ottawa. Private. Classical design. 7-circuits 28'x28.' Mother-of-thyme, lavender and sedum field with pine mulch path. The purple flowering happens for summer solstice and lasts about a month.

*Go lightly, simply. Too much seriousness clouds the soul. Just go and follow the flowing moment. The depths of wonder open of themselves.*

- Frederick Lehrman

who were conscientious objectors to the war. Their descendants continue to work for peace in this community and around the world.

The Labyrinth Walk, using the 36' Chartres style canvas labyrinth rented from the Labyrinth Community Network, was held in the auditorium at Parkview Village Seniors Residence, and was open to the general public. About 30 people representing a wide range of ages and backgrounds participated, including several seniors.

As part of the Peace Festival, it was noted that peace happens on many levels, whether in our own lives, in our families, communities, and nations. The labyrinth can be a resource for fostering peace at all of these levels.

The response to the labyrinth was overwhelmingly positive. Labyrinth walkers shared their experiences: "Amazing." "Who knew that lines painted on a piece of canvas could have such an impact." "A humbling experience to know the path we walked is shared by so many others trying to connect with God." "Tranquil after a busy day." "A great metaphor for the spiritual life. I feel centred and strengthened for whatever 'turns' may come on the path ahead."

- JOYCE TURMAN



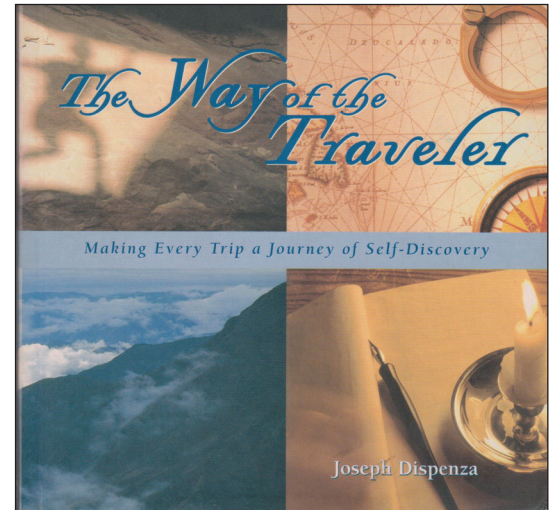
Virginia Vianna Garden Labyrinth, Mississauga. Pebbles and moss. Canine labyrinth enthusiast is Amber, a 3-year old mini dachshund.

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Photo credit: Virginia Vianna

### *The Way of the Traveler: Making Every Trip a Journey of Self-Discovery*

By Joseph Dispenza. Avalon Travel Publishing, 2002.



"The real voyage of discovery lies not in discovering new lands, but in seeing with new eyes," said Marcel Proust in his book *The Remembrance of Things Past*.

Joseph Dispenza, in his small book *The Way of the Traveler*, explores this truth by comparing travel to the journey we take on the labyrinth - the preparation, the discoveries on the journey itself, and the completion - homecoming - and the lessons learned.

Dispenza, who is very familiar with labyrinths, reminds us that we need to share not only the tales of our travels, but also the insight and truths we have learned during our voyage. Every traveller brings back his own lesson, and in some manner every traveller brings back the same lesson, which is self-discovery.

- Reviewed by JOAN D. CLAYTON

If you have a canvas labyrinth for sale, please contact [labyrinthnetwork@sympatico.ca](mailto:labyrinthnetwork@sympatico.ca)



## CANCER SURVIVORS GARDEN, LONDON

The Cancer Survivors Garden began with an email from Mary Coulter, a local cancer survivor. She suggested that creating a positive space, focused on healing and celebrating the multitudes of survivors would be beneficial to those facing a cancer diagnosis. The idea grew as the London Home Builders' Association became involved and thanks to the generosity of its members, the garden was completed in the spring of 2012.

A labyrinth was added to the plan upon the initial suggestion of Leslien Walters, a nurse at the local hospital. She described the benefit of mindful-walking meditation, and how this addition to the plan would truly enhance the design and usefulness of the project.

Upon opening the garden, a series of words of reflection were placed to mark the occasion. The words are: Believe, Bravery, Courage, Faith, Hope, Journey, Love, Optimism, Prevail, Strength, Triumph, and Victory. A granite centre stone featuring the garden's "High Five" inspired logo is at the centre.

The Labyrinth was made possible through a donation from the Sifton Family Foundation. This partnership between the London Home Builders' Association and the City of London

*We shall not cease from  
exploration  
And the end of all our  
exploring  
Will be to arrive where we  
started  
And know the place for the  
first time.*

- T. S. Eliot



Photo credit: Sarah Lynn Hawley

was supported by the Canadian Cancer Society: Fields of Gold with over 25,000 daffodils blooming each spring.

– SARAH LYNN HAWLEY

## From the President

This past year, our small Labyrinth Community Network committee took on the large task of hosting the Rev. Dr. Lauren Artress for a three-day program in June. Grateful is the word that comes to mind when looking back on this accomplishment.

Gratitude for Lauren herself, her willingness to come to Toronto, and for her deep interpersonal abilities, amplified in her labyrinth work.

Gratitude for our committee, holding the intention to achieve such a program, and gratitude to our members, who used their influence to reach others who would value Lauren and her work.

Gratitude to Islington United Church for the gracious welcoming space, and to the team ministry: Rev. Linda Wheler, office manager Carol Bennett, and Isla Grady and her hospitality team.

How could we not have experienced resounding success? There were 54 participants in the one-day workshop, and 33 people who took the Veriditas facilitator training, 19 from the Greater Toronto area. We expect to hear more from these new labyrinth friends.

Thank you to Camilla for being registrar; to Maureen as sales table co-coordinator; Lois for contact lists and background organization; Kathryn for marketing and publicity; Joan for attention to



Photo credit: Camilla Gryski

Walkers at Toronto Public Labyrinth following the lecture given by Rev. Dr. Lauren Artress, June 19, 2013.

details while holding the overall picture; John Joseph for being church liaison; Lori for physical on site help and Facebook presence; Brenda for background support and managing sales tables; Mike Franklin for his on-site help and ongoing commitment to music at Toronto Public Labyrinth; Anne for her supportive presence; Virginia for providing signage, transporting the labyrinths and laying them down.

Please save the date Saturday June 21st, 2014 for our one-day workshop for the participants of our program this past June. Location will be the Islington United Church.

– JO ANN STEVENSON

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