

**COOKING PORRIDGE @ Schumacher College**

Evelyn Roe, 23 January 2014

Cooking porridge by candlelight, as the early-morning meditators drift in for breakfast, is my favourite way to start the day at Schumacher College. In these quiet moments, the fridge in the snack area can be heard breathing gently, while the shiny new toaster sits silently grinning, awaiting a feast of sourdough bread. The clock-hands move towards 8.30 and the rest of the students tumble in, grabbing teas and coffees as the gong signals the morning meeting. A pause.



Who has a reading? Maybe we'll share Mary Oliver's *Wild Geese*, the last few lines of which read:

*"Whoever you are, no matter how lonely,  
the world offers itself to your imagination,  
calls to you like the wild geese, harsh and exciting,  
over and over announcing your place in the family of  
things."*

This is a place where we can feel 'in the family of things'. The spirit of the college rests where we gather, in the cool peacefulness of the main hall, to bring attention to the presence of the day and of each other.

Today, the Sustainable Horticulture students are working on artistic presentations of their choice of plant, which they've been studying using Goethe's phenomenological approach. Usually a relaxed, comfy sort of group, they have become temporarily separate entities, holding books, laptops, and ideas close to their chests, as they approach the time for sharing their heartfelt experiences.

Composer and philosopher David Rothenberg is with Holistic Science and Economics students, playing clarinet and experimental sound-recordings of birdsong and whale music, tendrils of technology reaching into the living sound-scape in an exploration of 'Mind and Nature'.

And, by the time the home-made biscuits have been put out at coffee-time, the porridge pot has been cleaned, ready for the oats to be soaked overnight.

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