



in these campaigns is enabling Scottish friends to bring back insights and is opening our eyes to the possibilities in neighbourhoods here.

This burst of summer activity – with the aim of raising up local animators of junior youth groups and establishing the spiritual empowerment programme – is lending energy to the next cycles leading up to the bicentennial anniversary of the



Bahá'í Council for Scotland

Dearest Friends,

In the first summer of this new Plan, an eagerness to launch into this immense effort can be seen in a flourishing of activity around Scotland and the Faroe Islands.

Friends from adjoining clusters have been coming together to participate in summer projects in North East and Forth, to learn about having conversations about the role of young people in the transformation of society and how individuals, communities and institutions can support youth in releasing their potential. Support for these efforts has included families joining in the campaigns in person, cooking delicious food (from Thai to Persian dishes!), making financial contributions and offering loving prayers.

There are ongoing opportunities to be part of projects in clusters elsewhere such as Manchester and London and experience working with a joyous group of friends who are learning about the features of these conversations – from developing the capacity to initiate a conversation, to describing a vision of how young people can contribute to the betterment of the world, and sharing moving accounts from the Life of Bahá'u'lláh. Participation



Birth of Bahá'u'lláh.

Furthermore, the Summer School in the beautiful surroundings of Strathallan School in Perthshire was a great success. Friends from as far as the islands around Scotland and the south of England attended. All enjoyed the uplifting spirit from the 'threefold features of devotion, study and recreation' which gave many insights to the School's theme of 'Neighbourhoods'. The results of the activities for children and junior youth were shared with the whole school on the final evening of the school with great humour and enthusiasm.

The annual Bahá'í-land Games took place in blazing sunshine which was wonderful fun for all. Adult sessions took place in the school's chapel and covered many neighbourhood topics such as 'Why so many Religions?', 'Family', 'Developing the Potential of Youth', 'The Nature of Prayer and Collective Worship' and 'Community Development'. It was wonderful to have participation and input from friends of the Faith collaborating in the field of service who attended this year's school. We were fortunate to have a huge selection of new and second hand books available thanks to the tremendous services of Steve and Becky Vickers.

The Summer School Committee once again produced a well organised and memorable event that allowed all who attended to experience a taste of Bahá'í community life. With prayers and loving Bahá'í greetings,

Hannah Moshtael
Secretary,
Bahá'í Council for Scotland

"A mixture of photographs from summer school and youth projects in Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Manchester..."



*** Open Letter *** Re Scottish Summer School

(It comes from Jane Gordon-Chauvet who is a 'friend of the Faith' and who came to her first **Scottish Summer School** with her two children. They live on the Isle of Mull and knows well a Bahá'ís from NE of England)

Dear Friends,

A short letter to thank you all for making Jamie, Louise and myself so welcome at this year's Summer School. It was such a joy to be part of this wonderful event; exploring Unity, and the Development of our Young People. I was overwhelmed by the generosity of everyone who made our journey - physically and spiritually - so easy and uplifting.

Thank you to those who so kindly gave us Books - we have loved looking at them together. Thank you to those who patiently answered my questions and offered guidance and help so freely. Jamie and Louise would like to thank their Teachers! (from me - RESPECT!! You were awesome!!!) Wow!!! You worked so hard both before the School in the preparation, and throughout the Classes working with the children with patience and joyfulness. My 2 learnt much and loved the activities. Thank you too to the children who included Jamie and Louise with such friendliness - they really enjoyed meeting you all and hope to see you again next year. The sessions were very engaging and thought provoking. Many thanks to all those who spoke with such eloquence and knowledge.

Finally, 'THANK YOU' to the Committee for organising the SSS, for the long hours you put in to ensure everything ran smoothly; for dealing with issues promptly and seamlessly; for your help in getting us there and for your encouragement while we were there. I very much appreciate all you did. **'We loved our first, I hope of many, Baha'i Summer Schools.'**

I hope some of you will keep in touch.

With our love to you all,
Jane, Jamie and Louise (Totie)

Martyrdom of The Báb

Pat Morrissey shares his joy and thoughts on a recent visit to **Strathtay**.

"In its recent letter concerning the celebration of the anniversary of the births of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh (1) , The Universal House of Justice encouraged the friends to develop

"a myriad (of) artistic and cultural expressions" as a means of sharing the importance of the Twin Luminaries "teachings to the future of mankind" it also talked of finding "creative ways to honour the Twin Manifestations". Anyone looking for inspiration in putting these ideas into practice need look no further than the innovative, reverent and uplifting approach to commemorating the **Martyrdom of the Báb** we experienced recently while visiting the friends in **Strathtay**.



A great deal of thought and care had gone into preparing a devotional that tied in one of the prayers of the Báb, to the religious and cultural beliefs practiced by Native Americans specifically in regard to the universal and deep rooted concept of the protective power of prayer (2). The readings were coherent and thematic, and to give physical



resonances to the mystical aspects of the proceedings, Maya, Rachel and Nancy had devised a mandala which replicated the points of a compass and reflected the fact that the original prayer, written in the Báb's own hand was in the form of a pentacle.

We had music and card-making, wonderful food prepared by Callum and while the solemnity of the occasion was never far from our thoughts, neither was the miraculous nature of the event which brought us together."

(1) Letter of the Universal House of Justice to all national Spiritual Assemblies 18th of May 2016

(2) Prayer revealed by the Báb

<http://reference.bahai.org/en/t/c/BP/bp-112.html>



In the letter of 29 December 2015, the Universal House of Justice wrote that,

"The process of community building...cultivates a set of attitudes towards wealth and possessions very different from those holding sway in the world."

We are called upon to manage our financial affairs in light of the teachings. The letter further stated,

"...voluntary giving fosters an awareness that managing one's financial affairs in accordance with spiritual principles is an indispensable dimension of a life lived coherently. It is a matter of conscience, a way in which commitment to the betterment of the world is translated into practice."

The intent of Ḥuqúqu'lláh education ... is to change attitudes , to change our perceptions of wealth and to live our lives in a new way.

The Regional Board for Ḥuqúqu'lláh is very pleased to announce the appointment of a new Representative for Scotland – **Dr Hooshmand Badee** from Newton Mearns

(see last page for contact details).



Compassionate Spiritual Care for the Elderly

Edinburgh Bahá'í Jo Flynn sends us this wonderful report

"I recently had the absolute pleasure of attending a meeting on **"Empathy: Exploring Compassionate Spiritual Care for the Elderly"** in Edinburgh ran by the **Interfaith** association during the Empathy festival. There were people from different faiths, nurses, carers and many others wanting to explore such an important topic. The atmosphere was extremely uplifting and the discussion vibrant.

What became immediately obvious was the vital importance for examining how we make provisions for the spiritual care of the elderly. We live in a rapidly ageing population and it is estimated there will be a 50% increase in those over 69s by 2033. The number of people with dementia is sadly increasing so how do we as community ensure older adults stay spiritually connected?

The meeting explored how we could better respond to the **spiritual needs of the elderly** and those with dementia in our religious communities. **This of course does not only apply to just the Baha'i community but also to our work place, our neighbours, relatives and friends!**

For me it highlighted not only the importance of compassion as a core virtue when thinking of the older members of our communities but our responsibility to ensure its practical expression.

Some questions that seemed to be at the forefront were **'How do we assist someone in fulfilling their spiritual life'** and **'How do we ensure someone stays spiritually connected?'** These questions can of course

be applied across a whole lifetime but how can we specifically assist someone who, for example, suffers poor mobility or is losing cognitive abilities due to dementia?

A lively discussion took place with people offering thoughts on the vital importance of taking time to know the individual's needs and talents before we can truly understand how to support someone in fulfilling their spiritual life. **Simple acts of supporting someone to have prayers in their own home** if they lack mobility or **offering a musical devotional** to help re-engage a person with dementia, can be effective. A re-occurring theme was of course the importance of true friendship but also understanding what gives a person's heart meaning and delight.

There was a unison of voices in expressing the need to ensure links between the younger and older generation. These links need to be constantly strengthened and nurtured. I recently took my friend's two young boys to visit a 92 year old gentleman and stories, laughter and food were the result! Understanding potential isolation in a person's older years or difficult circumstances brought on by ill health may mean we need to think of new, inventive ways to connect and spiritually uplift another soul.

Undoubtedly, this meeting provided a much needed reminder to spiritually inspire and enrich each other's lives, whatever our age or circumstances.....Jo Flynn"

One such day, Bahá'u'lláh enquired how Khayyát-Báshi was, for the man had been ill. When Áqá Ridá said that he had no news of his progress. Bahá'u'lláh replied that he should have gone first to visit Khayyát-Báshi, before coming to the garden

"This I tell you" He said, "that you all should learn to care for one another at all times, and look after each other."

(Page 226, "Bahá'u'lláh, King of Glory")

Scottish Summer School

Once again the Scottish Summer School was held within the beautiful surroundings of Strathallan School in Perthshire.



Over 90 residents and some day visitors came together to share in the wonderful experience that is The Scottish Summer School. Participants from Canada, Catalonia, Guernsey, the Faeroe Islands, Germany, Scotland and other parts of the United Kingdom gave an international flavour to the gathering.



The programme included many interesting talks and workshops. Children and Junior Youth classes

ran alongside the adult programmes and provided a stimulating experience for the young people. There were also various talent nights, a variety of art classes, a session from the Cosmic Ceilidh Band, swimming and of course the unforgettable Bahá'í-Land Games which took place on a sunny afternoon.

One project involved the participants drawing their home on a piece of paper and then using this to make into a wall hanging of their neighbourhood.



Many thanks to Rebecca and Stephen Vickers who organised and ran the Bookshop. Secondhand books were available at amazingly low prices.



News from the Western Isles

Another wonderful period of activity in the Western Isles. The monthly meetings held in An Lanntair, Stornoway, continued with the latest subjects as follows:-

April – Junior Youth Spiritual Empowerment

Rhiannon Shepherd runs a Youth Group in London outside her normal working hours in a hospital. She described her work with the 12-15 years old and how they are encouraged to enhance their powers of expression, intellectual and spiritual growth, and the development of talents.



May– The Kings who said “No”

This talk by Dr Stephen Vickers covered the years 1868-69 when Baha'u'llah, who was held prisoner in Acre, wrote letters to various leaders, kings and emperors exhorting them to get together and move the world towards unity and peace. Stephen discussed the content of some of the letters, pointing out that because this voluntary opportunity was missed, future generations would suffer.

June– Virtues Education

Diana Macpherson, from Virtues Project International (a global initiative founded in Canada in 1991 to inspire virtues, kindness and justice) spoke of the importance of awakening and encouraging admirable qualities and talents within ourselves and others. The results will bring benefits to all our lives.



Everyone has been busy!

Archery Tuition

At Sandwick School some of the junior youth took part in archery tuition organised by Lewis and



Harris Youth Clubs' Association. Although the weather was not good everyone enjoyed themselves, One of the boys, Saul, won the archery trophy at a later competition involving the Youth Clubs.

Braighe Cleanup

Part of the junior youth environmental service



project was a beach clean up at The Braighe, Isle of Lewis. On a cold blustery day (29 June!) our

wonderful junior youth collected all the plastic objects dropped locally or brought in by the waves . Plastic rubbish is a huge problem for all the seas and oceans. The collecting bags and skip were kindly provided by the Western Isles Council

Scaladale

Once again, on 1st July, it was time to visit Scaladale. As usual, everyone had an enjoyable time – both indoors and out. Activities included art instruction, a dramatic presentation of “Walking the Straight Path” and the ever popular kayaking.



Many thanks to everyone who helped at Scaladale with a big thanks to Diana Macpherson for the 'Virtues through Art' session and to the intrepid kayak instructors Rosemary Mclaughlin and Anne Bird.

Farewells

We say farewell to Helen, Suzanne and family and to Darren, Carol and Leo; both families have



moved to pastures new. Our best wishes go with them– for now and the future.

INVERNESS BAHÁ'ÍS

Engagement with Inter-Faith

While not engaged recently in public Bahá'í events we have been able to engage in “**community of interest**” activities, with the local Interfaith Group. Recent examples have been the April 2016 group visit to Iona with representatives of most of the faith groups attending and also the 2016 annual July picnic, The picnic idea now seems to have been copied elsewhere.



(Some of the Friends gathered the Picnic)

Another significant current Interfaith activity is the series of **Sharing of Faiths Evenings**, beginning with a shared potluck meal followed by readings and open discussion on a chosen topic, among which have been **Mindfulness, Inspiring Scriptures, Perceptions of Truth, The Momentous Times We Live In and Justice**. These have taken place alternately in one of three local homes (Bahá'í, Christian and Hindu) and the local Mosque. These evenings have been one

expression of the idea of engagement in meaningful conversation.



(The Picnic begins)

Regular Devotionals

Once a month (on the last Friday) members of the local Baha'i community, along with nearby friends, meet to have prayers together in one of the Baha'i homes. The prayers, interspersed with recorded music, are chosen around a specific theme and include passages primarily from Baha'i, but also other Holy Scriptures (often chosen and brought along by members of those Faiths). These are happy mornings and the readings often bring forth interesting conversations. For example the recent one was on the theme of *Turning to God for Guidance* and led to conversations about the never-ending guidance of God and, in particular, to progressive revelation.

Access to Baha'i information

We have a local web-site and several times a year we get enquiries through it. We usually keep the first Monday evening available so that we have a definite place and time to invite those enquirers or, in fact anyone else we would like to bring along. We call it Open House because we use it for all sorts of things, including studying important letters from The Universal House of Justice if there are no enquirers.

So if you are passing through Inverness on a Friday or a Monday join us. We can always make an extra date if it's not the Last Friday or the First Monday!

Your coming may be of interest and spark some even better conversations.

The Ayrshire Big Picnic

Not even dark clouds and rain could stop the Ayrshire Bahá'ís annual 'Big Picnic'. Nearly 30 people (of which around 14 were friends of the Faith) gathered at the home of Svend Kamming in the Ayrshire countryside. The participation of folk from the Borders, Lanarkshire, Glasgow, Shetland, a special Bahá'í visitor from all the way from New



Zealand and of course the Ayrshire Bahá'ís.

New Zealand visitor.
DawnHornsby

Ayrshire Bahá'í Liz Thompson
with Mandy Hepburn all the
from the Shetlands.

Laughter and joy filled the air, old friendships were renewed and new ones were made. Throughout the day there were many spiritual conversations, covering a huge range of topics including the Bahá'í Faith, its history, World Unity and Peace to name but a few.

Huqúq'ulláh

"co-operation, mutual aid and reciprocity are essential characteristics in the unified body of the world of being, inasmuch as all created things are closely related together and each is influenced by the other or deriveth benefit therefrom, either directly or indirectly"('Abdúl-Bahá)

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We need your stories and community activities. Deadline for the next issue will be the end of November, with publication in December. Email Dereck Redfern. (redfernricks@aol.com)
