

Camphill is celebrating 80 years with conference

Two Camphill communities in Hermanus have been selected as hosts of the International Camphill Dialogue 2020 Conference, taking place from Monday 16 March to Friday 20 March.

One of the keynote speakers will be Christo Brand, who was Nelson Mandela's warder while Mandela was incarcerated both on Robben Island and at Pollsmoor prison in Cape Town. Christo's values, instilled in him by his parents and enhanced through his relationship with Mandela, mirror the Camphill values in so many ways; values such as the fundamentals of respecting and accepting each human being, regardless of race, culture, political persuasion, sexual orientation or disability.

Camphill, as an international movement, is celebrating its eightieth anniversary. Camphill was established in Aberdeen, Scotland, to work with those in need of special care and continues to provide for the educational and social needs of children and adults with a diverse range of disabilities.

The essence of Camphill is to provide an environment and way of life where children, young people and adults diagnosed with a learning or intellectual disability, can live and work together in a mutually supportive and safe community environment. Today, the worldwide Camphill Movement

comprises in excess of 5 000 people, living and working together in over 100 Camphill communities or settings, in 20 countries around the world.

Camphill School Hermanus (established in 1952) and Camphill Farm Community Hermanus (established in 1978) are two such Camphill communities supporting children and adults both from the local Overstrand communities and further afield, all of whom have intellectual and physical disabilities of a varying nature.

The three core programmes at the school include specialised education, support and several therapeutic interventions. The children are collected on a daily basis from Hermanus and the surrounding impoverished communities such as Mount Pleasant, Zwelihle and Hawston, and dropped off at their respective homes, after school, in the afternoons. The residents at Camphill Farm Community live together in group homes that operate as family units where they live in an inclusive manner as equals, together with support staff and volunteers.

For more information about the conference, contact Jeanne-Marié Botha (Camphill School Hermanus principal) or Sam Hodson (executive manager of Camphill Farm Community Hermanus) on dialogue2020@camphill-hermanus.org.za.