



Scottish Bahá'í Newsletter

Issue 14



Bahá'í Council for Scotland

Dear Friends,

"We set this objective before the Bahá'í world conscious that it is truly formidable; that a herculean labour will be required; that many sacrifices will have to be made. But faced with the plight of a world that suffers more each day bereft of Bahá'u'lláh's elixir, we cannot, in conscience, ask anything less of His devoted followers." - Universal House of Justice, 29th December 2015

The Bahá'í Council for Scotland sends you its love and greetings with this latest Newsletter which is packed with stories of the dedicated endeavours of our community. The newly elected Council had its first meeting on the weekend of December 3 and 4 at the National Bahá'í Centre in London where the National Assembly provided a space for all of the Councils in the UK to reflect on progress and plan next steps.

This is often the time of year when we can reflect and make plans for the year ahead. It is almost exactly one year since our beloved **Universal House of Justice** set the challenge to us in the quote above, a year in which the suffering of the world has deepened ever more. The Council encourages everyone to think of what service we might be able to dedicate to **Bahá'u'lláh** and especially to think of any time during the 2017

summer months when there will be collective campaigns in Scotland to channel that service and to build our capacity for service further. The Council was delighted that some friends have already come forward to offer their service and we hope that this momentum continues to build.

At its meeting in Rutland Gate, the Council elected the following to serve as its officers:

Chair: Allan Forsyth
Vice-chair: Lorrie Fozdar
Secretary: Ian Fozdar
Treasurer: Andrew Goodwin

The Council is in the process of appointing a new Administrative Aide to the Secretariat. Until the appointment is made please send any communications to the Council as follows:

email - bcs@bahai.org.uk
Phone - 01651 -891356

Letter - Bahá'í Council for Scotland
% Ian Fozdar
The Steading, Bowiehillock,
Fyvie, Aberdeenshire AB 53 8QL

The Council would like to thank **Parvin Morrissey and Malath Abbas** who have served it so enthusiastically and diligently. We would also like to thank **Rachel Burnett and Carmelia Carew** who contributed so much in their support roles of Administrative Aide and Statistics Officer, helping the Council to improve its effectiveness with these new functions. No doubt every one of these dear friends will thrive in the other avenues of service that they follow

At its meetings, the Council says prayers for the whole community and for all those who it knows are facing distinct challenges or who have asked specially for prayers. Please let the Council know of any prayers you would like to request.

For Information:

The 2017 Scottish Summer School will take place from July 29 to August 2 inclusive at Strathallan School, Perthshire. Further details for booking etc. will follow in due course.

With loving greetings

Bahá'í Council for Scotland.

Some thoughts on the dedication of the Bahá'í Temple of South America



As an artist and sculptor, my initial interest on seeing the proposed design for the Baha'i House of Worship for South America was one of artistry and aesthetics. Since then I have been following with great fascination the Temple's construction progress up to its near completion, thanks to the informative Newsreels sent from Chile. Therefore, realising that it was within my means to attend the Dedication in Santiago I jumped at the chance. Nothing however could have prepared me for the beauty and sublimity of actually experiencing the occasion in person.



From day one, the day of 'Registration' at the Dedication Conference in Central Santiago,

with the arrival of 5,000 expectant Bahá'ís from all over the world, the spirit of the love for Humanity was palpable, in the air, as with great joy the the Friends from nearly every corner of the Globe greeted each other with warm embrace and excitement all day long. This was an experience deeply moving and humbling. It was particularly reinforced by seeing, for the first time as a visitor from Europe, representation of Bahá'ís from the Indigenous Peoples from right across the continent of Central and South America, all in their diverse cultural and colourful attire. Indeed the '**Flowers of Humanity**' assembled to celebrate together, in harmony, this unique and sacred event.



A reinforcing confirmation of the love for **Bahá'u'lláh** and the power of His Revelation to unite the hearts of mankind.

Following that came three enjoyable and informative days of conference including uplifting messages, lecture presentations, devotionals and choirs, inspiring drama and music and dance presentations from many of the diverse and indigenous cultures representing the Americas, Pacific and beyond. It was also an inspiration to witness the enthusiasm and dedication of not only the Chilean Baha'ís but those from the Continent and abroad, who's voluntary service as ushers, advisors, coordinators, gardeners, translators, guides, in the bookshops and in many other practicalities, enabled an event on such a scale to run smoothly and with joy. Finally, having learnt more during the conference presentation by the Architect Siamak Hariri of the temple's design evolution, construction, and, of other near miraculous events leading to its placing and completion (eg: the very name of the final temple location Peñalolén meaning 'Meeting of the Brothers' in the indigenous language of Mapuche, among others!) the crowning glory for me, as I'm sure it was for all, was our first group visit, of approximately 550 at a time, to the Mother Temple of South America and its location for a specially arranged devotional and choral programme. At its end, the two portraits of the **Báb** and that of **Bahá'u'lláh** which had been brought over from the Holy Land for the historical occasion,

were shown to all present. At that point words failed to describe the sublimity of the experience.

After the main dedication events were over, two whole 'open days' were reserved for the visiting Bahá'ís of the World to individually spend quality time at the Temple; to sense the space in quiet prayer or contemplation; to observe its intricate and simple aesthetic detail; to have time to wander with leisure the extensive many leveled landscape gardens which in the fullness of time will mature and blossom with magnificence. (I would recommend a visit in 9 years time just to see the gardens in maturity alone!) Many stayed on each evening to see the Temple begin to glow from within at sunset as the lights of Santiago spread out before us slowly came on.



My overall feeling was that the Temple and its environment had indeed been made a Sacred Space through this New Creation, as it stands now in simple beauty, a beacon, a 'Magnet of Hearts' as mentioned there, for the people of South America and beyond.



I am immeasurably grateful to **Bahá'u'lláh** for the opportunity to attend the 'Dedicación Templo Baha'i de Sudamérica' and pray that I may carry forward from it, even if as a crumb to share, some of the hope, love and inspirations of the thousands there for the Harmony of the Nations..... [Lindsay John](#)

Zoe Turner in Chile



(Zoe with Anne Corcoran, a Bahá'í I met while we were both volunteering at the Temple! She was born in Cork Ireland)

I had both the honour and privilege of attending the Dedication Conference of the amazing new House of Worship (**Mashriqu'l-Adhkar**) for South America. I had always hoped it would be possible to attend and thankfully it was. It is almost impossible to describe the experience, wonderful joy and spiritual feelings of those days spent with over 5000 Baha'is from 134 countries that were present for the Opening of the **Mashriqu'l-Adhkar**.

Having been on that continent as a child with my parents Dick and Vida Backwell who had a **"DISTINGUISHED RECORD SERVICE SOUTH AMERICA"** UHJ (see Baha'i World Vol XIII) we spent a few days volunteering which was quite a challenge in many ways, not least due to my very limited Spanish.



First Local Spiritual Assembly of Georgetown formed in 1955
(Front Row- left Dick & and Vida Backwell)

Other personal highlights were meeting a number of old friends such as Joan & Eric Bowers from Chester who were on the same plane from Paris to Santiago, and on our return there were also Mahzad Mazloomian, who used to live in Hamilton, (just outside Glasgow) and is now in Cyprus, and her daughter Soha from SouthportZoeTurner

Jeremy Fox sends us this report

Bahá'ís and Interfaith

As the Bahá'í representative on the Board of Interfaith Scotland I realise I should keep the friends somewhat informed of what has been going on recently, though I am aware that those labouring away from the Central Belt will know more than me about their own area.



(Maureen Siers with the First Minister of Scotland)

Prior to the opening of Interfaith week there was a significant meeting of Religious Leaders/ Representatives with Nicola Sturgeon. The theme was social cohesion as clearly the First Minister sees the Faith communities as reaching out to the grass roots and having the ability to encourage good relationships between each other, thereby making our society more harmonious and diminishing the likelihood of hate-crime. The atmosphere was relaxed and inclusive and at her request some younger people were present, among them **Laura (Hemmati) Westring** who



spoke excellently about how she had found her



home in Interfaith activity through her Baha'i faith and mentioned the Baha'i Junior Youth programme. The first Minister was clearly impressed.

The opening for the week, held in Paisley Town Hall went very well, introducing the theme of

“Religion and the Media” with a talk by Cathy MacDonald from the BBC and including drama, singing and dance.

Allan Forsyth attended the meeting with BBC producers and noted that they are particularly interested in people's personal stories and how their faith has impacted on them, so that may be a space to watch and those who feel they could tackle that might wish to let Allan know. We are wondering about Radio Scotland Thought for the Day too.

Some of you may have heard **Maureen Sier speaking on the Kay Adams Show**, primarily about the theme of Scottish Interfaith Week, “Religion and the Media”, mentioning that she is a Baha'i.

At a meeting in the Story Telling Centre in Edinburgh on “Religion and Human Rights” the Bahá'ís had the opportunity to speak in their various groups of the situation of the Bahá'ís in Iran.

In Stirling University, where there are at present just myself as Bahá'í representative at the chaplaincy and Ilona Kater, we managed to initiate an Interfaith Week meeting attended by myself, several of the chaplains, Christians, Muslims and quite a few Chinese and we watched the part of the video “Beyond Tolerance” concerning Religion and the Media followed by discussion. Hopefully this will lead to further encounters.

Undoubtedly the most exciting (and pleasurable) dialogue continuing is between the Bahá'ís and a group of Shia Muslims from the Ahlulbayt society with whom we have established a warm friendship and shared our beliefs. Led by **Maureen Sier, as Director of Interfaith Scotland**, we suspect this may be a first.

I think it is safe to say that the Bahá'ís are regarded as playing a significant role in Interfaith work and, despite our modest numbers, are recognised nationally as part of the fabric of Scotland's religious diversity. Thanks to Interfaith the Bahá'ís are visible and heard at the highest level in Scottish society and increasingly in schools.

"Twin Holy Day"

Celebrations in Scotland

Lanarkshire Bahá'í Community



The Lanarkshire Bahá'ís Community celebrated the "Twin Holy Days" with a wonderful Devotional in the home of one of the Friends in Lanark and followed it up with a meal in a local restaurant.

Twin Holy Days celebrated in Inverness

Five members of the Inverness community and friends from North Kessock met on the two consecutive evenings to celebrate the Twin Holy Days. We met, first of all at the Emersons' for the celebration of the Birth of the Bab at which we had a devotional with music and prayers followed by food, plenty of chatter and ending with a fun game.



L-R Mhairi, Rolf, Liz, Tom, Ann, Carol, and Royce

The next day we met at the Mackenzies' for the **Birth of Baha'u'llah** celebration where we had

prayers and very interesting readings which led to good discussion and Tom showed a youtube presentation. Afterwards we ate far too much as usual (especially considering that only a day was to elapse before the Nineteen-Day Feast).

The Feast was held at the home of Mhairi and Rolf Schmidt. For the devotional Mhairi had arranged a selection of Baha'i books on the coffee table and we first explored the spiritual name of the Feast... **"Power"** with some interesting consequences. We then were asked to look through the books on the table and find a prayer or reading for the devotional, bearing in mind what we had explored. It was indeed a very memorable week.

Dundee Bahá'í Community

The Dundee Bahá'ís celebrated the "Twin Holy Days" with two wonderful gatherings



The first **"The Birth of the Báb"** was held in the home of Mal and Mhairi Abbas, and after a wonderful devotional they all shared a meal together.



The second gathering **"The Birth of Bahá'u'lláh"** took place at the Dudhope Multicultural Centre in Dundee. The Bahá'ís along with their guests took part in devotionals, conversations and again shared a meal.

Stirling Bahá'í Community

Stirling Bahá'ís celebrated the historic remembrance of the **Twin Holidays** over the period 31 Oct to 2 November.

The Birth of the Báb was remembered at the home of Alex and Perviz Reid in Bridge of Allan and was notable for a wonderful musical contribution by David, the performance of a ballad in the Scot's tongue written by Alex especially for the occasion and accompanied by his friend Ken, and a musical adaptation of a prayer of the Báb.



The celebration of Bahá'u'lláh's birth was held at the Morrissey's home and witnessed a touching dramatisation of the story of a gaoler in the Siyah-Chal. Stories from both events were told and many friends of the Faith and community of interest were welcomed in a warm, loving and hospitable atmosphere.

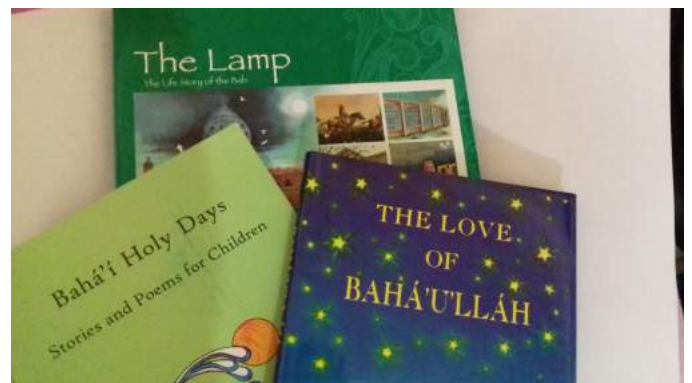


Holy Day Celebrations in Dumfries & Galloway

The Bahá'í Community of Dumfries and Galloway celebrated the **Festival of the Twin Holy Days** with spiritually uplifting devotionals and with many truly wonderful stories from both the lives of The Báb and Bahá'u'lláh



The younger children read stories and poems about the **Holy Days**...we used these books (in the photo) ... the stories in these books are indeed very heart-warming and inspiring specially for the younger members of the community..



Glasgow Celebrates Twin Holy Days



The Glasgow Bahá'í Community joined by family and friends and visitors from the Bahá'ís of surrounding Communities held a truly wonderful "Birth of the Báb" Celebration.



The evening was opened by James Gilles who gave an overview of the History and the Celebrations of the **"Twin Holy"** Days, along with a short slide presentation.

A wonderful devotional which was prepared by the Glasgow Friends reflecting the **"One World and Unity"** of the **Bahá'í Faith** with those who took part coming from Canada, Italy, Caribbean, Ireland and of course Scotland, which was followed by a musical rendition of Bahá'í Prayer.



Then food which was a hot and cold buffet and included currys, stews, salads and breads, and truly marvellous sweets all supplied by the Glasgow Community.

Cosma then lead everyone into a community singing project with all the friends being put into



groups with specific pieces to sing, all of which was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone.



The evening closed with music by **Hugh**, who gave a wide and varied selection of music and songs for everyone to dance and sing to and which everyone enjoyed .

Western Isles Twin Holy Days Celebrations



The celebration took place at two locations. After prayers, readings and some discussion, everyone was invited to an international food buffet. This included a range of foods based on recipes from Africa, Asia and Europe, and was cooked and supplied by visitors.

The Edinburgh Community **"Holy Days" Celebrations**

Zoe Turner sends us this wonderful report of her visit to one of the Edinburgh Community's **"Holy Day"** Celebrations.



"Along with Helen Campbell (Originally from Stornaway now living in Selkirk) we drove to the **Bahá'í Centre in Edinburgh**, which was her first visit to Centre. We both enjoyed and were spiritually uplifted by the Celebrations which started in the beautiful Upper Room with its wonderful

Chandeliers and later down to the basement for lovely refreshments.



Helen enjoyed the experience meeting new friends as well as those she knew from Summer School.



The young Bahá'í students were involved in preparing the programme; a special short slide presentation on **Bahá'u'lláh's** life by John Chan), and beautiful sung prayers

accompanied on guitar, and a special tablet of **Bahá'u'lláh** mentioning the "**Twin Holy Days**", in which there is a reference to a young child; whereupon the youngest present, a sleeping baby, stirred, making sounds as if to cry, but turned over and with the stroking of his back by his father, went back to sleep! It was a sweet moment. There was also a dramatic reading of stories about **Bahá'u'lláh** by four of the Friends from the Edinburgh Bahá'í community which was most effective."

The Next Day

Helen stayed overnight with me then managed to drive herself home to Selkirk again.

After she left I made some marshmallow 'Top hats' with pink sugar hearts on top to take to my two neighbouring families as a 'wee treat' for the Holy Day. One family had been looking up the **Bahá'í Temple Chile** on Google when they knew I was going there.

I also took some to the Youth Club in a special box, and guess what they were doing when I got there!? Making Top hats & toffee apples for their belated Halloween disco the next evening! At the end of the session the Youth Worker told them I had made something for them and asked me to tell them why. So I got a chance to mention the **Bahá'í Holy Days** again in a way I had not expected and also was able to mention my visiting Chile and why!

My Reflection Time evening was the next day so quite a lot of preparation was needed because I had been invited to lunch with dear local friends after sharing my Chile experiences and photos with them the week before, and another local friend who knew I was going to Santiago was keen to see those too! Gosh it is hard to fit everything in! Maria came for pumpkin soup, a baked potato & salad, and Helen & daughter Suzanne arrived early, then Spiritualist Joyce, so it was a lively evening, and after music, readings on the theme of Compassion, and prayers followed by further discussion, they also wanted to see some photos of Chile & hear a bit about my adventurous and challenging trip!

Forced closure of shops in Iran on an unprecedented scale

7 November 2016, (BWNS) — Over one hundred Baha'i-owned businesses in cities across Iran, including Sari, Ghaemshahr, and Bandar Abbas, were sealed by Iranian authorities after they were temporarily closed to observe Baha'i Holy days on the 1st and 2nd November.

(For full article go to Bahá'í World News Service)

Jeremy Fox wrote this article after attending an Interfaith meeting in Edinburgh which touched on Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights regarding "time off for religious holidays".

Observance of Baha'i Holy Days

"Examples of the right to manifestation (of religious belief) include ... time off for religious holidays." - This refers to Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights on the right to manifest one's religious beliefs..

Observance of Baha'i Holy Days

Shoghi Effendi's statement written in 1947
(Excerpt From: "Directives from the Guardian.")

"He wishes the Bahá'ís to press for recognition of their right to observe their own Holy Days, and to observe them whenever possible in strict accordance with our teachings."

"He wishes also to stress the fact that, according to the Bahá'í laws, work is forbidden on our nine Holy Days. Believers who have independent businesses or shops should refrain from working on these days. Those who are in government employ should, on religious grounds, make an effort to be excused from work; all believers, whoever their employers, should do likewise. If the government or other employers refuse to grant them these days off, they are not required to forfeit their employment, but they should make every effort to have the independent status of the Faith recognized and their right to hold their own religious Holy Days acknowledged.

It may be that the Guardian's guidance regarding observance of our Holy Days has somewhat slipped under our radar. Apart from what he wrote (all those years ago) about those who have their own business, it would seem that all employed Bahá'ís should 'make an effort to be excused from work', whether or not they are likely to be granted permission. **Why? - "for recognition of their right to observe their own Holy Days"**. It is a way of affirming the Faith's status as a religion established in our town/village etc. just like Christianity, Judaism and Islam for example.

Sometimes, where practical, an employer will allow a token one or two days off, but at least they become aware of the presence of a Faith to which they may have until then given no attention.

It is a way of saying "would you normally require your employees to work on Christmas Day?" Of course the answer is that it depends on what you do. If you are a nurse, fireman or work for an electricity or gas company obviously not all can have the day off, but the right in principle, under normal circumstances, is nevertheless recognised. It helps bring us out of the shadows and put us on the map.

Shirin Abdullaeva from Edinburgh's account of her recent celebration of the twin Holy Days is an excellent example of what I had in mind with regard to children.

"Children"

I remember when our children were young we decided we would keep them off school on Holy Days, but then realised this wasn't fair unless they were going to enjoy something special - so we chose to either make sure we had something worthwhile for them or, if not, to let them stay in school and just explain to them frankly that on this occasion we hadn't been able to justify it.

I wonder what today's parents think?"

(See Shirin's facebook page for the full account of her recent celebration of the twin Holy Days)

Betty Shepherd 1922 -2016



This wonderful tribute to the memory of Betty Shepherd has been produced in collaboration with Orkney friends.

"Betty became a Bahá'í in Manchester in 1952 after reading a book on the Bahá'í Faith which her sister Irene gave her. Betty was excited to discover that this was what she had been searching for for many years. With great joy and energy, she dedicated her life to serving the Faith. In 1959 the Shepherd family pioneered to Inverness opening the Highlands to the Faith. She would not think twice about supporting her neighbouring communities to give talks and join in activities, the nearest Baha'ís being over 100 miles away in Aberdeen, Skye or Stornoway!

Their family home (42 Island Bank Road) became a hive of Baha'í activities and she was known for her welcoming hospitality. There was a never ending stream of visitors who were always made to feel part of the family. Betty's enthusiasm, always present, was infectious whether meeting her as a stranger or a friend.

In 1972, during the Idi Amin regime, Betty and Harold left for Uganda to help support the Bahá'ís there, working in Auntie Clare's Kindergarten which included a spell in prison on a trip to a village to visit a Baha'í community. Due to Harold's deteriorating health they returned to Scotland and joined the Bahá'í community in Orkney where they remained to the end of their life in this world.

Betty was at the heart of the Bahá'í community in Kirkwall and tirelessly served the Faith becoming involved in many local organisations. She was highly regarded by the whole community - Bahá'í and non Bahá'í alike – and much loved by many. Betty served as an Auxiliary Board Member during the late 1970s into the early 1980s. **(A fuller account of Betty's life can be read on the Bahá'í Histories site)**

Travelling to Kirkwall

Royce and I were able to join Ann, Tom and Graham in Kirkwall for the funeral of Ann's beloved mother Betty Shepherd. This was our first visit to the Orkneys and a memorable one.

The whole day of the funeral was devoted to Betty's life and was beautifully prepared by Ann and the Orkney Friends. We were blessed with a sunny day and, standing on the hillside in the cemetery, I was very aware of being surrounded by a feeling of closeness with the souls of Betty, her husband Harold and sister Irene Bennett who are now all laid to rest in that spot.

The loving Friends in Kirkwall made us all very welcome with food and stories of Betty. An added bonus for us was attending an excellent concert in Kirkwall Cathedral, together with Ray Sheppard from Stornoway, in which one of the Orkney Bahá'ís was singing, A very beautiful and fitting conclusion to the weekend.....Liz Emerson

A Bahá'í wedding in Inverness



The Bahá'í marriage of our daughter Alexandra and Ben Saunders took place in Inverness on Saturday August 6th. The ceremony was held on a small island in the boating lake at **Whin Park**, which was a first for the park and a unusual vision for a curious public, followed by a meal at the Loch Ness Country Hotel. There were 110 guests of whom 25 were children. Mhairi Schmidt was the Bahá'í Marriage Celebrant.....Liz Emerson

Western Isles News

The monthly talks continued in An Lanntair, Stornoway

September –Full Circle

Lindsay John, a freelance artist and lecturer gave a presentation on his background and current work.

It was interesting to hear how the Baha'i teachings of all-embracing unity and an ancient Chinese Jade Disc have both influenced and shaped his sculptural works.

October – Tanzanian Trip

Mina gave an illustrated talk on her recent visit to **Tanzania**.

Learning and Service was the main reason for this trip - helping the Maasai widows and children via the independent organization called *Naserian* that was founded by **Zarin Hainsworth in 2010**



The group held children's classes, mobile clinics, jewelry workshops and helped build a centre for the widows. Discussions were held with community leaders and the local MP with a view to educating the children in every village, meeting local needs. Mina wishes to thank neighbours and shops that generously donated gifts including Harris Tweed, money, School Equipment etc, all of which will be put to good use for the benefit of the Maasai children and widows.

November – Dedication of Chilean Temple of Light

This talk was given by **Howard Moshtael**.

A long term Bahá'í aim has been to have a **House of Worship** on every continent of the world and with the completion of the Temple in Chile this has been achieved. This latest Temple, built near Santiago, has an outer skin composed of white alabaster and glass.

To mark the completion of the final temple, Howard's presentation contained a spiritual element along with an informative display of the now existing eight. A special thanks to everyone who prepared the visual presentations and delivered the talks.

Visitors

During August we were very pleased to meet Ian and Jill Cookson, visitors from New Zealand who

had come to visit relatives. Our best wishes go with them on their travels.

Meditation Course

In August we started Paul Profaska's C.A.L.M. (Communal Approach to Learning Meditation) course. The course ran for 9 weeks and was well-attended. 'Refresher' sessions are planned for the coming months.

Scaladale

In October the junior youth and children returned to Scaladale for a weekend of readings, games and



exercise. Many thanks to Laura Kater who took a major role in the proceedings. Laura was also the Ruhi Book 1 tutor to some of the juniors who have shown an interest in becoming future junior youth animators.

As always, everyone had a wonderful time

Service Project for Junior Youth and Children



At an art project in Sheshader, both Sally and Mina guided the youngsters in the making of pictures using sea-shells. The pictures were of excellent quality and



they were presented to the local Bethesda Care Home. Congratulations to the talented youngsters.

O Son of Man! I loved thy creation, hence I created thee.
Wherefore, do thou love Me, that I may name thy name
and fill thy soul with the spirit of life.....
Bahá'u'lláh

My thoughts on becoming a Bahá'í

Helen Campbell who has recently moved from Stornoway to the Borders shares some of her thoughts on becoming Bahá'í.

"Earlier this year, (9th March to be exact), at Laurie and Ian's house in Inverurie I decided to embrace the Cause. It was a natural decision even although I had argued all through the Ruhi Institute Book 1 and most of Book 2.

I was at Inverurie with some friends to read Book 3, tutored by Neil MacMillan who made the studying a very pleasant and joyful experience.

My initial contact with the **Bahá'í Community in Stornoway**, the largest town in the Hebrides, was with Mina Shephard. Mina was a great help when I undertook both my first Devotional and Feast and is a true friend.

During April I attended my first Gathering in Aberdeen - a lot to take in and understand. I'll be better at the next one!

The same applies to the **Strathallan Summer School**, an emotional experience, where Bahá'ís from all corners of the world meet to study and socialize. There is an amazing atmosphere at Strathallan and it is wonderful to meet the young families who are the future of the Faith.

I have been reading books pertaining to the Cause and ones I must mention are Portals to Freedom by Howard Colby Ives, Thief in the Night by William Sears and my current one, Memories of 'Abdul-Bahá by Ramona Allen Brown. The next in line is The Gleanings, a present from Mina.

In conclusion, I am glad I have become a follower of **Bahá'u'lláh** and since moving to the Scottish Borders I have met Zoe so there is now a new Devotional to look forward to and a new friend to meet".....Helen



Ayrshire Bahá'í Community along with partners groups once again came together in the Ayrshire Peace Group to celebrate the **United Nations "Peace One Day"** on the 21st September in Kilmarnock.

The celebration was opened by local Bahá'í Svend Kamming who welcomed everyone and gave a brief outline of the UN Peace One Day aims and said that this was the thirteenth consecutive year the celebration had taken place in Ayrshire. He also introduced the various stalls of the many supporting organisations scattered around the hall.



This year there were two main speakers, the first being **Julianne Wigfield**, who is a mature student completing her Masters at Glasgow University and the Campaign Coordinator for **Ayrshire Amnesty International**.



Julianne spoke about her work, in particular her involvement with the Refugee situation- her travels to the various areas where they live including the centres in Calais, and organising fundraisers and a convoy to Thessaloniki. She spoke about the plight of the unaccompanied children in these centres

who, without legal guardians, are extremely vulnerable to trafficking, exploitation and disease.



The other speaker was **Sheila Smith** from the Charity **Mary's Meals**. She spoke about how the charity was originally started in 1992 in a lop-sided garden shed in Perthshire to store a few donations for a Bosnian charity

appeal and has now grown to what is called: **"The shed that fed a Million Children"**

Mary's Meals provides over one million children across 13 countries with a meal at school. Many of the children depend on Mary's Meals because their parents are so poor they can't afford to provide a meal for their families every day, so they know that they will be fed each day they attend school, giving them the energy to concentrate in class and get through the rest of the day. She also confirmed that 93p out of every £1 donated is spent directly on all of their charitable activities. She concluded that Mary's Meals was now a grass roots Global Movement - people from all around the world contribute their money, goods, skills, time and prayers to help the world's poorest communities.



Barbara Alexander of the **Ayrshire Bahá'í Community**, read some quotations on the need for a peaceful world. She also announced that a new **"Peace Skills Group"** was being set up in Kilmarnock to learn skills to create peace in your heart, mind, voice and behaviour.

Music was again supplied by two musicians who have regularly supported the "Peace One Day" programmes over the years.

****Michalle McDonall.**

****Willie Sinclair**



Public meeting at Abertay University, Dundee

The Local Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Dundee organised a public meeting at Abertay University on 26 September 2016 at which **Dr Hooshmand Badee** of Newton Mearns Bahá'í Community's spoke about "*emerging values for a sustainable global society*". What follows is a summary of his talk.



We are living in an extraordinary time. Changes are taking place all the time and globalization is a part of this change. Globalization is no longer an imaginary idea, it is going to happen whether we want it or not, and it is a part of everyone's life. But, how does globalization takes place? Globalization occurs because we have the tools to achieve it, such as: information technology; advanced transport; effective communication systems; global financial interdependency; multinational corporations; and emerging economies who are entering the global market. These conditions have created a strong interdependency between the peoples and nations of the world.

Therefore, globalization is taking place and we don't have a choice. However, we can choose what path of globalization we want to follow. Experts in globalization strongly believe that although globalization is not negotiable, the process through which it will come about is. Unfortunately, current negative processes are resulting in many problems including inequality and the widening gap between the rich and the poor. This kind of globalization is not sustainable.

For **Bahá'ís**, enlightened, sustainable globalization involves a firm belief in the principle of the unity of humankind. **Bahá'u'lláh** proclaims 'The tabernacle of unity hath been raised; regard ye not one another as strangers...' (GWB, p. 218). A number of statements clearly explain the meaning and significance of globalization in relation to the unity of humankind, using phrases such as 'the well-

being of mankind' (GWB, p. 286), 'Let your vision be world-embracing' (GWB, p. 94). Similarly, **Bahá'u'lláh** uses metaphorical expressions such as 'the entire human race as one soul and one body' (GWB, p. 214), and 'ye are the flowers of one garden.' (Bahá'u'lláh, BNE, p. 209)

There is a close link between the unity of humankind, globalization and sustainability. People are concerned, interconnected and responsible for the needs of each other, for preserving the environment, and for respecting future generations. The notion of unity recognises the well-being of humanity as a human right, and accepts the fact that the suffering of others will affect the comfort of all in the long run. Thinking of humanity as one family, whether in a small community or the wider society, can be useful and effective in the application of emerging values for a sustainable and peaceful society.

(GWB = *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*;
BNE = *Bahá'u'lláh and New Era*)

UK Bahá'í Histories Project

<http://bahaihistoryuk.wordpress.com>

Have you thought about writing your Bahá'í story?

UK BAHÁ'Í HISTORIES are endeavouring to collect as many 'stories' as possible of how UK believers have become Bahá'ís.

The aim of this exciting project is to raise awareness of our unique heritage and 'unfolding destiny', to preserve the history of the Faith in these islands for future research, and to give readers, now and in the future, a historical perspective to aid their understanding of current trends and events.

Since its online launch in 2012, some 250 stories have been published on the Histories website. Friends around the world enjoy reading them - stories that tell of the excitement of becoming a Bahá'í, stories that record precious moments with some of the Hands of the Cause, stories of connections with Bahá'í friends throughout the world, and of experiences of the wider Bahá'í community.

Please don't delay in writing your own story. Not only is it going to be interesting to others, it will become a valuable part of our **National Bahá'í History**.

We would especially welcome more stories from the Bahá'ís in Scotland also stories from new Bahá'ís and those young in age.

To send in your story, or for further guidance as to how to go about it, please contact Jenny Lockwood on 01242 676597, or email: bhp1uk@gmail.com

You can also follow us on our Facebook page: <http://www.facebook.com/> or follow us on Twitter: @bahaihistoryuk

For your Diaries



Ruhy Parris of the Edinburgh Bahá'í Community sends out this up and coming event in Edinburgh.

Edinburgh Holocaust Remembrance

This is an invitation to attend the Edinburgh Interfaith Association Holocaust Remembrance on **Wednesday 25 January at 7pm at Drummond Community High School.**

One of the speakers is Umutesi Stewart, who many of the Edinburgh Baha'is know already. She is a survivor of the Rwandan genocide. She will be recounting her own personal experiences.

Please RSVP as shown below.

I will be attending the event, and hope as many of us as possible will be able to show our support.

Regards,

Ruhy

An Evening of Remembrance

The staff and pupils of Drummond Community High School and Edinburgh Interfaith Association invite you to the annual evening of remembrance for

**Holocaust Memorial Day,
Wednesday January 25th.**

There will be readings, reflections and musical performances from students and special guest speakers:

Umutesi Stewart, survivor of the Rwandan genocide
Saskia Tepe, daughter of Brigitte Langer, survivor of the Holocaust

**Drummond Community High School,
41 Bellevue Place, Edinburgh, EH7 4BS**

January 25th 2017, 7.00 to 8.30pm

After the event there will be a reception for the guests and audience.

The event is free, but please RSVP by calling 0131 556 2651 or emailing kirsten.dickson@drummond.edin.sch.uk

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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Ayrshire Quote:

"Be an encourager. The world has plenty of critics already!"

We need your stories and community activities. Deadline for the next issue will be the end of March 2017 with publication in April 2017.

Email Dereck Redfern. (redfernrocks@aol.com)
