

## Installation of Healing Artwork

As in every community where sexual abuse has occurred, there are always voices pleading that we should put the dark history of Dick Wichman's sexual abuse behind us. But his victims also remind us that we are called as an institution to be vigilant and to *remember* it, so that such abuse will never happen here again. After the first community Healing Workshop in 2005, one participant wrote:

*I've been feeling that something that may facilitate healing further, as well as a way of transforming people's pain is to have a symbol for what happened to the Cameron House community. I was thinking about something akin to the AIDS quilt or a book of poetry/writing or even a film that tells the truth and story of the decades of abuse. Re: the quilt, I feel it could be a powerful symbol of survival and pays tribute to the magnitude of the injury and energy that this abuse took from Cameron House. One can display the quilt at Cameron House or even a big picture to transform and cleanse the painful memories there. Perhaps a tapestry or something. One thing that one person mentioned in my small groups was that a lot of invisible victims have not been identified and that there needs to be more publicity so that these victims are aware and can visibly see that Cameron House is actively working on healing.*

The spark of this idea early in the healing process led ultimately in 2012 to "healing artwork" being installed to a permanent place in the Cameron House chapel and dedicated at a community celebration on October 14, 2012. The artwork took the form of a bronzed sculpture and poetry banners which had been created by Noël Chun, a survivor who had been among the first to publicly disclose Wichman's abuse in 1987. This healing artwork was originally Noël's own personal expression of his healing journey, but was later purchased by Cameron House to be a visible, symbolic reminder of the trauma of the sexual abuse that occurred there and to highlight the possibility of healing when a community is willing to name and confront evil. Noel also said the bronze sculpture and two poems were to commemorate the Survivors & Thrivers Group's 10-year journey toward healing together.

Noël's two poems, *Stepping out of our Darkness, Into our Light* and *In the Light* are printed on two opaque banners that fill two large windows in the chapel and can be read below. This healing artwork are visible signs and symbols of Cameron House's commitment to continue on the healing road for the sake of the survivors, victims, their families and future generations. As youth, alumni and visitors enter the chapel, the artwork prevents anyone from forgetting what happened, yet also inspires conversations to liberate each one of us from darkness into the light.

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## In the Light

*By Noel Chun*

We have traveled for many years  
With the Truth unspoken.  
We would gather in Sanctuary,  
Divided by walls of Silence.  
Unknowingly paralyzed  
By our fears.

Then the Angels came,  
and brought Light into  
Our Shadows,  
And  
Our Fears released us.

And with new eyes and minds  
Unfrozen,  
We saw our wounds  
Hiding behind fear and pain.  
And Our Community  
Divided,  
**By Silence, In Silence, With Silence.**

Walls of Silence with  
Truths unspoken.  
Walls of Silence, with  
Justice not given.  
Walls of Silence, with  
Our Community broken.  
We were afraid of losing our stories!  
We were afraid to speak our stories!  
**Afraid!... Blind!... Paralyzed!**

Then the Angels,  
Brought calm to us,  
With the loving kindness of  
Healing and Reconciliation.  
And as a Community,  
Divided for so many years,  
We embraced  
**Truth and Forgiveness,**  
**Healing and Reconciliation.**

We have traveled for many years,  
The Truth now spoken.  
And no longer living with fear,  
We can choose to be,  
Angels, In The Light...be  
Angels, In The Light...be

*IN THE LIGHT*

# *Stepping out of our Darkness, Into our Light*

We traveled many moons together!  
In a holy sanctuary we gather,  
Shaking in angst, and fear, and hope,  
We step ahead into the unknown,  
Stepping out of our darkness, into the light!!

**LIGHT...TIME...TRUTH...FREEDOM,  
IT IS OUR MOMENT!!!**

Stepping ahead into the light,  
We opened our hearts to minds final open.  
In anger, with tears, we shared our pain... our sorrow.  
We released our stories from their hiding places,  
So the truth could be heard.  
We shared our tears, so the truth might be heard.  
We opened our souls,  
So opened hearts might listen and hear,  
And the truth would be heard!

Commonweal brings us together again.  
Near the sea, it is a place for healing.  
We listen to the silence of the stars,  
And sounds of the ocean and wind.  
We are consoled by the dark night sky  
And millions of twinkling stars.  
Our hope is to continue our journey,  
Stepping out of our darkness, into the light.

An Angel nourishes us with veggies and haiku.  
Satsuki, spirit healer, helps us heal our souls.  
Karma brought her to us  
Through wind and clouds, on rays of the sun  
With her open hands, she helps us  
Step out of our darkness to find our light.

Twenty four hands, with fingers digging deeply,  
Pry open the doors that have imprisoned our pain.  
Heavy doors, with rusted hinges, resisted being opened.  
As one, we break open the seals to our darkness  
And let in the light!

The cords for community grows.  
The ocean brings calm in a sea of turmoil.  
We learn of each other's pain  
And we listen... to the tears falling in our hearts.  
Wretched anger, tares of pain, tears of sorrow,  
Falling on our scars to open old wounds  
And release demons imprisoned in our souls.  
Our spirits freed,  
We step out of our darkness, into our light!

The effigy we mold is an image of our pain.  
Laughter rings as we give shape to our demon.  
Then silence as we feel.  
The tears, are falling quietly in our hearts.

We are going to the ocean to burn our demon  
And free our spirits.  
It is a long cold walk  
The wind chills us as the sun is setting.

There is silence as the demon warms us as it burns  
With the notes we have written to bring us  
Out of our darkness and into our light!

We have traveled many moons together!  
In a holy sanctuary we gather,  
Shaking in angst, and fear, and hope,  
We step ahead into the unknown,  
Stepping out of our darkness, into our light!!