

“Fundamentally, as we have previously indicated, there must emerge in many hundreds of clusters a growing band of believers who can maintain, with those around them, a sustained focus on nurturing growth and building capacity, and who are distinguished by their ability and their discipline to reflect on action and learn from experience....”

Universal House of Justice, Ridván 2018



“....As the work of community building intensifies, the Friends are using the new capacities they have developed to improve conditions in the society around them, their enthusiasm kindled by their study of the divine teachings. Short-term projects have soared in number, formal programmes have expanded their reach, and there are now more Bahá'í-inspired development organizations engaged in education, health, agriculture, and other areas....”

Universal House of Justice Ridván 2018

SCOTTISH BAHÁ'Í



NEWSLETTER

“....How striking, too, is the young age at which so many of those lionhearts made their indelible mark on history. During the coming period, may their example give courage to the entire company of the faithful—not least to the youth, who are once more summoned to the vanguard of a movement aimed at nothing less than the transformation of the world...”

*Universal House of Justice
Ridván 2018*



BAHÁ'Í COUNCIL FOR SCOTLAND

Dearly loved friends,

The Bahá'í Council sends you all its loving greetings. These are the final days of service of the current nine members Council and at the end of November a new Council with five members will take up its service. This summer the Council collaborated closely with the Auxiliary Board members, the training institute board, supporting communities, and individuals in organising teaching projects and youth camps across Scotland, as well as the summer school and Scottish gathering. The locations of these projects differ greatly in terms of geography and demographics, ranging from an inner city to a small village on a distant island, and each neighbourhood of focus is home to a group of two or more Bahá'ís. Planning began in late spring, and lessons are now being learnt and future campaigns are being arranged for the year ahead.

The projects that were of particular focus took place in two neighbourhoods—Leith in Forth cluster and Maryhill in Clyde cluster—that are at the forefront of learning in Scotland. Projects also took place in Dumfries in the South West cluster and in Stornoway in the Western Isles. The aim with these two clusters was to learn more about how a first milestone cluster, where a programme of growth has already started, can advance past the second milestone by establishing an intensive programme. This is one of the principal goals of the Five Year Plan. The Council was also happy to support a teaching project in Levenwick in Shetland.

A good number of stories, challenges and reflections were conveyed in the reports from these summer projects. The Council would like to share some of these in the hopes that they will inspire everyone to realise their potential to enjoy the bounty of teaching, and to know that all that we love and admire in wonderful videos like *A Widening Embrace* can happen in our Scotland.

In Leith, Edinburgh, an urban location featuring social housing, private rentals, and a population of indigenous and new settlers, the project was used to both strengthen the neighbourhood work and to orient youth who were offering service during the summer. The aim was to have 250 meaningful conversations with youth about Bahá'u'lláh's mission and the institute process, and to ultimately start a Book 1 class. As the teaching project was scheduled immediately following a youth gathering focused on "A Call to Heroism", it made it difficult for many youth to attend. However, through a carefully planned programme and a focused outreach, the project yielded 213 meaningful conversations, with two youth and a mother beginning Book 1. This also led to the formation of a children's class with the mother's child participating, along with four others.



Maryhill in Glasgow is another urban location, with a large student population. The team planned nine days of outreach, focused on engaging youth in meaningful conversations, with the same aim of starting a Book 1 class by the following week. Although this class has yet to begin, the team was able to speak with twenty-five youth and five parents, and through these interactions, six new children joined the children's class in wake of the project. A key piece of learning for the Maryhill team was that it would be easier to invite youth to a Book 1 class if a specific start date is set in advance.

In the Western Isles, local and visiting Bahá'ís organised a series of activities, with the support from some collaborating friends. In Stornoway, meaningful conversations were enjoyed during seventeen home visits, picnic outings, and a craft event at a local community café. A radio interview on the nature and purpose of the Junior Youth Spiritual Empowerment Programme was also arranged. In Point, a beach cleanup service

project took place, in which twenty-two parents, children, and junior youth participated. A residential institute camp was organised in Scaladale, with nine adults, four children, ten junior youth, and a youth. Here, the purpose of the institute process was shared, and two junior youth groups and a children's class were formed. The local friends are already planning follow-up actions, with the hope that the camps and community-building activities can become part of the pattern for the year.



A teaching project was also organised in the Shetland Islands in the village of Levenwick, where the sole Bahá'í family has been gradually nurturing friendships since pioneering there in 2012. Last year, no less than every household was personally invited to attend the joyful Bicentenary celebrations. The aim of the teaching project was to meet new friends, build on existing friendships, and begin engaging in meaningful conversations. Although the location was challenging in that there are no streets, coffee shops, or obvious meeting places in such a rural region, the team made effective use of the programme that was created for the Leith teaching project, and in the end, thirty-four people were introduced to the Faith—twenty-five through meaningful conversations.

While these summer projects were organised in vastly different localities, in each case the participants wanted to learn how to effectively reach out to their neighbourhood for assistance to start, develop, and multiply their community-building activities. It is clear this may not be a quick process, but we are all building on years of trusted friendships in our neighbourhoods. We only need to find effective ways to share that vision so beautifully described in the first paragraph of the Ridvan 2018 letter from the Universal House of Justice to the Baha'is of the World. This is one of the key things the entire community in Scotland needs to learn more about in the coming months:

"...We greet you in the enduring afterglow of those memorable events that marked the bicentenary of the Birth of the Blessed Beauty. As we consider what transpired then and since, we find that the global Bahá'í community now in view is not the same as when it embarked on the first six cycles of the current Plan. It is more conscious than ever before of its mission. It has experienced an unprecedented surge in its capacity to bring friends and acquaintances into contact with its community life; to inspire neighbourhoods and villages into unified endeavour; to articulate how spiritual truths can be translated into sustained practical action; and, above all, to converse not only about the teachings that will build the world anew, but about the One Who taught them: Bahá'u'lláh. Accounts of His life and of His suffering told in myriad tongues by adults, youth, and children touched countless hearts. Some showed themselves ready to explore His Cause further. Others pledged collaboration. And many a receptive soul was moved to an avowal of faith..."

The Bahá'í Council for Scotland sends you all its loving greetings and looks forward to working with you all in the weeks, months, and years ahead.

Andrew Goodwin,
 (Secretary – Bahá'í Council for Scotland)
 Email: bcs@bahai.org.uk

IN AND AROUND GLASGOW

In July, Dr Lameh Fananapazir, gave a public talk on “The Need for Religious Understanding and Unity” at the Interfaith Centre in Glasgow. Dr Lameh Fananapazir, a member of the Bahá'í Faith and author of ‘Islam at the Crossroads’ is based in the USA. He was travelling throughout Scotland during July/ August ending with the Scottish Summer School, giving a series of talks, motivated by the tenets of his Faith, promoting unity and understanding between all Faiths and the oneness of the human family.



Newton Mearns community continue to hold their fortnightly ‘Neighbourhood Conversations’. The topics are varied and range from the Bahá'í attitude to economic development, to the study of various tablets, prayer and historical topics. At one of its recent evenings Mrs Venus Carew facilitated a wonderful discussion on the Bahá'í approach to education. The evening was well attended by friends from South Africa, Ghana, Iran, China and Ireland, illustrating the oneness of humanity!



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DEEPENING IN GLASGOW

Following on from a Feast suggestion, the Glasgow Community has decided to deepen on how to have “conversations” about the Báb in view of the Bicentennial of the Birth of the Báb coming up next year. A number of deepening classes have been arranged on a monthly basis with the first scheduled in August. Resources include a video show as well as prepared material to deepen on and discuss. Also there will be weekly Sunday devotionals during the Summer, which will be a great place to invite friends to come and join us.



AN INVERNESS FIRESIDE AT ROLF AND MHAIRI'S (A PERSONAL VIEW)

Rolf and Mhairi Schmidt invited us to their home in Inverness for a fireside talk given by Rolf. The theme for the talk was Bahá'u'lláh mystical work “The Seven Valleys” which were written in about 1860 during His time in Baghdad. Being a practical down to earth person, I was concerned that I was not going to understand the mystical meaning behind this particular work. but I was eager to learn and by the end of the evening I was beginning to understand a little. It seems logical that we're on a journey from cradle to grave and that this journey, which Bahá'u'lláh calls the Right Path, is marked by seven stages.

As I listened I was reminded of my school days, learning long Shakespearean speeches.

In his play “As you like it,” Shakespeare talks of the seven physical ages of man. He begins with “the infant, mewling and puking in the nurse's arms” and ends with “second childishness and mere oblivion”..... without teeth, eyes, sense of taste and in fact without everything.

Its physical progressionand regression, but Bahá'u'lláh, in “The Seven Valleys”, is not describing man's physical development. Instead He is describing our soul's spiritual passage by likening it to that of a wayfarer journeying through seven specific valleys. All progression Bahá'u'lláh writes ...

“The stages that mark the wayfarer's journey from the abode of dust to the heavenly homeland are said to be seven” but “until he taketh leave of self, and transverseth these stages, he shall never reach to the ocean of nearness and union”. (with God) Basically:

The first Valley is The Valley of Search, through which the wayfarer needs to travel with patience.

The second is The Valley of Love, in which he will feel both ecstasy and pain.

The third is The Valley of Knowledge, where he will find certitude.

The fourth is The Valley of Unity, in which he will learn



of the Manifestations of God.

The fifth is The Valley of Contentment, where he will delightedly discover his spiritual self.

The sixth is The Valley of Wonderment, in which he is struck dumb with the beauty of God.

The seventh is The Valley of True Poverty, and Utter Nothingness, which is dying from self and living in God.

I found it encouraging that Bahá'u'lláh states that “These journeys have no visible ending in the world of time...”.

Rolf's talk was illustrated throughout with beautiful paintings by an American Baha'i artist, Cary Enoch-Reinstein, that were projected onto a large screen. Rolf also chose seven interesting pieces of music to accompany us through the seven valleys.

The topic is huge and very deep but nevertheless I got something from Rolf's talk, particularly a desire to reread “The Seven Valleys”. The talk and subsequent discussion were very enjoyable and interesting.

There are many beautiful lines in the twenty pages of this work and I'd like to finish with a few of them.

These are from the point when the wayfarer has just come through the Valley of Knowledge and is now entering the Valley of Unity....

“With the ear of God he heareth, with the eye of God he beholdeth the mysteries of divine creation.”

“He seeth in himself neither name nor fame nor rank, but findeth his own praise in praising God”.

Bahá'u'lláh.

(PS Thanks Rolf and Mhairi for a lovely and inspiring evening.) *Liz Emerson (Inverness)*

WESTERN ISLES ACTIVITIES

Once again a wonderful range of activities took place throughout the summer months in the Western Isles, including; monthly talks, devotionals, a Junior Youth camp, the Western Isles 'Campaign', and new Children's Classes.

Monthly Talks

The monthly talks were held in the Retirement Centre, Bayhead and are advertised in the Events newspaper.

Everyone is invited to these informative talks and there is always time for questions. Recent subjects and speakers included:

May - The Prophet Herald. Sandi Humphrey travelled from North Uist to give her presentation on The Báb who was the founder of Bábism and the Herald of the Bahá'í Faith.

June: Tahirih. Ata Farhadi spoke about Tahirih, a woman ahead of her time.



August: Mulla Husayn. Natalie Varghaei from Glasgow spoke about Mulla Husayn, who was the first follower of The Báb. Due to ill health, Natalie was unable to attend in person, but used a computer video link-up to deliver the talk and answer questions.

Other Events

In June: Arlette George and Layli Semple came from Glasgow as part of the Western Isles Campaign. They helped with the children's activities at Aird

at Lewis Castle with many friends attending the celebrations held at Aird Community Centre. Everyone had a very enjoyable time. Christina St Clair, who travelled from the Shetland Islands, treated us to prayers in Gaelic and English. Some of the guests read and sang in their native Gaelic which was a joy to hear.

Regular Events

Fridays (6-8pm) Junior Youth Group meet at the Nicolson Institute.

Saturdays (3-4pm) Devotional in the Sanctuary room at Western Isles Hospital.

Everyone is always welcomed.

Saturdays (12-1pm)

A new children's group (5-7y.o.) is at an early stage but has started at Parkend.



She became one of the first 18 followers of The Báb, known collectively as the Letters of the Living. Tahirih was a talented woman, a poet and theologian who opposed the oppression of women. Her pronouncements, however, were not acceptable to the authorities and she was executed in 1852.

July: Who was The Báb? The martyrdom of The Báb (1819- 1850) was the subject chosen by Local resident Ann Shaw and her interesting historical talk covered the events leading to the execution of The Báb and his disciple, Anis, in Tabriz in 1850.

Community Centre, the July JY and beach clean-up activities and also visited many homes.

In July: On the 7/8th, The well-attended Junior Youth camp was held at Scaladale. The Braighe clean-up took place on 6th July, to remove debris from the beach. Also there were Information stalls at both Lochs and Point annual agricultural shows.

On the 4th August saw another Bahá'í wedding in Lewis with Rhiannon and Ata being married



A HUQÚQU'LLÁH STORY

(E.K.).. was a great scholar and a wonderful Bahá'í. The National Spiritual Assembly of Írán had requested him to devote all his time to the Faith, so his days were spent in writing books and deepening Bahá'ís, especially the youth. As he had no income of his own, he accepted a very modest monthly allowance from the National Fund. One of his students, Kázim, who would often go to his house to help him in his work, noticed that his teacher never touched the allowance which came from the National Office until he had returned nineteen percent of it as Huqúqu'lláh. Kázim was surprised because he knew that his teacher had no other income, and the allowance he received was barely

sufficient for his necessary expenses, so one day he asked about it. He said to his teacher, "You have repeatedly explained to us the laws pertaining to Huqúqu'lláh. You have said that giving Huqúqu'lláh is only binding on those who have excess wealth. How is it, then, that you, yourself, give part of your money for Huqúqu'lláh each month when I know how little you have to live on?" "My son", replied his teacher, "do you suppose that the amount I keep for myself is mine? That, too, rightfully belongs to God. It is His money that I am spending and the little I give back to Him is only to appease my own conscience." Kázim realized that true lovers are not bound by the standards of the wise. The measure of their sacrifice has no limitations.



LIGHT TO THE WORLD

At the end of July the friends gathered at the beautiful grounds of Strathallan School near Perth for yet another outstanding, unforgettable Scottish Summer School. The theme of the summer School was: **"Light to the World"** On the first day of the summer school the regional Council had arranged for a special gathering for the friends from all over Scotland to come together to

reflect with others on the life of Bahá'u'lláh and the implications of His life for us in Scotland in 2018. Over 200 friends from near and far gathered in the beautiful Chapel for this special day, and what a sight it was to see so many people striving for the same purpose: to serve humanity. The programme was filled with many beautiful artistic activities. In the morning the friends had an opportunity

to take part in art workshops. From card making, to singing, dancing and drama, there was something for everyone.

At different points of the day the love and joy of the friends was expressed through the sharing of service stories from all over Scotland. It was breathtaking to see the sacrifices that souls around Scotland have been making to serve humanity and even more touching to see some of the friends of the Faith up on stage sharing the enjoyment they have had through participating in the core activities.

The school was endowed with two exceptional speakers, Dr Lameh Fananapazir and Tahir Taherzadeh who gave us two different approaches





to talking about Bahá'u'lláh. Both Speakers gave insights to the friends regarding Bahá'u'lláh, providing us with tools and resources we can use to take back to our communities. The day was also graced with the presentation first given at the Scottish Parliament- Bahá'u'lláh and Scotland - which touched every individual at the School. The Sunday gathering ended with a beautiful ceilidh of fun, laughter and joyous memories. 200 friends had really brought light to the grounds of Strathallan.

The Summer School continued the next day with an early start for the friends who were staying. It was the first time I had attended the Scottish Summer school in a while and it was lovely to experience the 'family groups'. The idea of the groups was to create unity and fellowship, and facilitate individual and collective acts of service. Each group was encouraged to practice a particular virtue and service throughout the summer school. It was spiritually enlightening to see how the friends stepped up to their roles. Every group really showed in action what we need to foster in order to create a true Bahá'í family.

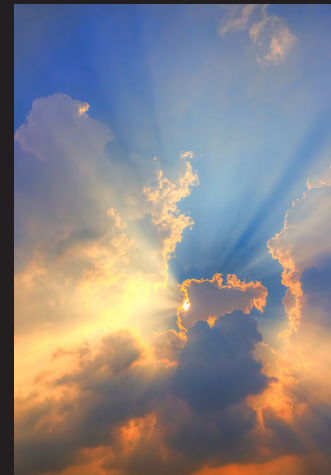
“So powerful is the light of unity that it can illumine the whole earth”

The Friends got to pick between two courses at the summer School, one lead by Dr Lameh Fananapazir on *“The relation between Christianity, Islam and the Bahai faith”* or the one lead by Tahir Taherzadeh *“The revelation of Bahá'u'lláh : “Uniting hearts and Souls”*.

There was also children's classes and a Junior youth group arranged for the younger friends who were attending the summer school.

Half of each day was spent in one's chosen course. I attended Tahir Taherzadeh's course, which was magnificent. The Course was filled with sooo many Light to the World stories about Bahá'u'lláh's life, the will of God and the Soul. Tahir's immense knowledge of stories was outstanding. It was a great course to attend. One of the things Tahir taught us in our course was to be mindful of change. Learning to be ready for entry by troops and next year's special celebration, tied in so well with the theme of the school.

There was so many things we learnt - from the character of a devotional,



TABLETS OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

The third Tajallí is concerning arts, crafts and sciences. Knowledge is as wings to man's life, and a ladder for his ascent. Its acquisition is incumbent upon everyone.

The knowledge of such sciences, however, should be acquired as can profit the peoples of the earth, and not those which begin with words and end with words.

Great indeed is the claim of scientists and craftsmen on the peoples of the world.

Unto this beareth witness the Mother Book on the day of His return...

“Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh Revealed After the Kitáb-i-Aqdas”
pp. 51-52

to examples and stories - that we will be able to share with our friends. Our souls were filled with nourishment and knowledge to help humanity advance.

Dr Lameh Fananapazir's course on "The relation between Christianity, Islam and the Bahai faith" provided insights on the relationships between the different religions, raising our capacity to having meaningful conversations with our friends on this theme.

The Friends got time in the afternoon to chill and use the grounds, swimming pool and tennis courts. This was a nice break in the midpoint of the day, and the shared activities brought everyone closer to each other.

The first evening programme was arranged by National Spiritual Assembly and based around the video "A Widening Embrace" which captures experiences and insights from a selection of neighbourhoods and villages, in rural and urban settings. This allowed the friends to see communities in action, and tied in nicely with the theme of the school. It was an inspiring end to lovely day.

The second evening featured a witty Scottish talent show arranged by the 'friendliness' family group. The School was lucky to have so many talented friends at its fingertips! There was singing, acting and communal dancing - a great evening.

The Summer School was a great way for the friends to learn more about the life of Bahá'u'lláh and how to use our knowledge and skills within our own neighbourhoods. From the Baha'i bookshop, to the friends who served us food, the organisers of the summer school, and all the facilitators, this summer school couldn't have happened without you! The theme 'Light to the World' is exemplified by the beloved souls who arise and serve. Spirit, joy and light were beaming throughout the whole summer school and when the friends had to leave, you could see how much everyone was going to miss the summer school and all the wonderful memories we created.

'Light to the World' Summer School will hopefully enlighten the friends in their own communities. A very beautiful and joyous time.

Natalie Varghaei



This piece, which Irene Rawling of Lanark created by using the Nuno Felt technique, is based on: "To one who visited in Haifa," 'Abdu'l-Bahá said, in likening the Cause of God to a Garden: "At the gate of the garden some stand and look within, but do not care to enter. Others step inside, behold its beauty, but do not penetrate far. Still others encircle this garden inhaling the fragrance of the flowers, having enjoyed its full beauty, pass out again by the same gate. But there are always some who enter and, becoming intoxicated with the splendor of what they behold, remain for life to tend the garden."

From: "The Garden of the Heart" Compilation by Frances Esty Roycrofters, NYMCMXXX (1930) Approved by the Reviewing committee of the NSA of the US and Canada.



ENERGY SPIRIT MATTER

Pencil Drawings, ink tinted on fabric.

I have long been fascinated with the process of Drawing as 'Mark Making' and the 'Energy' of line. Here the word energy is also used as a metaphor for spirit and the resulting images as various degrees of matter or that which constitutes the world of being.

Lindsay John - (Glasgow)



CONVERSATIONS

“The innumerable created things that are found in the world of existence - be they man, animal, plant, or mineral - must each be composed of elements. There is no doubt that the completeness seen in each and every thing arises, by divine creation, from the component elements, their appropriate combination, their proportionate measure, the

manner of their composition, and the influence of other created things. For all beings are linked together like a chain; and mutual aid, assistance, and interaction are among their intrinsic properties and are the cause of their formation, development and growth.”

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Some Answered Questions, Chpt. 46, p. 205)

“OUR COMMON CLIMATE CHANGE”

Illustrates both the primary pressing issue of the environment as well as the universality - and widespread responsibility - of its impact upon all peoples. But readers can also glean from it the fact that the Bahá’í Faith will bring badly needed changes (environmental) and otherwise) to society.

Biodiversity is so important –why?

It’s the primary building block of ecosystems (the complex relationship between plants, animals and their physical environment) and is a key factor determining the interactions in ecosystems. There is mounting evidence showing that increased biodiversity is vital for a healthy ecosystem. The ‘free’ natural benefits such as: crop pollination, flood prevention, carbon storage, eco-tourism, marine fisheries, as well as increased soil, air and water quality - which allow Scotland to prosper, are worth at least £21 billion per annum. *Amended from Scottish Wildlife Trust’s briefing ‘Scottish Government Debate: Biodiversity’, March 2017.

‘We cannot segregate the human heart from the environment outside us and say that once one of these is reformed everything will be improved. Man

is organic with the world. His inner life moulds the environment and is itself also deeply affected by it. The one acts upon the other and every abiding change in the life of man is the result of these mutual reactions.’ (Letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, 17 February 1933, Compilation on Social and Economic Development, p. 4)

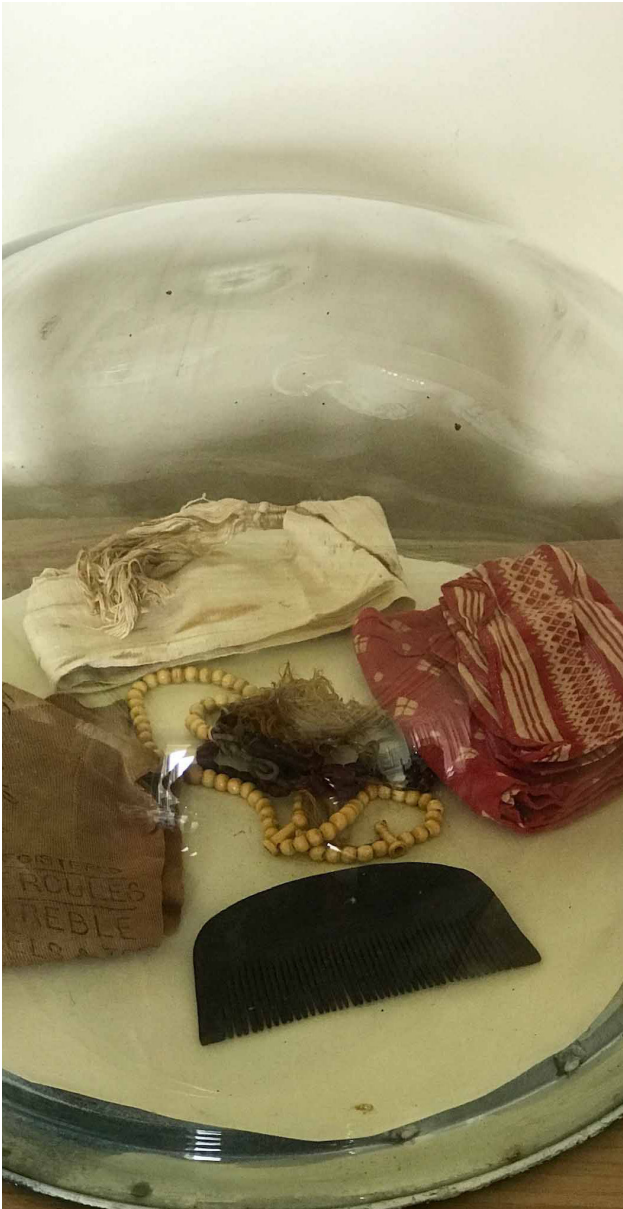
Alan Campbell

Pioneering-Teaching-Conversations

‘The most meritorious service which anyone could render is to bring the light of divine guidance and the quickening power of the spirit to an entirely new area. Humanity is crying for salvation and it is only by the Bahá’ís going into the various areas of the world, that it can be brought to them. This is the reason the Guardian has encouraged all of the friends to disperse to new territories, for this is the hour for the quickening of the world..’

(Shoghi Effendi, The Individual and Teaching, p. 35)





PERSONAL ITEMS BELONGING TO 'ABDU'L-BAHÁ GO ON DISPLAY

What joy and happiness were experienced at one of the Summer Schools, which some Bahá'ís from Scotland attended, when it was announced that a small collection of the Master's personal effects were to be put on display.

It so happened that one of the Friends, Mr. 'Adib Zaray, had recently been visiting an aunt, Shirin Manavi, in Karachi, who is now aged 89 and has a terminal illness. She was given them by her mother in law, named Zomoroo, many years previously.

It so happened that in 1915/1916 a Youthful Zomoroo, left Yazd for service in the Holy Land. She became a cook in the household of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. When the time came for her to return to Yazd, she was presented by the household with these items which have been in the family ever since.

The items included a set of Prayer Beads, a comb, a pair of socks and a head band, have been handed down throughout the years within the family, until they have now reached Mr. 'Adib Zaray, who with his aunt's full agreement, has offered them to the Universal House Justice. They will now be delivered by him personally in November this year.

PIONEERING-TEACHING-CONVERSATIONS

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(Shoghi Effendi, *The Individual and Teaching* , p. 35)



A WONDERFUL EXAMPLE OF PIONEERING, TEACHING AND SPIRITUAL CONVERSATIONS.



"I HAVE JUST RETURNED FROM A 2.5 MONTH LONG HOLIDAY IN DENMARK INCLUDING A VISIT TO THE DANISH SUMMER SCHOOL.

But I have experienced a remarkable thing: Everyone I get in touch with in Denmark wants to know why I am living in the Faroes, and so I have to say that I live here because of the Bahá'í Faith, and then they want to know what that is. Everybody I have talked to have been very positive and I can see it often leads to warm friendships with new Danish friends. When the Universal House of Justice said that the Faroes is going to play a big role in awakening the continent, maybe this is one of the ways the Faroes is doing that.

I am in contact with many, many people in Denmark and pray (of course) every day to reach out to more. Even in the shuttle taxi from the airport to Toftir last night the same thing happened with a Conversations Danish carpenter, with whom I shared the shuttle, wanting to know why I was living in the Faroes. It seems if I'm attentive it is easy to run into these lovely conversations all the time especially when I'm at home in Denmark. It can easily have to do with pioneering, and the special blessing it gives. Concerning

neighbours: I rent a small flat in Randers, my home town in Denmark, every time I am there. When I leave I have started to hand over my left-over food to the neighbours, so it does not go to waste. This time the neighbours on one side then invited me for coffee together with the neighbour from the other side, and we spent the most lovely afternoon together - and again the Bahá'í Faith became the main subject of the

conversation. The neighbour to the other side wants to host our lovely coffee next time, I will be there, and she and I sat for a long time one evening, and she wanted to hear more about the Bahá'í Faith. Here in Toftir, Maj-Britt, my neighbour broke her thigh-bone badly in January, and we, all her neighbours, have been busy helping her all we could all Spring: shopping, walking her dogs, doing laundry etc. This has brought us

all closer together and given us a warm friendship with Maj-Britt. 'The movement itself from place to place, when undertaken for the sake of God, hath always exerted, and can now exert, its influence in the world.' (Shoghi Effendi, *The Advent of Divine Justice*, p. 84).

Ingelise

"MERCY'S BLESSINGS" SHOWN IN SANQUHAR

Mercy's Blessings is a useful short film (half an hour) for stimulating reflection on gender equality, the rights of the girl child, and education. You can check it out at mercysblessing.com. During August we held a screening of "Mercy's Blessings" in Sanquhar. We had a few prepared questions to stimulate people to share their own perspectives on these issues. We were supported (as we often are) by the friends from Ayrshire. We had an interesting chat about the film and a delightful meeting together

John & Sally-Ann Hoyne.





A WIDENING EMBRACE

“True peace and tranquillity will only be realized when every soul will have become the well-wisher of all mankind.”

Bahá'u'lláh

In August, Edinburgh Bahá'í Community in the Bahá'í Centre hosted a series of audiovisual presentations on the hopeful signs of an emerging global civilization. Over the course of 5 sessions the themes that were discussed included, Evolution of human consciousness, Role of religion in the rise and fall of civilizations, Nature and underlying cause of the challenges facing humanity today, Birth of a new world civilization, embracing an ever widening crosssection of humanity.

may consider forming a children’s class and others develop capacity to work with the junior youth. More inspiration for the nucleus “The community of the Greatest Name possesses an instrument of limitless potentialities. Under a wide diversity of conditions, in virtually any cluster, it is possible for an expanding nucleus of individuals to generate a movement towards the goal of a new World Order.” Universal House of Justice 28 December 2010 We continue to pray, consult, reflect on our learning and continue with our planning and actions.

Venus Carew

NUCLEUS OF FRIENDS

(In Dumfries & Galloway)

In the last few months, a group of friends in the cluster have been learning about workings of a nucleus. Inspired by paragraph 7 of the 29th December 2015 Message from the Universal House of Justice: ‘Before long, there forms a nucleus of friends in a cluster who are working and consulting together and arranging activities.’ a few of us formed a nucleus focussed on learning about building capacity in our communities so more souls can: “invest their energies in organising children’s classes, junior youth groups, gatherings for collective worship, or other related activities...” For a nucleus to work effectively there needs to be a balance between reflection and action. Initially we met regularly to study and reflect on recent messages from the House of Justice and read stories of how the friends in other clusters have undertaken similar endeavours. We also had the bounty of consulting with our Auxiliary Board Members and Kat Murray about reading our own reality and learning the art of invitation to service. Then there was time for action: ‘The impulse to learn through action is, of course, present among the friends from the very start.’ After several firesides and unity feasts, a number of seekers accepted the invitation to form a study circle for ‘Reflections on the Life of the Spirit’. We are now learning how to collaborate and accompany the participants so everyone considers themselves as protagonists in this amazing process of individual and collective transformation. The vision of our small nucleus is to learn about enhancing capacity for this two-fold transformation using the ‘instrument of limitless potentialities’ so some



THE “YOUTH” DESIGNATED BY BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

“The Pride of Martyrs”

During those days, prior to his sojourn in the ‘Holy Land’, Nabil-A'zam (author of Dawn Breakers) traveled to Nishapur in the Northeast of Iran, a former capital of the Khorasan Province. There he met with a survivor of Shaykh Tabarsi, an old friend, Hájí 'Abdu'l-Majid who took him to his home. To Nabil's amazement he found that 'Abdu'l-Majid (also known as Aba Badí) was attending to him personally for all his needs and inquired did he not have a son old enough to assist him, (in those days the young generally had great respect and devotion for their parents and in this case a son would not have allowed his father to serve a guest personally, and bearing in mind the custom of the day did not allow female members of the family to entertain male guests.).....

Aba Badí replied that indeed he did have a son, Aqa Buzurg (Badí), a Youth in his teens, who lead a very wild life, was unruly and had no interest at all in any of his father's doings, in other words “he was the despair of his family. Nabil, the narrator, himself tell us:

“I said, send for him to come, I wish to see him. He was sent for and he came. I saw a tall, gangling youth, who, instead of physical perfections, had merely a simple heart, and I told his father to make him my host and leave his case to God . . . Then, I mentioned matters, very moving, which would melt a heart of stone.”

Nabil also read a number of verses from the long poem of Bahá'u'lláh- Qasidiy-i-'Izz-i-Varqa'iyyih, which was composed in Sulaymaniyyih, where Bahá'u'lláh speaks of His own sufferings and tribulations.

Nabil continues his narration:

‘Hearing these divine themes, the colour of the visage of that youth reddened. His eyes welled with tears, and the sound of his lamentation rose high. I calmed his agitation, but throughout that night, his enamourment and attraction kept sleep away from the eyes of Shaykh Muhammad and myself. Until the light broke we read and recited from the holy script. In the morning, when he prepared the samovar for tea, and went out to fetch milk, his father came and said: “I had never heard my son weep. I thought that nothing could move him. Now, what is the spell cast on him to make his tears flow and to cause him to cry out, to make him afire with the love of God”

I said “In any case he is no longer in command of himself, and you must give him up.” And his father



said: “This manner of losing one's self is exactly what I desired. If he remains firm in the Cause of God, I myself shall serve him.”

Studies completed, Badí' left home and departed for Baghdad and ultimately Adrianople. Upon his arrival in Baghdad, he stepped in to replace the martyred Áqá 'Abdur-Rásul, serving as the watercarrier of the companions. When eighty-eight of the companions were imprisoned and taken to Mosul, the illumined youth, despite being wounded in several places, set out on foot and arrived at Mosul ahead of the captives. Once again, he engaged in carrying water for the Friends. Later, he set out for the presence of the Abhá Beauty.

This time, he was drawn as if by a magnetic force to the waters of the Mediterranean and walked all the way from Mosul to the citadel of Akká, arriving in the spring of 1869. Since he was still wearing the simple garb of a water-carrier, he passed through the city gate and the vigilant guards. Arrangements were made for Badí' to enter the citadel and be in the presence of Bahá'u'lláh. Badí' was given two interviews by Bahá'u'lláh; during the course of these, Bahá'u'lláh made reference to a revealed Tablet addressed to Nasíri d-Din Shah. Bahá'u'lláh later wrote of Badí' that which was later quoted by Shoghi Effendi in God Passes By:

“The spirit of might and power was breathed“ Miriam Áqá Jan stated that Bahá'u'lláh: “ created him anew with the hands of power and might and sent him out as a ball of fire.”

Badí' subsequently asked for the honor of delivering the Lawh-i-Sultán to the Shah and his request was granted.

During his travels back to Persia, Badí' was often observed to be full of joy, laughter, gratitude and forbearance, walking around one hundred paces then leaving the road and turning to face 'Akká. He would then prostrate himself and say: "O God, that which you have bestowed upon me through Your bounty, do not take back through Your justice; rather grant me strength to safeguard it" Badí' plodded on, alone for four months and upon arriving in Tehran, as instructed, he never contacted any of the believers. His father didn't even know of his return.

After three days of fasting, he found out that the Shah's summer camp was located at the resort of Lar. He proceeded there and sat on a knoll where he would be found and taken to the Shah. After some time, the Shah while on a hunting expedition, found him. Badí' approached the monarch with respect and calmly said: "O King! I have come to thee from Sheba with a weighty message". Nasrin- Dín- Shah was taken back by the youth but was conscious that this message was from Bahá'u'lláh. The Tablet was taken from him and he was retained by the monarch's bodyguards. The Shah ordered the Tablet to be delivered to the mujtahids of Tehran for the purpose of a reply. The command was evaded, and they recommended Badí' be executed. The Tablet was, in an attempt to create further animosity, sent to the Persian Ambassador in Constantinople where it was hoped that the Sultan would find it to be an insult to his ego.

Shoghi Effendi wrote in *God Passes By*:

"Badí' was arrested, branded for three successive days, his head beaten to a pulp with the butt of a rifle, after which his body was thrown into a pit and earth and stones heaped upon it"

Badí' a youth of seventeen becomes, as described by Bahá'u'lláh in the "Fakhrú'sh-Shuháda" (The Pride of the Martyrs)

The Shah was reported to have been immensely displeased with the attitude and actions of the divines in refusing to meet the instructions of answering to Bahá'u'lláh. In the end, events now part of history brought loss and everlasting infamy to Násiri'd-Dín Shah and the inevitable end of the monarch's rein.

In a Tablet to Hájí 'Abdu'l-Majid (Aba Badí') Bahá'u'lláh states that - "the Temple of the Cause of God was adorned by Badí'. The pillars of tyranny were shaken and the countenance of victory unveiled itself. Badí' had attained to such heights in the world above that no mention could be made of it"

References:

Picture: Badí' accompanied by his torturers. Image scanned from Basic Bahá'í Dictionary, p. 32, originally from Bahá'u'lláh, King of Glory p. 372.)

Extracts: *This is merely an abridged version of this most wonderful story of Badí' and taken from a several accounts as follows,

- 1) Nabil-A'zam narrative "Dawnbreakers".
- 2) Hand of the Cause Mr. H M Buluzí "King of Glory"
- 3) Mr. Adib Taherzadeh "Revelation of Baha'u'lláh".
- 4) Shoghi Effendi "God Passes by".

*Please do read the full account of this most wonderful story of Badí' " the Pride of Martyrs

HILLS OF BAHÁ

THESE MOUNTAINS ASK US TO LIFT OUR SPIRITUAL VOICE TO THEM,

Kikaaya

Volcanoes Vaea and Lano Atata

Peñalolénf

Tukosmera, Yasurn

Wagagai upon Eldon caldera

Cerro Sonsonate

Taunus

Badí Pahari – Hiranya Parbat

Alborz

Nevado del Huila volcano

From the Dawning-Points of Divine Remembrance.

These mountains ask us to lift our spiritual voice to them.

(Alan Campbell..Hamilton)



“DIVERSITY DAY” IN EAST RENFREWSHIRE

(NAWGOLE AND HER DAUGHTER KARA FROM NEWTON MEARNS COMMUNITY)

Now in its 8th year “Diversity Day” which is hosted by the East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure, continues to be supported by the Giffnock Bahá'í Community with an exhibition stall managed by local Bahá'í Janet Pooran. The exhibition, now in its eight year, brings together Primary 6 pupils from schools in the East Renfrewshire area, gives the young people

the chance to see an exhibition of different religions, participate in a diversity themed art competition and develop their team-building skills through a number of sporting and dance activities. All the activities are designed to allow young people to learn about the things they have in common as well as the things that make people different.

DAYSRING

Dayspring is a Bahá'í magazine for children aged 5-12 in the U.K. and is produced under the auspices of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United Kingdom. Issues can freely be downloaded for personal use from the Dayspring website: www.dayspring-magazine.org.uk For any enquires please contact Dayspring through the or by email: dayspring@bahai.org.uk



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*We do need your stories and thoughts of what's happening in your community so please send them, deadline for next issue **January 2019** - send all contributions to Dereck (email: redfernricks@aol.com)