



BAHÁ'Í JOURNAL

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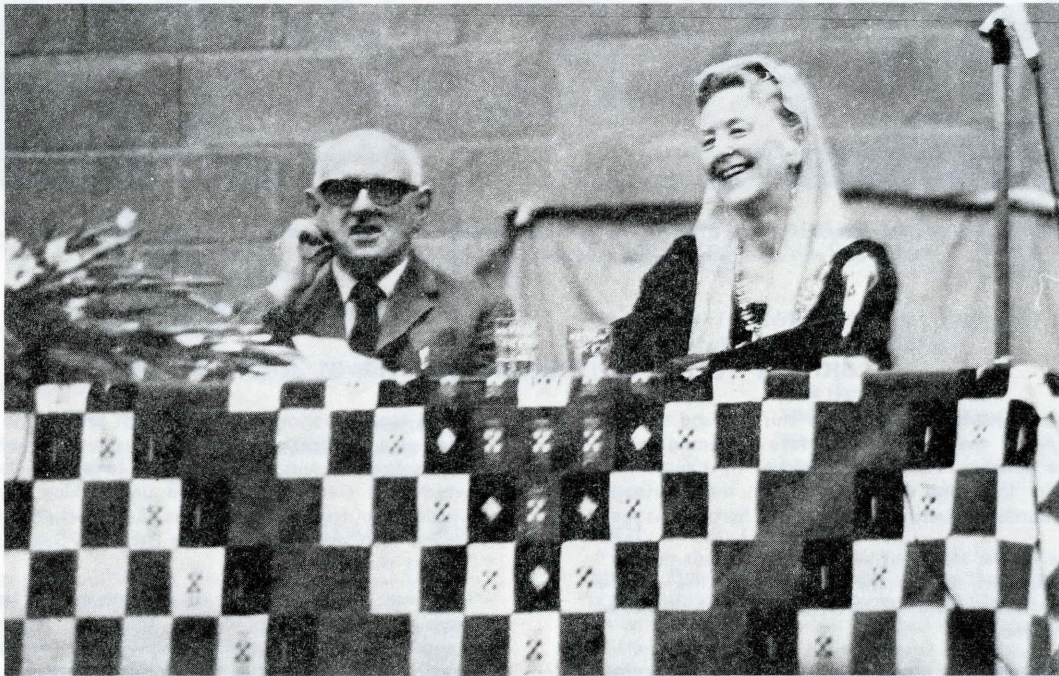
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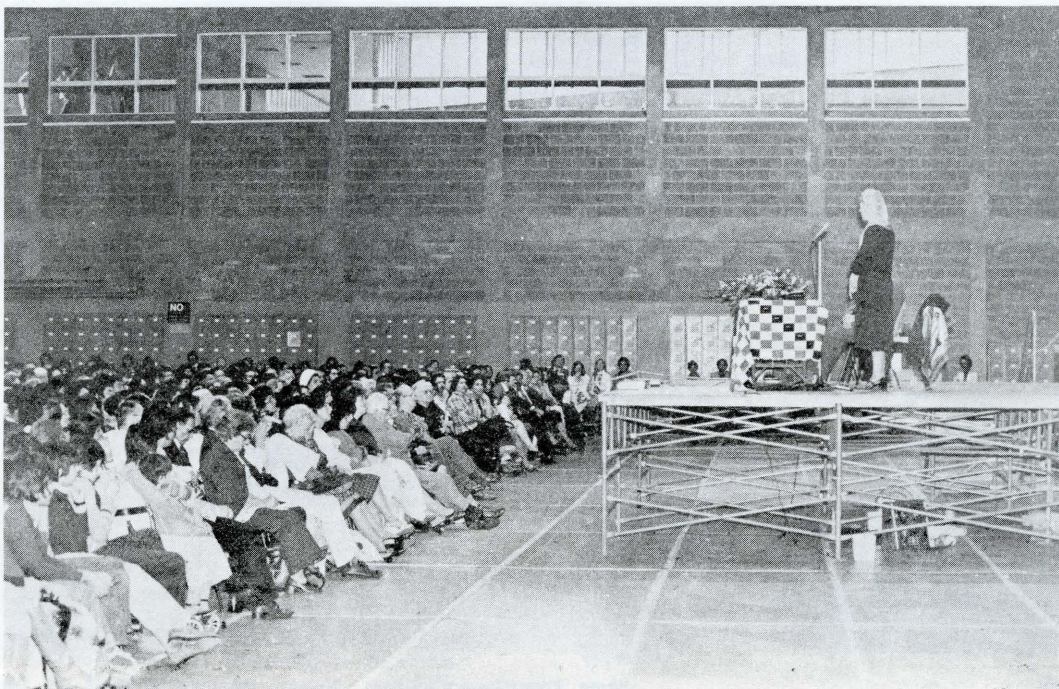
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October 1977

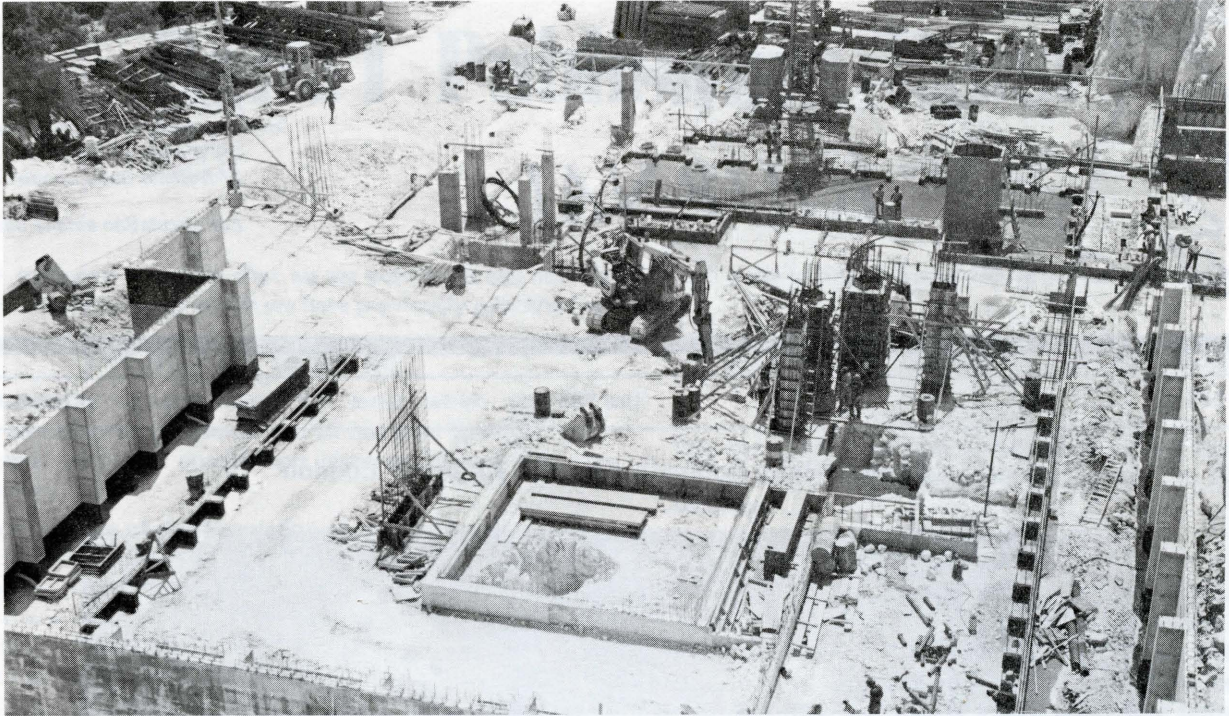
Amatu'l-Bahá Ruhíyyih Khánúm speaks in London



Ruhíyyih Khánúm with John Long, National Assembly Chairman



A section of the thousand people who attended the meeting held at Picketts Lock, London, to hear Ruhíyyih Khánúm



General view of the construction area of the Universal House of Justice building, showing the upper basement in the foreground and the lower basement beyond, looking toward the east. June 21, 1977.

BRITISH YOUTH IN LANGENHAIN (17–31 JULY)

A group of twelve youth, aged between thirteen and twenty, spent a fortnight of their summer holidays gardening in the grounds of the Mother Temple of Europe, in Langenhain, Germany. Despite the damp and dull weather, the self-named "Weedflowers" battled bravely to vanquish the herbaceous foes.

The significance of the House of Worship as a "silent teacher" became very apparent to us; the people who live in the proximity all know the word "Bahá'í", even if they do not as yet appreciate its meaning.

This was the second such group (the first being in Summer 1975), who had gone to Germany for this purpose. However, at the suggestion and with the assistance of the German National Spiritual Assembly, four of the party managed to

travel teach during the latter half of the trip, in the important goal area of Saarland, which is close to the French border. The splinter group assisted in the large scale teaching project which the German youth are undertaking this summer, by visiting the towns of Saarlouis, Saarbrücken and Homburg; a young man declared himself a Bahá'í in Saarlouis the day we arrived there.

We were all greatly touched and moved by the warmth and hospitality shown to us by the dear German friends in Langenhain and wherever else we visited. The group benefitted greatly from being able to pray and meditate in the Temple each day; hence, arrived back in England weary, but spiritually enriched by our experiences.

Ruhiyyih Haqjoo



Some "Weedflowers"

THE FUND

Ways of making contributions to the Funds.

1. Directly (by cheque or postal order) to the National Treasurer:—

**Mrs Betty Goode,
8 Knowle Road,
Stafford ST17 0DN
Tel: Stafford 62157**

2. By Bank Giro directly to the bank which is:—

**The National Westminster Bank Ltd.,
186 Brompton Road,
London SW3**

Our account number is **18188443**

3. By Post Office Giro. Our number is **43 301 4008**

4. The Capital Projects Fund is in a separate account:—

**The National Westminster Bank Ltd.,
186 Brompton Road,
London SW3**

Account number **18188648**

POINTS WHICH ARE IMPORTANT

- A All cheques no matter for which Fund should be made payable to **"NSA OF THE BAHÁ'ÍS"** (please **NOT** to Betty Goode).
- B They should be 'crossed'.
- C It is unwise to send paper money or any money through the post unless it is registered.
- D Receipts are only sent if the donation is accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope.
- E It is still cheaper to make Post Office Giro payments than to buy postal orders.
- F Friends wishing to donate by Deed of Covenant, please write directly about it to the National Treasurer.

NOTICES**BIRTHS****MARRIAGES**

24 June 1977:

7 July 1977:

28 July 1977:

29 July 1977:

6 August 1977:

Deborah Kyne to Ian Burnett, in Canterbury.
Isobel Harper to Amid Khoshbin, in Swansea.
La'al Fekri to Samir Delshad (of Liverpool), in Kuwait.

Nushin Nikompour to Mehran Nakhjavani, in London.

Shiva Shirinzadeh to Trevor Finch, in Crawley.

DEATH

24 September 1977: Lady Kathleen Hornell, in London.

DEADLINE: As the Bahá'í Journal must now await distribution with the first available Newsletter, would the friends please note that there will now be a regular deadline date — six weeks before the first day of the month in which it is scheduled for publication — as follows:

February issue	— deadline —	15 December
April		15 February
June		15 April
August		15 June
October		15 August
December		15 October

Please send **TYPEWRITTEN** copy (**PLEASE**) and black and white glossy photographs to the Editor:

**Lois Hainsworth (Mrs)
136 Thurlow Park Road,
West Dulwich,
London SE21**

ORKNEY ISLANDS SUMMER SCHOOL 9–23 JULY 1977

The first Summer School in the Orkney Islands began when over forty Bahá'ís from the North, South, East and West arrived in Kirkwall; North from the Shetlands, South from Rhodesia, East from Pakistan and West from the U.S.A. they came.

The wonderful spirit engendered by the friends very quickly spread to those around us and many opportunities to teach our beloved Faith came our way. An indication of the impression given by this gathering was a letter sent to us during the school, addressed to "Monastery of Tranquility, Orkney Islands". The GPO were at a loss to know where to deliver this and wrote on the envelope "Try Bahá'í Summer School at School Hostel, Kirkwall"! A group of archaeologists joined us for ten days of our stay in the Hostel and shared our meals with us, giving an ideal opportunity to proclaim the Name of Bahá'u'lláh. Publicity was given to the Summer School by the local radio station when Auxiliary Board Member Betty Shepherd was interviewed and the local newspaper, "The Orcadian", gave a report about the forthcoming public meeting, when National Assembly member Joe Foster was to speak on the subject "A new concept — the earth is but one country and mankind its citizens." The Orkney Assembly sent out two thousand invitations and although the islanders did not respond, a tremendous amount of proclamation was achieved. This completed a proclamation project to reach every household in Orkney with Bahá'í literature and an invitation to a meeting.

The truly spiritual series of lectures and workshops arranged for us were further enhanced when Counsellor Betty Reed flew in after attending the Scandinavian Summer School in Sweden. She brought to us fantastic teaching plans which are to be launched in Europe — the future being NOW!! A call was made to the believers in the United Kingdom to move to the continent on extended travel-teaching projects.

We were delighted to have the opportunity of meeting our National Spiritual Assembly Chairman John Long for the whole of the School and our National Spiritual Assembly Secretary

Enayat Rawhani, who joined us for the second week. Also present during the first weekend was Mr Steffen Rasmussen with his wife and mother-in-law who had come from Denmark where Steffen is a member of their National Assembly.

The children were well catered for; they had their own room where they had lessons, songs, dances and rehearsals for several plays which they presented to the adults. The weather for most of the time was so good that they were able to spend a great deal of time on the beach, the swing park and children's playground situated on the school campus. Other diversions included the gymnasium, swimming pool, putting green, table tennis and badminton. There were also two colour television sets, but no-one had the time nor inclination to watch them!

One evening a barbecue on Scapa beach was enjoyed by everyone and a coach tour was arranged during the first week to take us to visit local places of interest, including "Scara Brae", "The Standing Stones" and "Maeshowe", made famous by a recent television programme about the islands by Magnus Magnusson. During the second week there was a boat trip to the island of Shapinsay, where it was shown that even apples and pears could be grown in this northern climate!

The friends were all pleasantly surprised at the excellent and comfortable facilities — not at all one's concept of a "hostel". There were parquet floors, showers, baths, spin-driers and ample food, plus the natural beauty of the islands and views from the hostel, which all helped to make this both a restful holiday and a spiritual experience to remember. It is hoped that this will be the first of many such schools in Orkney.

Our loving greetings were sent to the Universal House of Justice exhorting their prayers at the Sacred Shrines for the success of the School and the spread of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh in these lovely islands of the north.

Expressions of sincere thanks must go to the Orkney friends for all their efforts in making this school a truly joyous and spiritual occasion.

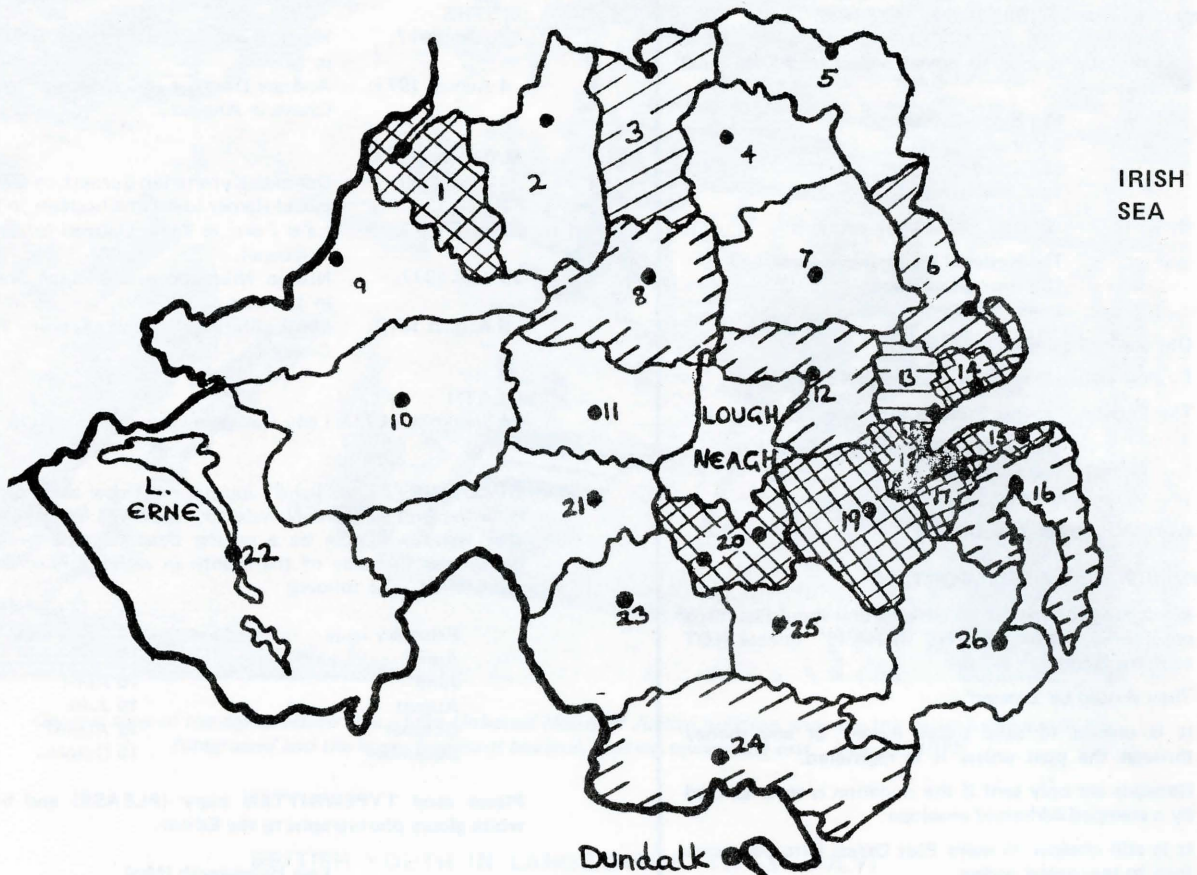
Dorothy Foster

NATIONAL TEACHING COMMITTEE

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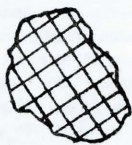
Principal centres of population are either the town after which the District is named or as shown below.

DISTRICTS

- | | | | |
|------------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Londonderry | | 14. Carrickfergus | |
| 2. Limavady | | 15. North Down | Bangor |
| 3. Coleraine | | 16. Ards | Newtownards |
| 4. Ballymoney | | 17. Castlereagh | |
| 5. Moyle | Ballycastle | 18. Belfast | |
| 6. Larne | | 19. Lisburn | |
| 7. Ballymena | | 20. Craigavon | /Lurgan/Portadown |
| 8. Magherafelt | Maghera | 21. Dungannon | |
| 9. Strabane | | 22. Fermanagh | Enniskillen |
| 10. Omagh | | 23. Armagh | |
| 11. Cookstown | | 24. Newry & Mourne | Newry |
| 12. Antrim | | 25. Banbridge | |
| 13. Newtownabbey | Glengormley | 26. Down | Downpatrick |

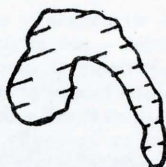
SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES

1. Londonderry
14. Carrickfergus
15. North Down
17. Castlereagh
18. Belfast
19. Lisburn
20. Craigavon



DISTRICTS OPENED

8. Magherafelt
12. Antrim
16. Ards
24. Newry & Mourne



GROUPS

3. Coleraine
6. Larne
13. Newtownabbey



GOALS FOR ASSEMBLIES

3. Coleraine
6. Larne
13. Newtownabbey
16. Ards

NORTHERN IRELAND

Northern Ireland comprises six of the original thirty-two counties of Ireland and is roughly the size of Yorkshire. It has a population of 1,527,000 of which two thirds is within easy commuting distance of Belfast (population 360,000), so that the more remote regions are relatively sparsely populated and a greater part of the province is decidedly rural in character. In fact the second largest city, Londonderry, has a population of only 60,000.

Despite its small size, Northern Ireland has an infinite variety of scenery, from the level plain of Antrim which borders Lough Neagh (the largest inland lake in the British Isles), to the Mourne Mountains and the Sperrin Range. Glacial action, from the last Ice Age, has shaped the drumlin ("basket of eggs") landscape of the Ards Peninsula and the Glens of Antrim, the latter in some parts, like a mini-Switzerland. We also have a northern coastline, described as one of the finest in Europe, with mighty cliffs and rocky headlands contrasting with extensive beaches and intimate coves.

People's image of Northern Ireland is somewhat media-influenced and usually includes saturation coverage of the province by troops and police, armed civilians, bomb-blasts in every other street and a death-rate comparable with a 17th century plague. This is, of course, a great exaggeration. Without trying to minimise the effect that these "troubles" have on life in the province, life carries on and one would have to search for the sort of things that people in mainland Britain can see at the flick of a switch.

The goals for Northern Ireland relate to the twenty-six districts. They involve the formation and maintenance of eleven Spiritual Assemblies — five more than at the start of the Five Year Plan — and the opening of the remaining fifteen districts. The Bahá'í community here has soared to greater heights of dedication and service than ever before but includes few youth and is not able to be so active, for various reasons, as its counterpart in mainland

Britain. In a situation involving the breakdown of the existing order, in which the main participants are young, directionless people, the need is particularly for mature Bahá'í youth to pioneer, who are able to communicate with disillusioned youth.

In his essay "The Genius of Ireland", Hand of the Cause George Townshend described Ireland's distinguished past and discusses the reason for its being called the 'land of Saints and Scholars'. In view of Ireland's having been, in the past, 'a lamp of Faith in a darkened world directing its light both East and West', could not the present calamities be a preparation of the ground for the acceptance of the Faith; might not their 'great tradition' call the people of Ireland 'to be the first to behold the vision of truth, the first to declare it' and will not past history be repeated? Isn't this an exciting time in which to live and won't it be even more so to be a part of the glorious future of Ireland by pioneering to its northern six counties?

TRAVEL TEACHING EXPEDITION TO THE ISLE OF MAN, APRIL 1977

Following the Easter School in Henley, twelve Bahá'í youth arose to travel teach in the Isle of Man.

The journey got off to a good start when the early arrivals greeted the later members of the party with guitar playing and Bahá'í songs, thus attracting the attention of a traveller who happened to be responsible for a couple of folk music clubs on the island. He invited the group to play for a while at one of the hotels in Douglas that night, with the result that teaching and proclamation were both possible.

The group then split up so that as many parts of the island as possible could be visited, coming together for another, well-advertised, concert in Douglas.

One afternoon a visit was made to the hospital where Elinore Peters, one of the local Bahá'ís, works. The patients appreciated

not only the songs but the fact that the visiting young people were prepared to sit and chat to them. All were sad when the Bahá'ís left, some of the older folk being in tears, and staff and visitors gained a very good impression of the Bahá'í Faith.

After further visits to various parts of the Isle of Man, the team gave a concert at a folk club in Ramsay, attended by over a hundred people. One of the things which drew special attention and questions afterwards was the singing of the prayer 'Blessed is the spot. . .'. . .

Thanks to the devotion and skill of the visitors, the support of the local friends, and the bounty of Bahá'u'lláh, the trip was a great success and a most valuable means of advancing the Faith in this vital goal area.

NEWS FROM THE COMMUNITIES

GUILDFORD AND WAVERLEY: During the past six months there has been an excellent response from schools in the Guildford area with several invitations for Bahá'í speakers and slide presentations and many schools accepting books for their libraries, including three public schools. This is very heartening as the local public library told us that they have enough Bahá'í books and don't need any more!

Ridván 133 saw nine voting adults in Guildford, of which one was serving at the World Centre and two 'inactive' — this compared with twenty-three adults the previous Ridván — and still no sign of the Waverley Assembly goal being achieved. However the local friends did not lose heart but sustained a programme of public meetings in Farnham whilst commencing them in Guildford.

This perseverance is now paying off, with renewed interest in Guildford and a sudden upsurge of movement in Waverley. Following the pioneering moves of Sue O'Donovan and Ronald McAlpine from Guildford to Waverley at Ridván, Carolyn Branson decided to settle in Farnham on her return from the Holy Land, thus depleting the Guildford Assembly even further.

At the same time the Badié family pioneered from Persia, and at the time of going to press we have just learned that Dr and Mrs Rasti are pioneering from Persia, settling near their daughter, Mrs Mahvash Pibworth in Witley. Waverley Assembly is thus finally assured, with a good balance of Persians and administrators in both sides of the district. Most exciting of all is that we have a local family on the brink of declaring in Farnham.

Meanwhile, links continue to be strengthened with the people of Guildford with several instances of cooperation with the local UNA and a number of invitations to assist in forthcoming events in the town.

Press coverage continues to be good, and the various comings and goings of the local friends together with Holy Day and other celebrations have all proved of interest to local editors in both districts. The historic election of our dear Muna Delshad to the first National Assembly of the New Hebrides was given particularly good coverage, and many non-Bahá'ís drew our attention to it.

Bahá'ís taking part in the Eastbourne Carnival



NORWICH: Although West Norfolk is not our priority goal at the moment, nevertheless we are continuing with the occasional proclamation foray into its darkest interior.

The local teaching committee decided to 'reccy-out' the little seaside town of Hunstanton and reported back favourably to the local assembly, saying that shopkeepers, for instance, had been very cooperative about displaying posters. Also that they went out of their way to suggest ways of advertising; one newsagent offering to insert leaflets in the local evening paper — for a fee of course. Others had directed the teaching committee to the appropriate offices where they were offered some very attractive premises, namely the Hunstanton Youth Centre, in which to hold meetings.

This venue was duly booked for Saturday 2 July, where it was decided to hold an exhibition in the afternoon and a public meeting in the evening; the latter to consist of a short talk followed by some music — kindly supplied by "Hummingbird".

The day turned out to be a real scorcher. In fact the sort of day when — as we eventually discovered — it would prove more or less impossible to prise sunbathers off the beach to look at an exhibition. So, having assembled all the material on the tables inside the centre and tastefully added flowers, softly draped chiffon scarves, shawls and rugs, we bowed to the inevitable and humped it all outside, re-assembling it by the road, so that passers-by on their way to the beach could pause and read about the Faith through the chain link fencing. Those who stopped were given a pamphlet and their questions answered.

As evening approached the exhibition was put away and the room prepared informally for the evening talk, scheduled to be given by Tony McCarthy. Unfortunately, no enquirers came so we decided to hold a prayer session. A table had been left at the gate with piles of pamphlets with the invitation to 'please take one'. Whilst our prayers winged outwards a steady trickle of people were seen passing by, almost all of whom paused to take a leaflet. The occasional youngster perched on the table and with serious concentration read right through a pamphlet. After the prayer session we had the musical session as planned and all joined in some joyful singing.



John and Vera Long (right) photographed with the Ulva friends during a visit to the Isle of Mull.

Virtually none of the people to whom we spoke had ever heard of the Faith so this was a very exciting venture — virgin territory, so to speak. Our thanks go to Waveney for their unfailing support, not forgetting our own teaching committee who travelled many miles to make all the arrangements.

SHEFFIELD: The Sheffield Bahá'í community recently hired a city centre shop for two days for the purpose of displaying and selling Bahá'í literature and posters.

Friends from the newly formed Doncaster community helped to man the shop and to hand out pamphlets.

This was felt to be a successful proclamation venture as people on buses, pedestrians and passing motorists could scarcely fail to see the shop from the busy city centre street.



INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL TEACHING TEAM

Photographed at Heathrow before their departure to Johannesburg — Left to Right (standing) — Vafa Ram, Soheil Kaynejad, Meehan Ram, Shahroukh Boroumand, Zarin Hainsworth, Guita Ram, Venus Alainea, Roushanak Alainea, Corinne Kent, Richard Hainsworth (kneeling) Novin Doosdar, Javid Djalili. Farzin Aqdasi, who was a member of the team, is not in the picture. The team visited South Africa, Lesotho, Botswana and Malawi and their efforts were much appreciated by the receiving National Assemblies.

Reports of this trip and the one to Guyana will appear in the December Journal.

HUQUQU'LLAH

در لوح امین از ساحت شیت الهی نازل قوله تعالی :

یا ابا الحسن علیک بهائی بعزت امرنا طرباش و بتاجد به الافقه و تل
تکلمنا مطالبه حقوق ابد اجاز نموده نیست این حکم در کتاب الهی نازل لاجنبی
امور لازم که من لدی الحق باسباب مقدر شده اگر نفسی بکمال رضا و خوشحالی مکتبه

باصرار بخوابد باین فیض فائز شود قبول نماید و آلا فلا . انتی .

PERSONAL TEACHING

To understand the meaning of 'personal teaching', we might do well to ask ourselves if there is such a thing as 'impersonal teaching'. If the activities in which we are engaged are impersonal, if we do not forge direct bonds with the people we come in contact with, if we look on those we speak to about the Faith as 'contacts', mere numbers to fill a goal, then we are not teaching; at best we are preparing the ground for that task. It may well be for this reason that so many of the friends lose enthusiasm for teaching: concern with immediate and tangible results, with numerical victories, with reaching as many people as possible has caused many to lose sight of the human dimension, and even of the spiritual meaning and purpose of teaching. Plans and goals are merely administrative means of organising the teaching work; they are not ends in themselves, just as the administration is not an end in itself but a means of channeling the spirit of the Faith to the believers. We should beware of allowing projects and proclamation techniques to become in themselves substitutes for that profound, sacred, and awe-inspiring spiritual exercise which is teaching others of the Faith of God.

It is hearts and souls that we seek to win for Bahá'u'lláh. The end of teaching is that we should be the means for our fellow-men to recognise God through Bahá'u'lláh, to dedicate their lives to His Faith, and to remain steadfast in it. Anything short of this exalted aim has no place in our work.

Bahá'u'lláh Himself emphasises that numbers are a secondary consideration in teaching: 'Whosoever quickens one soul in this Cause is like unto one quickening all the servants'.¹ 'Abdu'l-Bahá has stated that to guide but one soul is greater than sovereignty over the earth and the possession of everything in it.² Elsewhere he quotes the words: 'If a person becomes the cause of the illumination of one soul, it is better than a boundless treasury'.³ If we teach with sincerity, devotion, and love for others, the problem of numbers will take care of itself. 'Abdu'l-Bahá has promised that, should each of the believers wholly concentrate his thoughts on teaching, after one year men will enter the Faith without any need of being taught.⁴ In the final analysis, it is individuals that we teach. We may bring whole tribes, villages, sections of society into the Cause; but we teach individuals. Not everyone may feel able or temperamentally suited to 'mass teaching' or 'teaching projects', but all can engage in teaching at the personal level. Bahá'u'lláh, indeed, has stated that no-one is exempt from the command to engage in teaching.⁵ With this one statement He has abolished all the inequalities of wealth, intelligence, birth, or temperament which divide men, for in many places He has clearly indicated that the first rank among men is that of the true teacher of the Faith.⁶ This rank can be as easily attained by the quiet, unknown believer who brings a friend to a recognition of the truth of the Faith over a period of several years as by the highly-acclaimed globe-trotting teacher who is responsible for the conversion of ten thousand in a single week. And if the ten thousand should abandon the Faith and the single friend remain firm and teach others in his turn, who has been the true teacher?

The keynote of teaching, Bahá'u'lláh has written time and time again, is wisdom. He seldom mentions teaching without some reference to the wisdom which must be used in carrying it out. So important is this condition that, in one place, He states that, unless wisdom be used, teaching is not permissible.⁷ In the same tablet, He indicates the meaning of wisdom when He remarks that, should someone call on men to tear apart the veils of vain beliefs all at once, he will not be regarded as a teacher, for he will have departed from wisdom.⁸ The veils, says Bahá'u'lláh, must be removed gradually, without haste. Although wisdom is essential in all our activities, nowhere is it more necessary than in personal teaching. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, in explaining the meaning of wisdom in the context of teaching, says that it means to teach with consideration, love, kindness, patience, forbearance, and through divine virtues, deeds, and actions.⁹ This same principle He elaborates elsewhere: 'Under all conditions the Message must be delivered, but with wisdom. . . If one of the believers be kind to one of the negligent ones and with perfect love should gradually make him understand the reality of the Cause of God in such a way that the latter should know in what manner the Religion of God hath been founded and what its object is, doubtless he will become changed. . . If by this method every one of the friends of God were to try to lead one soul to the right path, the number of the believers would be doubled every year. But this should be carried out with perfect wisdom'.¹⁰

The nature of wisdom in teaching is further explained by Bahá'u'lláh: 'The wise are they that speak not unless they obtain a hearing, even as the cup-bearer who proffereth not his cup till he findeth a seeker'.¹¹ In the *Súriy-i-Ghusn*, He writes: 'Beware lest ye scatter the pearls of inner significance before every barren, dumb one. . . Wert thou to read the most mighty, wonderful verses to the stone for a thousand years, will it understand, or will they take any effect therein?'.¹² 'Abdu'l-Bahá writes: 'Those souls who have the capacity and ability to receive the outpourings of the Kingdom and the confirmation of the Holy Spirit, they become attracted through one word. But people who have not the capacity, no matter how much one explain the divine behests and advices or breathe the breath of the Holy Spirit, it will not make an effect; nay, rather they add to their hardness and heedlessness'.¹³ It is the hallmark of the true teacher that he possesses the insight to distinguish those with spiritual receptivity from those without.

Having discovered a ready ear it is, however, necessary to take care that one's words suit the time and the place and the hearer.¹⁴ Quoting the Imám Ja'far as-Sádiq, Bahá'u'lláh writes: 'Not everything that a man knoweth can be disclosed, nor can everything that he can disclose be regarded as timely, nor can every timely utterance be considered as suited to the capacity of those who hear it'.¹⁵ Elsewhere He states that we should speak with someone according to his capacity so that he may develop from the state of infancy to that of maturity and be able to bear the Word of God.¹⁶ Milk, not meat, He says, is to be given to babes.¹⁷ If we are to fulfill this condition we cannot escape the duty of getting to know and understand the person we are teaching. Everyone has his personal prejudices, needs, fears, and ways of thought; we should avoid raising controversial issues, showing off our own knowledge, speaking in language too difficult or too simple, using terms or concepts that may be meaningless to that particular individual, dwelling on those aspects of the Faith that may only be of deep interest to ourselves, and of urging someone to declare before he is ready. We should at all times be sensitive, deeply sensitive, to the reactions of the person we are teaching and respond accordingly. Above all, we should have the humility and detachment to acknowledge that we may not be the right person to teach that individual, and take steps to introduce him as soon as possible to a Bahá'í more familiar with his background, ways of speech, and outlook on life.

The more we seek to become involved with each person we teach as a unique individual the greater our enthusiasm for teaching will become. Instead of becoming bored by the repetition of stereotyped 'spiels' given on all occasions, we will be stimulated by the challenge of adapting our responses to the needs and understanding of those we teach; we will be compelled to develop the qualities of love, detachment, and purity which Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá have stressed as the indispensable conditions for every teacher,¹⁸ for our lack of these qualities will rapidly become apparent when we are face to face with individuals rather than large audiences. In acquiring the spiritual prerequisites for teaching, we will be able to respond to whatever questions may be put to us by different people. Bahá'u'lláh states that we are the springs of His utterance: if we should purify these springs from vain ideas we will be able to provide the answers to many questions.¹⁹ The Guardian indicates one way in which we can purify these springs: 'To deepen in the Cause means to read the writings of Bahá'u'lláh and the Master so thoroughly as to be able to give it to others in its pure form. There are many who have some superficial idea of what the Cause stands for. They, therefore, present it together with all sorts of ideas that are their own. . . The more we read the Writings, the more truths we can find in them, the more we will see that our previous notions were erroneous'.²⁰ Bahá'u'lláh Himself lays considerable stress on the duty of every teacher to deepen himself: 'Whoso ariseth among you to teach the Cause of his Lord, let him, before all else, teach his own self, that his speech may attract the hearts of them that hear him. Unless he teacheth his own self, the words of his mouth will not influence the heart of the seeker'.²¹ The Guardian always emphasised that expansion and consolidation must go hand in hand.²² If we should deepen ourselves spiritually and intellectually, our long-term success in teaching will know no bounds.

(DM'E)

Notes:

¹ *Súriy-i-Ghusn* (Bahá'í World Faith p.206); original in *Ma'idiy-i-Asmani* IV p.118.

² M.A. IX p.135;

³ *Tablets of the Divine Plan* p.36;

⁴ M.A. V pp. 73-4;

⁵ *Iqtidar* p.11; cf. *Gleanings* p.312;

⁶ M.A. IV p.354;

⁷ M.A. VIII p.98;

⁸ *ibid*;

⁹ M.A. V p.77;

¹⁰ BWF pp.385-6;

¹¹ *Persian Hidden Words* 36;

¹² BWF p.207; M.A. IV p.119;

¹³ BWF pp.364-5;

¹⁴ M.A. V pp.73, 176-7;

¹⁵ *Gleanings* pp. 175-6; *Majmu'a-yi Alwah* p.9;

¹⁶ M.A. VIII 16;

¹⁷ *Ibid* pp.123, 145;

¹⁸ See TDP p.20; *Gleanings* pp.200, 333-4; *Iqtidar* pp.10-11;

¹⁹ *Iqtidar* p.100;

²⁰ *Principles of Bahá'í Administration* p.11;

²¹ *Gleanings* p.276;

²² See *Letters to Australia and New Zealand* pp. 35-6.

Bahá'í Publishing Trust

2 South Street
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We are happy to announce that we are publishing two new compilations made by the Universal House of Justice in the series of their compilations of which we have previously published seven.

THE GIFT OF TEACHING

The following extracts from the letter which the Universal House of Justice sent to all National Spiritual Assemblies with this compilation gives an idea of its importance.

The corner-stone of the foundation of all Bahá'í activity is teaching the Cause. As 'Abdu'l-Bahá has categorically proclaimed in His Will and Testament, "the guidance of the nations and peoples of the world" is "the most important of all things", and "Of all the gifts of God the greatest is the gift of Teaching."

The friends likewise are in varying degrees aware of the repeated exhortations found in the writings of our Faith that divine confirmations are dependent upon the active pursuit of the teaching work. In the words of the beloved Master, "the unseen divine assistance encompasseth those who deliver the Message." He further states, "... if the work of delivering the Message be neglected, the assistance shall be entirely cut off, for it is impossible that the friends of God could receive assistance unless they be engaged in delivering the Message."

While the friends are generally conscious of the vital importance of teaching, yet, because of their frailties, many for the most part lack confidence, and feel they do not know what course of action to follow, or how to bring their efforts to a conclusion. Since guidance on such fundamental issues comes from the writings of the Faith, we asked the Research Department to prepare a compilation of texts on the subject.

When the friends realise that the hosts of the Kingdom are waiting to rush forth and assist them, that others from their own ranks have arisen and have been successful, that everyone can find some effective method of teaching according to his own particular capacities and talents, they will then no doubt arise with greater confidence to take the first step, and this, we know, will be aided and guided from on high, for the very act of striving to respond to God's call will bring in its wake countless divine blessings.

It is the hope and prayer of the Universal House of Justice that each National Spiritual Assembly will do its utmost constantly to encourage the friends to participate in what Shoghi Effendi calls "the most essential, the most urgent of all our obligations", and what must be "the dominating passion of our life", and follow the example of the Apostles of Christ who, as testified by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, "forgot themselves and all earthly things, forsook all their cares and belongings, purged themselves of self and passion ... till at last they made the world another world, illumined the surface of the earth and even to their last hour proved self-sacrificing in the pathway of that Beloved One of God ... Let them that are men of action follow in their footsteps!"

SEEKING THE LIGHT OF THE KINGDOM

This compilation consists of two sections; the first on the Nineteen Day Feast and the second on Bahá'í Meetings.

"If thou seekest after the light of the Kingdom, hasten undoubtedly to the meetings of the believers. ..." With these pregnant words of the Master we wish to introduce to you two beautiful compilations newly prepared by the Research Department of the Universal House of Justice which contain passages from Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi which have not hitherto been available to the friends.

The compilation, headed respectively "Bahá'í Meetings" and "The Nineteen Day Feast" are most timely and shed light on some questions which have for some time been a source of confusion. More than this, however, they give us a much broader insight into the tremendous importance of such meetings to our spiritual life, to the progress of the Cause and to the ultimate triumph of the Faith.

Regular meetings, feasts, anniversaries and special gatherings *"designed to serve and promote the social, intellectual and spiritual interests of their fellow-men"* all receive an attention which must surely thrill the heart of every believer who studies the relevant passages. Shall we ever enter a Bahá'í meeting with any feeling other than joy and expectation when we are assured by Bahá'u'lláh Himself that round that dwelling *"... shall circle the souls of true believers and all the favoured angels"*? Would we ever decline to *"embellish"* our houses *"with a meeting of Bahá'ís"* when we know that *"that house of earth will become a house of heaven, and that fabric of stone a congress of the spirit"*? Can we fail to attend our prayer meetings when the Master said *"... that from the site itself, and its earth and the air about it, one will inhale the fragrant breathings of the Holy Spirit"*?

Every quotation in these compilations has the greatest potency; every passage is precious; we share them with the friends with the hope that this booklet will become one of their most constant companions, be studied individually and collectively and be referred to whenever a Feast or other meeting is planned, for not only will *"such reunions... yield boundless happiness and peace"*, but *"wherever the spiritually-minded are gathered together, there in His beauty reigneth Bahá'u'lláh"*.

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