

CAMP HILL VILLAGE
KIMBERTON HILLS

NEWS

Fall 2023



• [Our Dairy History](#) • [Meet Jess and Tom](#) •

“We continue mourning but celebrating Eva and the life she lived with you. She was fortunate to have the support your community provided. We are more than grateful for the transition Camphill provided to Eva as well to all of us, surrounding Eva with love and song and providing such extraordinary hospitality to us all. You’ve taught us a new way to pass on from life. ”

From Eva’s sister Judy

Memorial Gathering for Eva Herz

Sunday, November 19th



Life Cycles

By Felicity Jeans, Executive Director

The nights become longer and days are cooler; the changing light of fall brings us an inward mood with an edge of melancholy amid courage for the future.

Our harvest festival was a lovely continuing celebration of life here in Camphill Village Kimber-ton Hills, with local food, speakers, musicians, crafts people and dancing in the rain under a big tent. We recently welcomed crafters from the North American Camphills to a large conference, and also those involved in studying anthropo-sophic psychology. Rose Hall continues to be an important venue for many concerts and other events for the local community and beyond.

We are reminded how blessed we are in this amazing community surrounded by people who care about the earth and relate to each other with dignity and respect.

These qualities are ever apparent in honoring an individual in their passing from this earthly life. Our dear friend Eva Herz crossed the threshold unexpectedly from natural causes at the Phoenixville hospital, accompanied by her family. She had lived in Kimber-ton Hills almost fifty years. She was returned to Kimber-ton Hills where, with the ongoing loving support of her family and friends, she was celebrated and buried.

The project we are engaged in for our dairy is an indication of our continuing commitment to the people, land, animals and way of life we uphold here in Kimber-ton Hills. As ever, we send our love and appreciation to those of you who support us in so many ways.

From the Development Office

By Robert Martin

Fernanda, Amanda and I are excited to be working on events, both new and familiar. Our Harvest Festival, held on September 23, was a joyous occasion (despite the rain!). Our own community and many from the surrounding area enjoyed dancing to the music of three different bands and lunching on food from our own farm and dairy. The afternoon ended with the launch of the Dairy Renovation Fund campaign, featuring remarks from Chester County Commissioner Marian Moskowitz. We also celebrated Friends and Family Day on October 7, our annual eagerly anticipated opportunity to connect with loved ones from near and far.

Looking to the future, we’re planning a series of small events in the Café, including the Valentine dinner in February and pre- and post-concert events in the Spring. Plans are already underway for a major fundraising Farm-to-Table dinner in the Fall of 2024. Stay tuned for more details. We are looking forward to seeing you all!

Volunteer opportunities

for short term coworkers

(live-in volunteers)

[Click here to know more](#)



Get to know our farmers

By Sherry Wildfeuer

Tom Trczinski grew up in urban Wilmington, Delaware. He first heard of biodynamics in a sustainable agriculture elective while in college at Penn State. On his first apprenticeship in a garden in Vermont, he participated in a study group on biodynamics, and read about our farm “in the rolling hills of Chester County.” Drawn to be nearer to his family, he moved here and worked under Steven Clee on the dairy. In 2007, having finished four years of apprenticeship, he was ready to take on the journeyman phase of his training, and spent a year in New Zealand. Next, he came back to work on several farms in the Northeast US and settled down in Maine, where he created a micro-dairy (with 6 cows) for a CSA run by someone who had been a coworker in Kimberton Hills years before. Then he received a call from Steven asking him to consider coming back because we needed a dairy farmer.

Jess Trczinski studied public health at Stockton University in New Jersey, imagining to become a physical therapist. Her main motive was to be able to help people. A college friend was a coworker here and thought this would be the perfect place for Jess. So she visited on a festival day, worked in the garden and was deeply moved by meeting the people, especially Ben Simenhof. All her life she had been drawn to gardening, so she applied to be a garden intern. Wishing then to stay for a whole year, she then began to work full-time on the dairy, where she fell in love with the cows and Tom. Only later did she learn that her paternal great grandparents had been dairy farmers! Jess wanted to learn more about biodynamics and enrolled in and completed the two-year North American Biodynamic Apprenticeship Program, working one year in the CSA and one year at the dairy. After that, she sought answers to her questions about grazing in the Dairy Grazing Apprenticeship Program run by the Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture.

In 2018 Tom and Jess decided to run the farm together. They married in 2019, and little Olive joined the family in 2021.

Their vision is to bring added value to the milk by selling it as bottled raw milk, and making cheese. By cutting out all grain supplements, we have a 100% grass fed dairy herd, and we maintain Biodynamic Demeter certification. They also instituted the practice of keeping the calves with their moms for up to 100 days. Jess learned cheese-making from Sue Miller, who rented our cheese house, and then took a course in Vermont.

Our farm is for people who want to develop useful skills. Mark Combrinck-Hertz is our barn master, taking over from Larry Adler (both pictured on the cover). Alex Bauers is also on the team. They help move the animals and sometimes help with deliveries. Wes Keller is great with routine. He helps with bottling and other tasks. Michael Weinstock tends to the farm landscape, making it beautiful and orderly.

Training is a major part of their work. New people come every year, and it is inspiring to see them grow into real responsibility. Young people gain skills for life, whether or not they continue their path in agriculture.

Tom and Jess are deeply grateful that people find it important enough to support the building of the new housing for the cows. It will be spacious enough to fit all the animals, will have great air flow and a convenient manure stacking area, and will bring efficiency and harmony to all who work on the farm as well.

The history of our cows!

1770

First record:
John Melchior
3 cows

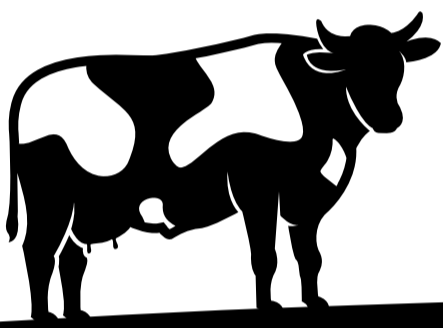
1826

Abraham Knerr
builds barn near CSA



1873

Heckel Barn



1940

Alarik and Mabel Pew Myrin
purchased the land for
biodynamic farming

Dairy gains profitability due to
increased biodynamic practices

1972

Karin Myrin gifted
the land to CVKH 70
Guernsey dairy cows

Late 1980s

Focus on smaller herd,
entirely grass fed

Late 1990s

herd increased
to 40 cows

2023

total of 80 cows and
Dairy Renovation!



Cows at Camphill

By Sandy Bardsley



Reverence for the land binds us closely to our history at CVKH. We share with the Leni Lenape an emphasis on sustainability and gratitude. The first records of cattle come from 1770, when John Melchior owned three cows. A few decades later, Abraham Knerr built a large barn – still standing next to our new CSA building – to house dairy cows and crops. Further up the hill, a second dairy barn was built in the late nineteenth century by Edward Bowers Heckel. In the 1940s, these farms and others were purchased by Alarik and Mabel Pew Myrin and combined into one entity. Alarik Myrin introduced some principles of biodynamic agriculture thirty years before we became a Camphill. Myrin invited Ehrenfried Pfeiffer, a student of Rudolf Steiner knowledgeable in biodynamic agriculture, to join him. Together, they managed both the 400 acres of the Myrin estate south of French Creek (which form most of our lands today) and a similar acreage to the north (which briefly became the Kimberton Farms Biodynamic Agricultural School and is now Kimberton Waldorf School and Seven Stars Dairy Farm). Pfeiffer pioneered biodynamic farming in the United States, and Kimberton briefly became the headquarters of the Biodynamic Farming and Gardening Association and its journal. Myrin continued his interest in biodynamics after Pfeiffer moved north but found skeptics among his neighbors and employees. In 1972, through the gift of Karin Myrin, Alarik's granddaughter, the estate became Camphill Village Kimberton Hills. It came with a resident farmer and a herd of 70 Guernsey dairy cows. Commercial fertilizers were still used on parts of the farm, however, and one of the tasks of the new Camphill Village was to shift entirely to biodynamic methods.



Exploration and negotiation characterized the early years of farming at CVKH. Coworkers explored different markets (wool, lamb meat, vegetables, raw milk) and methods of administration. In the 1980s, the dairy cost more than it earned. Over the next decade, it regained profitability by focusing on a smaller herd (23-25 cows) and relying on grass rather than machine-based grain feeding systems. As the dairy gained financial self-sufficiency, the herd was increased to 40 cows in the late 1990s. Today, we run 40 milking cows, along with calves and a bull. Minutes of Land Group meetings dating back decades make it clear, however, that the dairy has always been about far more than numbers. We have long taken notice of the labor of people, wellbeing of animals and soil, need for sustainability, and responsibility to preserve wild areas. Commitment to integration within the local community has driven CVKH's cooperation with multiple organizations beyond the village, especially Seven Stars Dairy and Kimberton Whole Foods. In the past, excess milk was processed into cheese by cheesemakers beyond the village; now, we produce a range of cheeses onsite. Recently, the market for raw milk has flourished, and the flexibility of the dairy and strength of community connections have made it possible to meet this interest.



Dairy renovation fund

The campaign to Make it happen

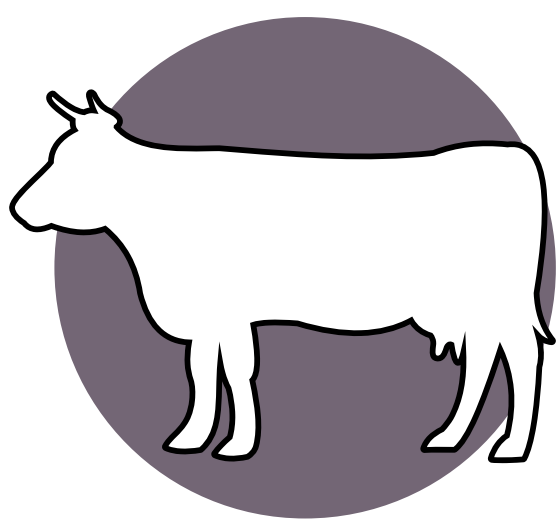
The Camphill Village Kimberton Hills dairy is recognized as a treasure of our community. The cows are beloved. Each has a name. They are allowed to keep their horns. Each year, when spring comes, the village gathers early in the morning, decorates the fences, and watches eagerly as the cows, some also festooned with flowers, are let out into pasture, leaping and frolicking. This truly beautiful scene is a treasured moment at CVKH.

The Need

We saw that major renovation was needed because:

- The 40 year-old structures were in danger of collapsing.
- The safety and well-being of the cows and the dairy crew were at risk.
- Manure runoff posed environmental hazards.
- Potential for increased profitability was hampered.

The Plan



PHASE 1

A new shed! | Cool in summer, warm in winter.

Phase one is well underway!

Est. cost \$755,500



PHASE 2

Redesign of milking parlor.

Improved safety and hygiene.

Est. cost \$583,000



PHASE 3

New storage and marketing facility.

Better customer experience!

Est. cost \$320,000

SO FAR
RAISED
\$550,715



**WE STILL NEED
\$1,107,785**

Contribute at www.camphillkimberton.org



Why Give?

Because Camphill Village Kimberton Hills is the way the world could be.

Recommended options for directing your support:

Unrestricted gifts (Villager Support Fund)

Flexibility to use the funds where they are most needed.



The Master Plan Fund

Supports new buildings, major renovations, and infrastructure upgrades.



Dairy Renovation Fund

Supports the renovation project.

For other options check our website

Click here to contribute

Ways to give

- Credit card contribution at our website.
- A check addressed to Development, CVKH, P. O. Box 1045, Kimberton, PA 19442.
- Stocks or securities transfer, call Robert Martin at 1-610-0300 Ext 11 to arrange.
- Include CVKH in your will or living trust, charitable remainder trust, charitable lead trust, or other planned giving instrument. Call Robert Martin to discuss.
- Select CVKH in your Donor Advised Fund.
- Make CVKH a beneficiary in your life insurance policy.

**GIVING
TUESDAY**

Join us on **November 28** for the International Day of Giving

**Know more on our website
www.camphillkimberton.org**



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www.camphillkimberton.org

**VISIT OUR
CRAFT SHOP**
Monday - Friday
9 AM - 5 PM
Weekends by
Appointment

SANKANAC CSA
Harvesting
May-November



**CAMPBILL
CAFÉ**
**Re-opening on
November 15**

Wednesdays
and Thursdays
10am to 2pm