



In
Memoriam
168 - 169 B.E.

O my Lord! I myself and all created things bear witness unto Thy might, and I pray Thee not to turn away from Thyself this spirit that hath ascended unto Thee, unto Thy heavenly place, Thine exalted Paradise and Thy retreats of nearness, O Thou who art the Lord of all men!

Grant, then, O my God, that Thy servant may consort with Thy chosen ones, Thy saints and Thy Messengers in heavenly places that the pen cannot tell nor the tongue recount.

Bahá'u'lláh

Contents

Abbas Ali Bayat	4
Joan Bray	6
Stella Brew	7
Dorothy Brown (née Aldcroft)	8
Andrew Calderhead	10
Felix Charles Caprez	11
Michael Champs	13
Alison J. Carnie (Watson)	14
Dorothy Denton	16
Thuraisamy (Frankie) Durairatnam	17
Bernice (Bunny) Evans	19
Badreddin Fadaei Zanjani	21
Martha Hall-Patch	23
Renee Hill	25
Mary Jameson	26
Beatrice Kent	28
Sidney David Jellicoe Marsh	30
Paridokht Mavaddat Farmand	32
Afagh Moshtael (Azordegan)	33
Aghaali Moshtael	33
Margaret Joan Phillips	34
Mohammad Razavi	36
Audrie Reynolds	38
Kim Rogers-Belson	40
Sayeid Jalal Saadat Yazdi	42
Tayebeh Sábetián	43
Amy Shields	44
Sami'ú'llah Shahriari-Zavareh	46
Morna Sibley	47
Dr Aziz Ahmad Siddiqui	48
Robert Richardson Smith	49
Mohammad Vali Nakhaei	50
Tahireh Vojdani	51



Abbas Ali Bayat

1930 – 2012

Abbas Ali Bayat was born on 30 June 1930, in a city called Malyer in Iran. He was born into a Muslim family, and got married at the age of eighteen.

He declared himself a Bahá'í during the Falsafi, at a time when Bahá'ís in Iran were being tortured, persecuted and imprisoned for their beliefs. Mr Bayat was very upset and disturbed at seeing what was happening around him. One night he had a dream. He dreamt of the Báb, who, within this dream, instructed him to follow Him. This dream led Abbas to investigate the Bahá'í Faith.

It took him several months to study the Faith, and despite negative pressure from his family and friends, he declared himself a Bahá'í. Accepting the Bahá'í Faith caused Abbas immense impediment, challenges and many uphill battles.

He lost his wealth and all his comforts, and this declaration and change of faith made his life unbearable in the city of Malyer, not only for him, but for us his family too. He was forced to make the decision to leave his home in Malyer and relocate to Tehran.

Abbas owned and ran his own business, but another of the challenges that he had to face, as a result of his faith and beliefs, was that in 1995 the Islamic Republic of Iran did not renew his business licence, and consequently closed his business down. This resulted in the loss of his possessions and livelihood, not an easy obstacle for a husband and devoted father of nine children to contend with.

Shortly after this event, Abbas came to the United Kingdom to visit his children who were living there. Despite his wish to return to his home country, Iran, he was persuaded to remain in the UK, where he lived for nearly seventeen years.

Abbas Ali Bayat lived a remarkable life, one that inspired our family greatly. His adventurous attitude, his broad range of interests and his happy, patient and generous conduct made him a wonderful person to know.

He always took an interest in the people he met – there were few people he wouldn't engage with at any time or place, and his many friends over the years always spoke of how interesting he'd been.

Abbas pursued his many achievements diligently, and always rose to meet a challenge – an expectation he had of his children too!

He was philosophical in his approach to life. He especially had a great perspective when it came to the little things, never displaying anger or impatience. Instead, he showed a great dignity and humour. He extended this philosophy, no matter what obstacle he faced.

Poetry was one of his passions and his love of chanting his poems from memory was great.

The strength of his character showed even in crisis. With a few wry words our father lost his wealth, but not his faith, and that was his rock – to be a Bahá'í.

We'll miss his perspective and his gentle humour. We'll miss the surprising depth and scope

of his knowledge. We'll miss the warmth he extended to everyone he met. We'll miss the news of his strange adventures, and we'll miss the stories from the 'young ages' and places that he visited. We'll miss the tales about his old friends, and the stories that he told again and again, with that same exacting detail and passion with each telling.

Abbas passed away on 26 April 2012, on the sixth day of Rıdván, leaving behind his beloved wife, nine children, twenty grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

The Abhá Kingdom has received a special soul, and we are delighted to have been in his presence, and honoured to have been a part of his family.



Joan Bray 1921 – 2013

Joan was born on 3 August, 1921. The family was living in Chilcomb, a small village near Winchester, in Hampshire. Her father, a surgeon, was a Colonel in the British Army, and at one time was the Superintendent of Bath Hospital. When he passed away in 1935 the family moved to a large house in Twyford, also near Winchester.

With her family Joan regularly spent the summer holidays in Cornwall. Photos of her as a child usually feature a variety of animals; the older she was the more unusual her pets were, and included a pair of pet crows when she was an adult!

Joan studied art at the Courtauld Institute in London and she used her training during the war when she served as a WREN. Her assignment was to create posters for the Fleet Air Arm and her work was well known at the time. Later she taught art in Petersfield. Joan was the youngest child in the family and she never married. When her mother died in 1965 Joan moved to Winchester.

Joan's great love for animals led to a very unusual career – she was an animal faith healer! Her niece recalls family stories about Joan working from home, which sometimes meant horses in the sitting room! Throughout her life Joan was involved with animals, and she had a special devotion to St Francis of Assisi.

No one remembers how Joan first encountered the Faith. The Bahá'í community used to put quotation from the Writings in the local paper and many people heard of the Faith that way. Maybe there was a quotation about animals? Joan embraced the Faith in the mid-1970s. She served on the Local Spiritual Assembly of Winchester for many years.

Joan's last years were spent in a nursing home. Many of her carers attended her funeral where they spoke of her sweet nature and, as always, her great love for animals. Joan's room had a small balcony and she had a bird feeder placed there. She was quite happy to have the door to the balcony open so the birds, including pigeons, would enter her room! She wasn't happy when, citing Health and Safety, the nursing home wouldn't allow it.

Joan died in Winchester on 29 January 2013.

Stella Brew

1926 – 2012

Stella, aptly named a star, was born on 17 January 1926, the eldest of three girls, and with her sisters Vera and Joan was brought up in North Belfast by a mother who was a nurse and a father whose job in planning was essential to the war effort.

One of Stella's early memories was of bombing raids on the dock area of Belfast harbour; she must have been in her early teens. Her two sisters had been evacuated, but Stella, probably because of her age, stayed with her parents. According to her sister Joan, Stella was always interested in music and singing. Her father promised her a piano if she came first, second or third in her singing exams. Stella had a pure, light, beautiful tone to her voice. When she came second she was quick to ensure the delivery of the piano! What was increasingly becoming clear was that for all Stella's frail, dainty attractiveness she had a strong will and was seldom deflected from her goal.

She went on to train as a comptometer operator, an early form of computer. When trained she worked in the City Hall where she was first introduced to the Bahá'í Faith by her then boss, Harry King, a Bahá'í from Belfast. She married Ralph Brew, a keen musician, and they shared a love of jazz. Later she went on to work in advertising, modelling shoes and knitwear. Yet another thread woven into the light of her soul was her spirit of adventure; she was always going somewhere – Australia, Israel, Italy, London – you had to run to keep up with her! Even in her latter years you had to walk smartly not to be left behind, high heels and all.

After working abroad, and in London, Stella returned to Northern Ireland, and through a neighbour's connection to Pat Irvine, a Bahá'í in Belfast, started coming to Bahá'í meetings. After thoroughly investigating the Faith for some years Stella became a Bahá'í. She went on Pilgrimage to the World Centre in the early 1980s; attended the opening ceremony of the Indian Temple; joined the Bahá'í Choir and became an active, diligent and loving teacher in the George Townshend Bahá'í School. The children in her class responded very well to her dedicated approach. As well as all this Stella fully involved herself in all local and regional activities.

Courage may have been one of her noblest qualities, but the quality that endeared her to others was her sense of fun. The only time others saw Stella ever really 'lose her cool' was at the sight of a tiny mouse. Elaborate measures had to be brought to bear to protect her from such a 'vicious beast', the saga of which was related for the entertainment of the community. Stella's light, infectious laughter invited all to join in at her expense, as when she recounted having had a whole flight crew down on their hands and knees searching for a pair of her lost reading glasses which turned out to be on her head the whole time. She had to allow them to think that they were another pair!

She was in her 60s when she first learnt to drive a car, a source of amazement and inspiration for the children she taught. She embarked on a gruelling City and Guilds embroidery course in her 70s. This love of art and design inspired a beautiful piece of embroidery that was sent to the Bahá'í World Centre as a gift.

It was her sister Joan, and Victor her husband, to whom Stella turned when she was diagnosed with Parkinson's. They gave her generous and unstinting love and support. She met the news of her ill health in the same way she lived her life, first ensuring she understood what was involved, and then courageously accepting, and facing with grace and dignity, the reality of her condition.

Stella passed away peacefully in Strathearn Nursing Home on 25 March 2012.



Dorothy Brown (née Aldcroft) 1916 – 2013

Dorothy had always had an interest in religions and philosophies. While she was living in Barbados in the 1950s she explored yoga and Buddhism, and met an Australian, Audrey Thompson, who had similar interests. Audrey had already encountered Bahá'ís in Miami, and when she returned there she became a Bahá'í. Meanwhile Dorothy moved to England with her younger daughters, and after Audrey had attended the 1963 World Congress in London she visited Dorothy.

Dorothy accepted the social teachings easily, but wasn't sure she believed in God, so she asked for a sign. Shortly afterwards they both became aware of a powerful scent of sweet roses. Audrey, who had little sense of smell, was amazed and then explained how this was a link to the Faith. Dorothy declared after this. As far as we know, she was the first Bahá'í in Ringwood, Hampshire (now Dorset).

At that time the nearest Bahá'í community was in Bournemouth, and the family began attending the regular Sunday meetings there at the home of Gloria Momen and family.

Dorothy and her family moved to Christchurch, where she hosted weekend schools and firesides in Purewell. One memorable weekend was a training event held by Betty Reed which focused on the Guardianship.

In 1967 she attended the Intercontinental Conference in Germany and visited the Mother Temple of Europe, a trip funded by Elsie Cranmer, who had asked Dorothy to go in her place.

In 1969 she pioneered to Poole to help form their Spiritual Assembly. Later Dorothy pioneered again to Ryde on the Isle of Wight. Her home there became the centre of regular devotional meetings with more than twenty-five people present on occasion.

At Ridván 1972, the first Spiritual Assembly of the island was formed.

In 1973 she spent a few months in Llanelli to help form an Assembly there, before returning to the Isle of Wight.

With her love of travel and exploring new places, Dorothy visited her eldest daughter in Australia for a few months, and took the opportunity to work as a guide at the Sydney Temple.

In 1977 she joined a teaching team in Gloucester, and then moved there to help form their Spiritual Assembly. While living in Gloucester she went on Pilgrimage, bringing home stories, pictures and small fragments of marble from the building site of the Seat of the Universal House of Justice. She also carried to England a set of A3 pictures of the Holy Places, a gift from the Universal House of Justice for the United Kingdom National Spiritual Assembly.

In 1980 she told the community that she was looking for another retired Bahá'í to flat-share, replacing one of the pioneers who was moving out. Somehow the 'retired female' turned into a 12-year-old Iranian refugee – Dorothy unexpectedly, at 64, became a substitute mother until she could find an Iranian family to take on her new foster daughter three years later.

Her travels continued through her 60s and 70s. While travelling back from the Islands Conference in 1980, Betty Reed joined her and persuaded her to move to Orkney. She lived in the main town, Kirkwall, for some time. Some of her family joined her in Orkney in August 1981, and they had the privilege of hosting meetings with Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum at the house which is now the Orkney Bahá'í Centre. Dorothy then pioneered to open the island of Shapinsay.

Dorothy was a painter. One of her favourite subjects was 'Abdu'l-Bahá, of whom she painted several oil portraits which were given to friends. She contributed to teaching exhibitions and, even when she could no longer paint larger canvases, she made drawings for Bahá'í pamphlets.

When her health began to fail, her family asked her to move closer to them and medical care, so she moved to the Lake District, living in Oxenholme, Windermere and Kendal. During her time in the Lake District, in addition to serving on the Spiritual Assembly of Kendal, she spent two summers in Poland helping to teach with a group of Bahá'ís from the United Kingdom.

By now needing more support, she moved to Felixstowe near the family in Suffolk, and finally, after another accident, into a sheltered home in Ipswich.

This year would have been the 50th anniversary of her becoming a Bahá'í. Dorothy over the years had served on seven Assemblies, opened an island to the Faith, gone on numerous teaching trips, had the blessing of meeting Hand of the Cause Mr Samandari twice, and of spending several hours with Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum, gone on Pilgrimage, organised contributions towards funds for Temples, Arc buildings and Centres, hosted devotionals and firesides which resulted in many people finding the Faith and used her artistic abilities in the service of the Cause she loved. Dorothy died with her prayer book to hand and her favourite picture of 'Abdu'l-Bahá on her wall.

Andrew Calderhead

1929 – 2012

It is the measure of the man we knew as Andrew Calderhead that just before he passed away, he told his daughters: ‘I have no regrets at all. I have had a wonderful life!’

Ralph Waldo Emerson once said: ‘Insist on yourself; never imitate.’ Andrew was just such a man. He was always so very much plainly himself. He was quintessentially a decent, kind, proper, English gentleman. Andrew never felt that he had an obligation to reform or impress others.

The Sacred Writings say: ‘Strive ye with all your might, to create through the power of the Word of God, genuine love, spiritual communion and durable bonds among individuals.’

This is what Andrew personified ever since he became a Bahá’í in 1996. It was more than a year earlier that we had received a call at the Liverpool Bahá’í Centre from a Bahá’í lady called Janet, asking us if she could bring along her father to meet us over a cup of tea. We said: ‘Why not come for dinner?’ And so along came father and daughter, but when they arrived, we were advised by Janet not to mention anything about the Faith, as in her own words: ‘My father is a very independent-minded man.’

So it was just pleasantries and getting to know each other. Andrew then asked if he could have a walk round the Centre, and when he came to the Library, his eyes skimmed over the books and latched onto a title which seemed to intrigue him. That book was *God Passes By*. He then asked me if he could borrow the book. In spite of my explaining to him that it was heavy reading, an historical tome written by the Guardian of the Bahá’í Faith, usually read by Bahá’ís only, and not really an introductory text, he insisted that he would only like to borrow that particular book and went away with it. It was to be the beginning of Andrew’s love affair with the Faith of Bahá’u’lláh. He returned repeatedly to visit us and to borrow many other books from the Liverpool Centre Library. One evening, after over a year, while at a Fireside, he was simply asked if he would like to be a Bahá’í and he said ‘How do I become one?’ And that was Andrew’s formal espousal of the Cause, but it seems he had been a Bahá’í all his life.

His dignity, his loving attitude and unfailing courtesy to all and sundry alike, were not just enduring qualities in his life; they endeared him to all who were fortunate to meet and know him.

We all look for little miracles in life! Thomas Paine said ‘Reputation is what men and women think of us; character is what God and angels know of us!’ Andrew was in himself, a little miracle for all of us with his simple life-style, his unblemished reputation and his sterling character. He was truly regarded as a lovable and loving person throughout Merseyside and Cheshire.

For 21 years after the passing of Edna, his beloved wife, Andrew lived all alone, but he is reputed to have said: ‘I live alone, but I am never lonely.’

He never failed to assist the surrounding communities both materially and with his personal presence at all Bahá’í events, and all of us who came to know him and love him deeply are the poorer for his passing, but now that his soul has winged its way to his Lord and to his beloved Edna, we rejoice in having been given the opportunity of having come across a beautiful soul such as his. The Bahá’ís of Merseyside and Cheshire bid thee farewell, dearly loved Andrew, and say to you: ‘May God hold you in the palm of His hand.’

Andrew passed away after a short illness. He leaves behind two daughters, two sons-in-law, seven grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren.

Felix Charles Caprez

1935 – 2012



There was something in his blood that drew him to the distance. Following a vibrant 1950s London youth, a chance encounter led to the unfolding of a childhood spiritual leaning. Soon, with his trust in God, Charles and his young family were setting out to Africa, to pre-independence Swaziland. Cycles of crisis and victory followed.

Charles was born to Anglo-Swiss parents in London in 1935. Early education was punctuated by wartime evacuation and the loss of friends to enemy bombing, something that troubled his young soul. His multi-lingual father, with ancestral roots from Switzerland's Romansch region, passed away prematurely in 1950. Charles was forced to leave school, cutting short a sporting passion, to seek employment to support his mother and younger sister. His mother, who passed away in 1976, left him with a love for music. Over the years the piano was a great personal solace.

During two years' Royal Air Force national service he repeatedly questioned the rationale for hatred and killing. Seeking solutions he chose to travel. Plans to cross Europe towards the Far East were cut short by thieves stealing his possessions in Naples. The intervention of the British Consul provided for safe return to London.

One evening in the chaos of Clapham Junction, and now as a London auditor, he impressed a young nurse he had exchanged a glance with that very morning. With disarming charm he wooed her with: 'I knew I'd meet you again, but not so soon.' Soraya was struck by his clean appearance, neat hair, blue eyes and double-breasted suit.

Marriage soon followed in March 1960. Soraya, the young Persian Bahá'í nurse, had committed herself to a life of service to mankind. After accepting that his wife's Bahá'í beliefs were the route to eliminate war and foster human progress, Charles declared his belief in 1965. A new chapter was about to start. The young couple volunteered to serve the Faith by spending two years in Swaziland. Through good times and difficult times, often at the violent frontline of the Cold War, two speculative years became forty-four rewarding ones.

His day job as an accountant in a brewery created a serious moral dilemma – Bahá'ís abstain from alcohol. But God intervened. A rapid forced exit from now-independent Swaziland, a short difficult sojourn in South Africa and finally the last move to Rhodesia in 1975 (itself approaching the violent peak of its liberation conflict) with a brief stint in the Rhodesian Defence Force, were the price to pay for the conviction that social justice and self-determination would prevail.

International sanctions throttled Rhodesia. The shrinking economy left him jobless, but motivated the courageous acquisition of a recycling business in 1979.

Charles and Soraya now had deep roots in the country, and had no intention of fleeing newborn Zimbabwe, remaining singularly focused on continuing to serve as Bahá'í pioneers.

The Faith prospered in the early years of Zimbabwe, but his health deteriorated. A race against time in 1991 to get to a Johannesburg hospital was lost. The embolism that settled in his

upper leg was cleared too late and his leg had to be amputated. Charles remained in intensive care for twenty-eight days until God, again intervened. The prayers of friends across the world rescued him. Soraya recalls how she only once saw him upset: the moment he discovered that he had lost a leg.

But this did not stop the ardent couple. With limited mobility he attended his second Bahá'í World Congress, this time in New York, and as opportunities to teach the Faith in Zimbabwe receded with the faltering economy, they became regular travel teachers in Croatia. The lush greenery of an English Summer School enjoyed at Wellington College was a visual delight, a stark contrast to arid Bulawayo.

Charles had boundless energy. As a youth, having run out of cash, he cycled nonstop from Taunton to London. He had a passion for trees. The early Bahá'í forester and environmental activist, Richard St. Barbe Baker, inspired him to plant 100,000 eucalyptus trees on virgin land in the Swazi highlands, from seedlings cultivated at home in Manzini, and transported in the back of his car! But his body could no longer keep up. His ambition of celebrating his fiftieth wedding anniversary, sipping tea on the Great Wall of China was not quite achieved. Instead he made it to a last family reunion in Penang.

Charles passed away peacefully in Johannesburg. He had been actively involved in all levels of Bahá'í activities, local and international, serving for some years on the joint National Spiritual Assembly of Swaziland and Lesotho, and participating in the 1973 International Convention.

Soraya, his loving wife of fifty-two years, continues to live in Zimbabwe, while his three sons and five grandchildren now live in Australia and the United Kingdom.

Charles will be remembered for bringing joy and laughter to all who crossed his path.

Michael Champs

1953 – 2012

In the 1990s the Bracknell Assembly had a programme of going out into the town, trying to meet people and interest them in attending a meeting about the Faith. One of the people they encountered was Michael Champs. Michael, who had serious health concerns of his own, lived at home in nearby Yately, serving as his elderly parents' caregiver. He worked as a warehouseman when his health permitted. Because of his poor health Michael had missed a lot of school, but he had had the initiative to set up a help-line to help others.

Michael was very enthusiastic about the Faith and he declared in January 1993 – within a few weeks of attending his first meeting.

When Michael's mother died, his father applied to become a Chelsea Pensioner – he had served in the military. He was accepted and so moved into the historic Chelsea Hospital. Michael used to visit him, but gradually his health concerns (Type One diabetes) became more serious. He was always enthusiastic about attending Bahá'í meetings and he wanted to learn more about the Faith, but he had no transport. The friends used to collect him for meetings, but it wasn't always possible for him to go out.

Michael later moved to Southampton where he was able to find housing more suited to his needs. His health continued to decline and he was in hospital frequently. It was in Southampton that he met Karen whom he later married. Michael had circulation problems which meant that first one, then the other leg, had to be amputated and he was confined to a wheelchair. He had a wonderful relationship with people of all faiths and none, and when they could, he and Karen opened their house for firesides, attracting people from all walks of life and of all ages.

Despite his severe disability Michael completed *Life of the Spirit* of the Ruhi Institute which resulted in him hosting a devotional meeting in his home. Karen, who is a Christian, was always encouraged by Michael to pursue and practise her faith both in the home and in the community. She had serious health concerns as well, and it wasn't always possible for them to live in the same home. Michael loved to attend Bahá'í meetings when he could, and he loved talking about the Faith.

Whenever he was taken ill, even after multiple heart attacks, Michael would always try to cheer up the other patients. He had to travel three times a week to undergo kidney dialysis, and although these were always long and tiring days, Michael remained cheerful and always ready to comfort others in the unit.

Michael was an attentive listener and possessed a wonderful ability to see the 'real' person and their qualities. He died on 17 May 2012.



Alison J. Carnie (Watson)

1962 – 2012

My much beloved sister is buried in East Kilbride, Scotland. This was the town she grew up in, became a Bahá'í in, prayed and fasted in, served in and, for the last ten years of her life, raised two of her children in.

She declared her belief in Bahá'u'lláh in 1979 at the age of sixteen. Thirty-three years later from a hospital bed her comments to us were, 'I feel so blessed, so lucky to have found Bahá'u'lláh!'

Alison was blessed with a beautiful voice, and many of us cherish the recordings we have of her chanting and singing Bahá'í prayers and verses. It was a talent she was

only too happy to share with everyone. She had a generous, loving and shining spirit, and many summer, winter and week-end schools were lit up with her presence.

From the beginning Alison went on teaching trips around Scotland and was involved in youth activities. After a few years studying art and design in Carlisle, when she was twenty-two, she responded to the call for service at the Bahá'í World Centre in Haifa. She joined the janitorial crew, and was blissfully happy polishing, cleaning and being of service in whatever capacity was called for. This was to be one of the happiest times of her life. The privilege and honour of serving the Faith in Haifa among so many inspiring people was something that she felt deeply. As someone keenly interested in history, some of her favourite times were spent with Dr Ruhe (a member of the Universal House of Justice) and friends on trips around Jerusalem and Galilee.

After marrying in Haifa, she returned briefly to Scotland, where her daughter Catherine was born in 1988.

In August 1989 the family moved to Canada where two other children were born – Amy in 1992 and Abel in 1995.

Life was difficult and involved moving from one coast to another several times. Throughout it all Alison was steadfast and unwavering in her faith. Her prayer book is held together in a silk cover, its pages well-worn and thumbed through. I treasure it.

Returning to Scotland in 2001 with Amy and Abel, she set about raising them on her own while having a full-time job. In the ten remaining years of her life Alison engaged in a wide range of Bahá'í activities wholeheartedly and enthusiastically.

She caught up with old friends from her early days as a Bahá'í, and made new friends with neighbours and people at work.

She attended the London Five Year Plan Regional Conference together with Amy and myself in 2009.

She approached her Member of the Scottish Parliament (MSP) about the plight of the Bahá'ís in Iran. This resulted in her MSP bringing other MSPs to the Bahá'í Centre in Edinburgh. Although Alison had passed away on 23 March, friends who hosted the meeting on 27 March remarked on the positive and loving atmosphere that pervaded the Centre that day.

Alison's selfless, loving devotion to her family and friends was an inspiration. This was despite her own pain and sorrow at the sudden loss of her close friend Graeme in 2009.

What a shining example of forbearance and enduring love she set for her family and friends! Her wonderful sense of humour helped us all cope as best we could during the last months of her life. A swiftly spreading cancer eventually took its toll, five months on from diagnosis.

Her Bahá'í funeral was attended by many who said they had never experienced a funeral quite like it. Everything about it was exceptional: the recording of her voice; the readings; the uplifting atmosphere; even the weather!

Like unto a singing nightingale she chanted Thy sacred verses, and like unto a mirror she sought to reflect Thy light.

Bahá'u'lláh.



Dorothy Denton Unknown – 2012

Dorothy declared her faith in Bahá'u'lláh very late in her life, on 29 February 2012, less than six months before she peacefully passed to the Abhá Kingdom on 16 July 2012.

Like her husband, John, she came from a Christian background. They had been married for about thirty years when her husband's search for the truth led him to embrace the Bahá'í Faith. Possibly one or two unanswered questions prevented Dorothy from following in his footsteps, but she enjoyed fellowship with Bahá'ís through attendance at such events as musical firesides,

Holy Day celebrations, devotionals and the study of several Ruhi books, and she was happy to welcome the friends to their home for Nineteen Day Feasts until they were unable to continue – Dorothy was a very good cook! Certainly, she lived the Bahá'í life, and loved her husband and four children dearly, enjoying family life immensely; this included several visits a year to their caravan on the Norfolk coast. She also had a wonderful sense of humour and a ringing laugh!

When Dorothy finally overcame any lingering reservations to declare her belief in Bahá'u'lláh, she was welcomed with open arms into the Bahá'í family.

She attended Feasts until too ill to do so, and it was regrettable that her remaining time with us was so short. The Sheffield friends would have liked to benefit from her wisdom, especially in her newly found identity as a Bahá'í.

Her funeral service was simple and heartfelt, and included both Christian and Bahá'í readings.

Thuraisamy (Frankie) Durairatnam

1936 – 2012



Thuraisamy Durairatnam, known to almost everybody as ‘Frankie’, was born in Kuala Lumpur, Malaya (now Malaysia) on 7 November 1936. His family were of Tamil descent. During his early years he showed a good aptitude for mathematics and science and especially electrical engineering. In 1956 he became a technical cadet with the Central Electricity Board of Malaya and spent the next four years working in various locations in Malaya supporting the electrical supply network. It was during this time that he became a tenant of a flat owned by Peter Raymond, a Bahá’í pioneer, who taught him the Faith. He became enamoured with its message of unity and peace, but was initially reluctant to declare. However, once satisfied with the answers to the many questions he had, he declared, and became fully immersed in the Bahá’í teaching work and life, turning away from his Tamil heritage.

In 1960 Frankie decided to further his education and came to the United Kingdom to complete a BSc in Electrical Engineering at Strathclyde University, Glasgow, followed two years later by an MSc in Electrical Engineering at University College, Swansea. This is where he acquired the name ‘Frankie’ after an encounter with a high-voltage terminal at which a fellow student quipped that he was ‘just like Frankenstein’. The name stuck. Whilst studying at these institutions Frankie was an active member of the Bahá’í communities in both Glasgow and Swansea. In 1963, while still at Swansea, Frankie was able to attend the Bahá’í World Congress in London.

In 1964, having completed his MSc, he secured a position as a development engineer in Oldham. During his time here Frankie was an active member of the community, opening up his home for firesides and local activities and serving as secretary of its Local Spiritual Assembly for many years. He travelled extensively to conferences, summer schools and conventions and built up a large network of friends and contacts here and abroad. Always keen to continue his education, Frankie started an Open University course and achieved a BA in mathematics.

In 1980 Frankie was made redundant and, after trying school teaching as an alternative profession, returned to engineering as a Senior Transformer Designer in Stafford in 1983. Again he became fully immersed in the Bahá’í community’s activities, and he continued his travels. He spent several months working in Queensland and in South Africa where he was able to continue teaching the Faith and supporting the Cause as well as adding to his growing network of contacts. In 1992 he attended the Bahá’í World Congress in New York and served on the help desk at the Congress.

In 2001 Frankie retired from working life, but used the extra time he had to do more work for the Faith. He worked tirelessly within interfaith organisations and made excellent contacts with all the local dignitaries, as well as becoming known to all the religious leaders in Stafford

and beyond. Wherever there was a local civic event or an activity involving religious organisations Frankie would be there representing the Bahá'í Faith. He gave talks in schools, and was able to travel somehow to these on public transport carrying display boards and cases of leaflets and handouts. He went to far-flung locations that people with cars would think twice about going to.

He had an indomitable spirit, a generous nature, a curiosity and desire to seek out the truth and increase his knowledge, and a steadfastness and loyalty demonstrated through his efforts to promote the Cause. During the last months of his life, when illness robbed him of the ability to travel to meetings and support local activities, he still had a keen interest in affairs of the Faith, and despite his own illness, Frankie was very concerned on hearing about the health and welfare of others in the community.

Frankie passed away on 26 September 2012. His funeral was attended by over eighty family, friends and former work colleagues from diverse backgrounds. The readings at the service contained passages from Hindu, Islamic, Jewish, Christian and Bahá'í writings, and were read out by local Bahá'ís, family members and representatives from the local interfaith and SACRE bodies.

Bernice (Bunny) Evans

1930 – 2012

Bunny Evans was born Bernice Mary Cosway, in Toronto, Canada, on 24 May 1930. She was given the family name ‘Bunny’, because as a child she had a fluffy white coat and hat, which made her look like a bunny, so the name stuck. Bunny married in 1957. Although divorced in 1964 she continued to use her married name of Evans.

Around 1964 she became attracted to the Bahá’í Faith, and she was registered as a Bahá’í on 15 April 1968. Bunny worked as a fashion writer in Toronto for ‘Simpson’s’, one of the largest stores in Canada, and won awards for her window displays. She loved the power and subtlety of words, and had her own unique style and sense of fashion.

Bunny had a great love of English country gardens and cottages. She visited her cousin in Somerset in the early 1970s, and later lived in Weston-super-Mare for about a year, before returning to Canada.

At the end of 1973 she moved to England and became a permanent resident. She worked at first for ‘Barkers’ in Kensington High Street. Bunny then served as a member of the Secretariat team at the National Bahá’í Centre during the late 1980s, and is still remembered there for her loving, supportive attitude and wonderful humour. She loved to assist in arrangements for the Thursday night public meetings at Rutland Gate. Bunny supported many Bahá’í events in Central London, and she would travel to summer schools and events across the country.

Bunny had been engaged to Robert Anthony Ellis Nesbitt. She assisted Anthony (Tony) with arrangements for the Chelsea and Kensington Music Society concerts in Leighton House, which gave her many opportunities to introduce the Faith to distinguished members of that society, as well as other guests and performers. Tony unfortunately died in 2000, just after his 65th birthday, and the start of his retirement. This was a cause of great sadness to Bunny.

Although proud to be a strong Canadian woman, she was a true world citizen who loved to travel, and she became particularly attached to the Island of Madeira, where she supported the Bahá’í community during her numerous extended winter visits. She had seriously considered moving permanently to Madeira, but unfortunately ill health prevented this.

Bunny was courageous and gifted, with a tremendous sense of integrity – she was always true to her beliefs. She was a loyal friend who looked after her friendships throughout her life. Bunny kept her address books up to date sending cards and messages to friends whenever she could. Often there would be a little gift pertinent to the person’s need, such as a special tea bag for relaxing. She had a wide range of interests from tap dance to classical music, and she was a keen follower of snooker, ‘The Simpsons’ and other TV shows. Her sense of humour was renowned amongst her friends and colleagues.

Bunny had breast cancer, and although the initial treatment was successful, she became unable to walk, and spent the last five years of her life confined to bed. She still kept an active interest in fashion and world affairs. Bunny would give small prayer books or pamphlets to her



carers, and she always wanted to have Bahá'í literature available. At all times she kept a Bahá'í poster by her bed so that any visitors would learn something about the Faith. Bunny was a very private person, who had an unusual mix of relaxed refinement and playful humour, and most of her many good works will have past unrecorded. She was always positive, eloquent, putting her 'best foot forward'. She had incredible style. As she said in one of her published short stories: Bunny 'departed for another place' from Fulham, London, on 6 June 2012.

Her grave (131) is in Section D of Mortlake Cemetery.

Badreddin Fadaei Zanjani

1923 – 2012

Badreddin Fadaei Zanjani was born on 7 March 1923 in the city of Zanjan in the province of Azerbaijan in northern Iran. His maternal grandfather was Haji Iman Zanjani, one of the early believers who were imprisoned with the famous Varqá and his son Rúhu'lláh, but he was not bestowed with the mantle of martyrdom. He was also related both on his mother's and father's side, to Hujjat Zanjani and Ashraf, who were martyred in the Bábí uprising in Zanjan.

As a young child he received a Bahá'í education at home, but his childhood was interrupted as the family was forced to move out of Zanjan because of the persecution of Bahá'ís. He moved with his parents and younger siblings to the city of Rasht in the province of Gilan by the Caspian Sea, where he grew up and finished his education, whilst always involved in the Bahá'í youth activities in that city.

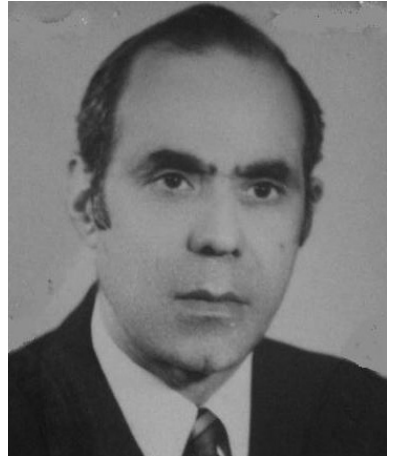
He started his first job at an Anglo-Iranian bank in Rasht and later moved to the capital city of Tehran, and continued his career in banking at the National Bank of Iran, where he met his future wife, Mrs Aqdas Yousseffi. The couple were married in 1957 and continued their lives in Tehran, both still working at the bank whilst bringing up their young family.

Badreddin first travelled to England as a young man in the early 1950s and felt a sense of connection with this country. It was during that trip that he decided to one day pioneer to the United Kingdom. Always seeking to better the lot of his children and to give them better life opportunities and to serve the Faith, he finally moved with his family to this country in 1974 and settled in the town of Bedford where he remained for over thirty-five years. He lived the last nine months of his life in Wellingborough, Northamptonshire and enjoyed the warmth of that loving community before his soul took its flight to the Abhá Kingdom on 20 May 2012.

Badreddin always spoke about his Faith with those who showed interest. He served as the treasurer of the local Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Bedford for over thirty years. Last year when it was suggested to him that he should perhaps consider retiring from this role of service, he accepted reluctantly. He performed his duties meticulously. The treasurer taking over, noted the meticulous records exemplifying love and devotion.

He loved reading Bahá'í books and literature and read ravenously. He would often read a new book cover to cover in one evening, even if that meant being up until the very early hours of the next morning. He enjoyed transcribing his favourite books and copied several books in his own handwriting. He loved poetry and committed a large collection of poems to memory. From time to time he also wrote poetry when inspired. He enjoyed the art of calligraphy and was gifted with beautiful handwriting: he was often asked to transcribe Farsi articles in Bahá'í magazines and journals.

Badreddin's friends will remember him for his gentle sense of humour and for his love of Persian classical music, especially playing the Tar (a classical instrument). He always enjoyed



being in nature and had a deep love of gardening which gave him great joy and peace. He loved growing flowers and vegetables, and shared the fruits abundantly with friends and neighbours. In his retirement years, he would often go in the garden early in the morning and, much to his wife's disgruntlement, go back inside only when it was dark.

He was a most gentle, unassuming and detached person and was always happy with little and never wanted more than his basic needs. He often talked about the importance of being resigned to the Will of God.

In 1991 and two months before going on Pilgrimage to the Holy Land, he was diagnosed with cancer. His first question to the doctor was whether he had enough time to go on his forthcoming Pilgrimage as that was his last wish in life. Not only did he go on that Pilgrimage, he continued living for another twenty-one years!

He was completely and utterly dedicated to his wife of fifty-six years, and over the last few years of life his time was mainly spent caring for his ailing wife.

He was a man of few words and did not like excessive speech – he spoke when he felt he had something worth saying, otherwise he would observe silence. Since his passing, many friends have commented on his gentle nature and endearing human qualities.

Mr Fadaei leaves a wife, a daughter, Mrs Farnush Tanhai, a son, Mr Soroush Fadaei, and six grandchildren between them.

Martha Hall-Patch

1941 – 2012

Martha was born in Tehran, to Ghodsieh Djalil-Haghibin and Baroueer Massehian. Her mother's family had been Bahá'ís for several generations, and her father was one of the first Bahá'ís from the Armenian community in Iran. Growing up in Tehran, she became steeped in the knowledge of the Bahá'í Faith, especially under the guidance of her mother, who was well versed in the Bahá'í writings. Active in her Bahá'í community from an early age, Martha also had a strong interest in art and a natural ability to draw – a talent recognised and helped to flourish by a leading Iranian portrait painter of the time. Martha gained a BA in English literature from Tehran University, but also remained deeply attached to her Iranian heritage. She loved Persian music and poetry – an interest she actively pursued to the end of her life, in forums such as the Bahá'í Society for Persian Arts and Letters.



Martha's first marriage was to Manouchehr Faez. They had a daughter, Mae, but the marriage was cut short by Manouchehr's illness and death, when her daughter was only eight and she herself still in her twenties. Throughout the very difficult period of her husband's protracted illness and after his passing, Martha showed remarkable stoicism and grace. She demonstrated a spirit of self-sacrifice and dedication to the well-being of others which remained characteristic all through her life.

Martha married Tony Hall-Patch some years later. In 1978, seven years after the birth of her son, Phillip, she moved to the UK, with her children, husband and mother. She then settled in Runnymede, in accordance with the Five Year Plan, and in the twenty-seven years that followed, her home became a hub for Bahá'ís and non-Bahá'ís alike. Martha's monthly Fireside, with its lively discussions and tireless hospitality, was the fixed point in her diary which all other events revolved around. Throughout those years in Runnymede, she also held monthly Dawn Prayers. These meetings engendered such a wonderful spirit among friends attending that they often extended until late morning. Martha's Firesides continued within the Bracknell community, where she and her husband, Tony – who, though not himself a Bahá'í, was always supportive of these events – lived for the last six years of her life.

In the early years after the Iranian Revolution, when persecution of Bahá'ís was at its height, Martha acted as the liaison between the National Bahá'í Office and the UK Home Office, bringing her unbounded energy as well as organisational and communication skills to the important work of securing refuge for the Bahá'ís fleeing persecution in their homeland.

Always actively involved in interfaith meetings and events, Martha's commitment to this area increased when she became a member of the interfaith group in Elmsbridge. Among other activities, this led to her working in her remaining years as a volunteer at a local food-bank charity.

Martha had come to know and love Northern Cyprus and in 2007 purchased a property there, as a base from which she hoped to serve in that region for a few months each year – an ambition frustrated by poor health.

Martha truly embodied her faith in every aspect of her life. She was an example of fortitude and forgiveness. Having no expectations, she received all good things with genuine surprise, childlike joy and shining eyes. She was profoundly wise – always a reliable source of good counsel, but never interfering, and an incisive judge of character, but never judgemental. Her gentleness and loving, compassionate nature were such that she always found the best in everyone, and spoke ill of no-one. Her kindness, warmth and generosity of spirit simply shone through, and deeply touched all who came into contact with her. Martha was also exceptionally astute, but never showed off her cleverness – except at times, in private moments, when she delighted in her ability to accurately predict the ending of a ‘Whodunnit’ – despite loud protestations from her family!

Martha was blessed with an effortless elegance and a radiant beauty, even in her more advanced years. She exuded grace and loveliness, even when carrying out mundane tasks. Her outer beauty was more than matched by an inner radiance and spiritual maturity, no more exemplified than in the last two and a half years of her life, when she was made aware by her doctor of a frailty in her body which might end her life at any moment. She absorbed and accepted this knowledge with utter equanimity, prayerful poise and a total surrender to the Will of God.

For those of us privileged to be closest to her, Martha was light, the rays of her smile lighting all our dark corners. Now, she is part of the Concourse on High and a constant presence in our hearts.

Renee Hill

1917 – 2012

Renee Hill, was born on 29 March 1917 and lived in Oxfordshire for most of her life. She spent her first years living with her grandparents in Banbury, attended school there at St. John's Priory, and later trained in shorthand, typing and bookkeeping. Her mother, stepfather, half-brother and sister lived in Devon at this time. Renee married Frank Bolton in 1936, and they lived with their three children in Cropredy, Oxfordshire.

Renee was a keen tennis player, played the piano and did a lot of sewing and knitting, essential tasks after the war with three children to clothe. She became passionate

about amateur dramatics and a leading light in the Banbury Cross Players. This is where she met Lemmy Hill, who became her second husband. They moved to Sussex, and later to Kent, and during this time Renee happily ran two village shops, baking and cooking special items for sale.

They moved back to Oxfordshire, where, tragically, Lemmy died whilst in his late forties. It was a bewildering and heartbreaking time for her. However, Renee's yearning for travel came to the fore, and she set off on her own to work abroad, including a time spent in Libya. Her family are still very much in awe of her adventurous spirit and what she did. Although Renee returned and settled back in the United Kingdom, helping to look after her grandson Nicholas, and later living with her son and daughter-in-law in Oxford, she still jumped at any opportunity to travel.

Renee was very generous and dearly loved her family – no matter how often they tested her! Renee's enthusiasm for and love of life were contagious. She also loved all flowers and animals, and always owned dogs and cats. If she could, she'd have been just as happy with an elephant or a snake or any other exotic creature.

Renee enjoyed the company of family and friends or anyone she happened to bump into! She came across the Bahá'í Faith at a bus stop at Kidlington in Oxfordshire while chatting to Bahá'í Nahid Collis. Renee embraced the Cause in 1984 while attending a fireside in Chipping Norton. That Renee accepted this new Faith at the age of 67, and got actively involved in Bahá'í community life, is an indication of her great courage and openness to new ideas and challenges.

Renee was always eager to travel for the Faith and attend Bahá'í activities. She helped with children's classes in Oxford, attended Bahá'í conferences and festivals in the UK and France, and accompanied Marion Hofman in some of her travels. She also visited the friends in Northern Ireland.

Despite continuing health problems and advancing years, Renee went on Bahá'í Pilgrimage to Haifa, and then travelled to South-East Asia, visiting the Bahá'ís in Malaysia and the pioneers in Bukittinggi, a remote town in West Sumatra in Indonesia. She went to Sydney, Australia and during her stay there she volunteered as a guide in the Bahá'í House of Worship.

Renee Hill passed away on 4 August 2012 and is laid to rest in the Bahá'í section of the Wolvercote Cemetery in North Oxford. She leaves three children, nine grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild.





Mary Jameson

1923 – 2012

Mary, an only child, was born in Allendale in rural Northumberland to parents Andrew and Hilda Yule. They moved to Wallsend, on Tyneside, when Mary was seven years old, and this was where she grew up. Throughout her life Mary retained a deep love of the countryside where she was born, and where she would always love to visit. In later years Mary would drive for many miles along quiet country lanes around her beloved Northumberland.

Mary's main career was in nursing, which she followed as a young woman and later in life. She ended her career working for several years in palliative care supporting people with terminal illness, and also people with significant disabilities.

Mary married Joseph in the late 1940s and by 1951 had two sons, Peter and John. Joe had already embraced the Bahá'í Faith by this time and Mary became a Bahá'í in 1951.

Being a Bahá'í was very important to Mary throughout the rest of her life and would influence many of the things she did from hosting young Iranian students at her home in the 1950s and 60s, several of whom remained close friends throughout her life, to moving to Newcastle upon Tyne, along with Joe and family, to help form the first Local Spiritual Assembly there in the early 1960s.

Together with Joe, in their Newcastle home, she hosted visits by several Hands of the Cause and other prominent Bahá'ís over many years.

Mary supported Joe, at great personal sacrifice, when he went to work at the National Office in Rutland Gate, London, whilst she remained in Newcastle. Sadly Joe passed away suddenly whilst giving a public talk at Rutland Gate in 1972. Mary remained a widow and single for the rest of her life.

Mary pioneered to Tynedale District in Northumberland, on her own, to become the first Bahá'í there, and eventually helped to form the first Spiritual Assembly of Tynedale. Indeed Mary had served as secretary and treasurer for many years on Spiritual Assemblies; she worked on Summer School committees in the 1950s and 60s, especially for Dalston Hall Summer Schools, in the days when most of the British Bahá'í community would attend one Summer School.

Mary attended two World Congresses: at the Albert Hall in London and later in New York. She was also present at the Inauguration Ceremony for the Bahá'í House of Worship in New Delhi, India in 1986, and Mary managed to go on Pilgrimage twice to the Holy Land.

She served also as a member of the Local Branch of United Nations, and the Save the Children organisation. In later years she visited and toured Russia post Chernobyl.

Mary was a quiet, private, cheerful and stoical person who served the Bahá'í Faith well for many years with a ready smile and famous hospitality. She continued driving into her eighties, and especially to attend Nineteen Day Feasts, Holy Days and, of course, Assembly meetings.

Mary loved music and dance all her life. In her youth she would go dancing and even in old age would take to the floor at the drop of a hat. Classical music and especially ballet were always a joy to Mary, and her sense of fun and drama belied her reserved demeanour. Mary showed a fine sense of theatre and comedy when the occasion demanded at many local Bahá'í events, proving a talent for acting and performance that probably surprised many.

Sadly, in her last few years Mary suffered from debilitating dementia. However, she kept her strong character, indomitable spirit and physical health to the last, passing away peacefully with family members at her side.

Mary is greatly missed by her family, good friends and many others who knew her. She kept Joe waiting a long time, but surely now they are together again.

Mary is buried at Corbridge Cemetery in Northumberland.



Beatrice Kent

1923 – 2012

Who can ever forget Beatrice Kent after meeting her? To outward appearances here was a typical Welsh lady coming from a Welsh-speaking home who loved to sing in a choir and enjoyed chatting away. Inwardly she carried the fire of the love of God and His Cause that warmed the spirit and deepened one's faith. Those privileged to have known Beatrice felt her loving-kindness, constant cheerfulness, open hospitality, fellowship and compassion and souls grew closer to God in her company. In fact she exemplified all those gems Bahá'u'lláh assures us are in the 'mine' of our true selves, and which

the beloved Guardian extolled as the foundation of the coming Divine Civilization.

The passing of dearly loved Beatrice represents the end of an era. At the age of 88 she was the last remaining believer in Wales connecting us to the 'Interregnum Period' of the Hands of the Cause of God and the election of the first Universal House of Justice in 1963. Beatrice with her husband, Eric, and their daughter Corinne, who was a little child at the time, were amongst the very small band of Welsh believers at the first Bahá'í World Congress held in the Albert Hall in 1963.

Beatrice and Eric, now reunited in the company of the Concourse on High, first came into contact with the Faith after they had moved into Caerphilly from Merthyr Tydfil.

Eric, a lay-preacher of a Pentecostal Church in Merthyr, was eager to spread the Gospel of Christ and His imminent return, and moved into Caerphilly, South Wales with Beatrice to start evangelising.

Through a chance meeting with David Hofman in a guest house in North Wales, Eric was introduced to the Bahá'í Faith, and later declared his belief in Bahá'u'lláh in 1957 as 'Christ returned in the Glory of the Father'. Beatrice's declaration followed in 1960. From that time on Beatrice and Eric served the Faith in Wales with unremitting zeal and confidence. She served on the very first Local Spiritual Assembly in Caerphilly in 1997 until the Assembly was dissolved because of boundary changes in 2001.

This all sounds so simple now, but their move into the Faith caused a great disturbance in the family and amongst their previous co-religionists. Beatrice and Eric were denounced, rebuked and scorned for the love they carried for Bahá'u'lláh, yet their faith grew stronger, and at a time when there was no Bahá'í community in Wales to support them. Of such souls the Master writes, *'...these afflictions shall be the purest bounties and bestowals, and a token of thy acceptance at the Divine Threshold.'*

Their only child, Corinne, after her marriage to Richard Hainsworth, was fully supported in her move thousands of miles away as a pioneer to Moscow at a time when the 'Iron Curtain' still separated East from West. On occasions Beatrice was able to visit Corinne and Richard, and bring back tales of how the Faith was taking root there, even though the circumstances of daily living were very testing.

Corinne remembers that in her childhood they 'always had guests in the house', many of whom Beatrice kept correspondence with for years. Corinne knew she could always bring a gang of friends round without giving any notice. They would just turn up and Beatrice would make tea and provide cake and biscuits for everyone. Even after Corinne left home her university friends would still pop in and see Beatrice when they were in the area, and she made them welcome.

As she was constantly in contact with friends and acquaintances, many souls would find cards dropped through their letter box from Beatrice with messages of love, sympathy or encouragement. Her faith in the power of prayer found expression in adding people to her 'prayer list' that seemed to get longer and longer as the years went by, and many supplications were made just prior to going to sleep.

Beatrice had a profound purity and simplicity of heart which attracted all who met her. She was a true 'universal citizen', a precursor of the spiritual giants who will abound in the 'Golden Age' of our Faith.

Beatrice is survived by her daughter, three grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Sidney David Jellicoe Marsh

1914 – 2012

Sidney did not come from a religious family, and wrestled with organised religion throughout his childhood and youth. In his early working life Sidney was an apprentice piano-maker and tuner and a booking clerk on the railways. He had a whirlwind courtship with Ivy and they married in 1939, just before Sidney left to serve in the Royal Navy as a stoker and then Petty Officer. After the war, Sidney and Ivy moved to Heston, Middlesex where they started family life with their two children, David and Teresa.

Sidney came to an accommodation with the Anglican Church and was finally confirmed at St. Paul's Cathedral in 1949. Subsequently he threw himself with great enthusiasm into the life of his local parish church as a server, occasional organist and Youth Club organiser. When the family moved to Cranford Park in 1957 he carried on his church activities in this new congregation.

On his return from his war service in the Navy, Sidney worked as an accounts clerk and then as a Civil Engineer, but it was at the age of 59 that he took on the job he treasured most – becoming a verger at Westminster Abbey, progressing to Chief Verger, until he retired in 1979.

In this role he made many friends across the country and the world. Sidney was very strongly drawn to devotional practice – prayer and meditation. He helped to establish the *Society of Our Lady of Pew* in the Lady Chapel of Westminster Abbey.

Sidney had a life-long interest in comparative religious studies, kindled while still at school, and his service as Chief Verger gave him the opportunity to come into contact with people of all religious backgrounds.

However, it was in Israel staying with friends in the late 1970s and early 1980s, that Sidney became both aware of and drawn to the Bahá'í Faith after visiting the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh in 'Akká.

On his return to England, a chance sighting of a Bahá'í poster on the platform of Earlsfield station led Sidney to contact the Bahá'í community of Wandsworth, and after attending a number of meetings, Sidney enrolled as a Bahá'í in 1984.

Sidney was later elected to the Local Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Wandsworth, and he served on this body for many years during which time Sidney held the post of treasurer.

He served the Bahá'í community with the same enthusiasm and loyalty that he had served the Church, and was, for a while, a teacher in the London Thomas Breakwell Bahá'í Sunday School and a tutor for the Thomas Breakwell Youth College, a national distance teaching institution.

Sidney was certainly a person of rare character, a soul of great spirituality and morality and a dedicated servant of humanity.

Sidney was very forthright and honest. He was intolerant of hypocrisy, indifference and slovenliness. However, he was also a man of great humility and modesty, so that you would often be surprised to find out about something he had done through other people.

Sidney was an extremely orderly person, and he was meticulous in all his affairs, paying great attention to detail and maintaining a regular routine in his personal life. His large collection of books, records and photographs was always beautifully set out and anything he wanted he could instantly lay his hands on.

Sidney bore his challenges and troubles with great cheerfulness and fortitude. He was a very determined person. Once he had decided upon something there was little that could stop him and no-one who could easily dissuade him.

In his later years, when Sidney had moved with Ivy from Earlsfield to Battersea, the area of his birth, he would regularly go on long walks around the places he loved, especially to the River Thames. When he was too frail to walk he would eagerly accept offers to push him in his wheelchair along his old haunts.

Sidney loved nature, and his hobby of photography allowed him to preserve the beautiful places he visited. He loved reading and classical music, and he had a particular love of poetry, writing some himself.

Sidney was a profoundly spiritual person and marvellous company. He showed his love to everyone, old and young, familiar and strange, family and friend. People felt buoyed up having spent even a short time with him.

Sidney leaves behind a son David and a daughter Teresa, four grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

May his soul wing its flight into the court of the Lord in whose service he always strived to give of his best.



Paridokht Mavaddat Farmand 1923 – 2012

Paridokht Mavaddat was born in Tehran, Iran, on 29 September 1923. Both of her parents came from many generations of Bábí and Bahá'í families, and they raised her in a loving Bahá'í atmosphere, giving her a Bahá'í education. At the age of sixteen she married Mr Faroukh Farmand, and they had six children. She emigrated to the United Kingdom in 1977, and remained in the UK until her passing on 8 February 2012. Her loving husband died in Tehran before he could join the rest of the

family, making Paridokht a widow at the age of fifty-seven.

Paridokht became a teacher and subsequently a vice-principal in Tehran at the age of twenty-eight, and during her two decades of working in a girls' elementary and middle school, she also served as a Girl Scout leader. Due to an absence or limited availability of social services in schools and communities in Iran at that time, Paridokht, and her life-long friend, who was the principal of her school, served as volunteer social workers, assisting families and children in need of financial and other types of help. Paridokht was an extremely popular and loved teacher, and her former students, some of whom live in London at the present time, remember her fondly, and have wonderful memories of her kindness and beautiful spirit.

Paridokht had served on the Local Spiritual Assembly of Shemiran, Tehran, acting as its chairperson for a time. After her move to London, she was elected to the newly formed Local Spiritual Assembly of Hammersmith and Fulham. She remained in Hammersmith and Fulham Bahá'í community for the rest of her life, and served that community to the best of her ability.

Paridokht possessed a great sense of humour and had an amazingly positive outlook on life. She always managed to make others laugh, and taught her children, her students and everyone around her to love all humanity.

She will be missed by her children, grandchildren, and by all those who knew and loved her.

Afagh Moshtael (Azordegan) 1928 – 2012

Aghaali Moshtael 1923 – 2012

On 19 March 2012 the Bahá'í community of Bristol lost one of its distinguished and loving members.

Afagh Azordegan was born on 25 May 1928 in Tehran to a Bahá'í family. Her father's paternal grandfather was from the city of Yazd, and had become a

Bahá'í during the life of Bahá'u'lláh. Her father's maternal grandfather, Agha Mohammad, was from the city of Kashan and he had become a Bahá'í during the time of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

Because of the imprisonment and hardship he and his family had suffered, Agha Mohammad received a Tablet from 'Abdu'l-Bahá in which the Master called them 'Azordegan' – *O Thou afflicted in the Path of God.*

Afagh grew up in Tehran and after finishing her education she became the assistant headmistress of a famous girls' high school.

Together with her parents, sister and brothers, Afagh pioneered to India in 1950, but returned to Iran in 1951. She was a very active member of the Bahá'í community in Tehran, and she served on various local and national committees.

She married Aghaali Moshtael in 1973. The couple moved to London in the early 1980s and settled in Bristol in 1984 to help form the Local Spiritual Assembly of North Avon. Owing to Afagh's vast knowledge of the Faith she helped organise various deepening classes, particularly for children and youth. She served her community with the utmost love.



Aghaali Moshtael was born in the Iranian city of Kashan on 9 April 1923. He was the grandson of Agha Mohammad, a prominent Bahá'í of that city who had been the recipient of two Tablets from 'Abdu'l-Bahá in which the Master called him 'Moshtael' – *O Thou inflamed by the fire of the love of God.*

Aghaali grew up in Kashan and attended the Bahá'í school of 'Vahdat-e-Bashar'.

He moved to Tehran when he was a youth and this is where he lived and worked for a good part of his life.

In 1973 he married Afagh Azordegan. They moved to London in the early 1980s, but settled in Bristol in 1984 and helped establish the Local Spiritual Assembly of North Avon.

Aghaali, after a brief illness, passed away on 9 March 2012 only days before his wife.



Margaret Joan Phillips

1930 – 2011

Joan had enjoyed good health all her life, but after a brief illness followed by a stroke, she passed away in October 2011.

Joan was well known in the Swansea area as ‘Miss Gough’ – being an art teacher in a large secondary school for girls. She was well respected for the encouragement she gave her pupils. Even in recent times she would be greeted in the street, ‘Hello Miss Gough. You taught me art in Mynydd Bach School – and some would add with a smile, ‘and you taught my mother!’

Joan was a member of the International Friendship League in Swansea, and its social evenings were held at Joan’s parents’ home where overseas students from Swansea University would gather, including at one time a Bahá’í called Frankie Durairatnam.

Later a friend, Denver Morgan, put a leaflet under the windscreen wiper of Joan’s car about a Bahá’í fireside being held by Neal and Estelle Evans. Denver, already interested in the Faith, knew Joan would be too.

At other meetings which followed Joan met Margaret and Albert Morse, Gladys Parker, Dee Dewar, Gethin and Weavy Jones. Joan also met Jeremy and Denise Fox, and attended a Bahá’í meeting in Porthcawl where Marion Hofman was the speaker.

During a visit to a weekend school at Coleg-y-Fro, near Barry, Hand of the Cause John Roberts and his wife Audrey, were told of Joan’s keen interest in the Faith. Soon Joan received a prayer book in which was written:

‘Our Dear Joan, May God love you always, with much love, John Roberts’

She was very moved by the gift, which was well cherished.

Not long afterwards, and following the end of a short and difficult marriage, Joan felt free to declare her faith in Bahá’u’lláh. She was soon to be elected secretary of the Local Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of Swansea – then in its formative years of the early 1970s. It was a post she took very seriously.

Joan remained an assembly member nearly all her Bahá’í life, and was re-elected its secretary intermittently over the years.

The Assembly was responsible for hosting, at Swansea University, a visit from Hand of the Cause Dr Ugo Giachery, and later, another visit from Hand of the Cause Collis Featherstone.

Joan later helped organise the Narberth Bahá’í spring school in 1983. She served as its registrar.

Joan worked hard to support the small team of Bahá’ís that organised the monthly residential institutes held at Gathen House, Llanelli, over a period of four years, until the introduction of the Ruhi courses.

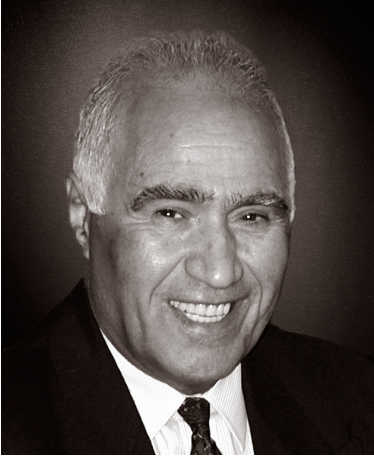
She was one of the key supporters of the ‘South Wales Bahá’í Arts Centre’ and the presentation at the Swansea Brangwyn Hall of the oratorio *Ridván, The New Dawn* in 2000. Joan was quite a cheerleader!

Joan, being a world citizen, cared for humankind and all living things. She was a very generous supporter of the Orphanage Project in Honduras.

Joan's great-grandfather, Richard C. Gough, discovered the Gough's Caves in Cheddar, and, being a poet, was inspired to write many poems and prayers praising God for the wonders of creation. These are the same caves in which the Bahá'ís held a spectacular music festival some years ago.

Joan was unmovable in her principles, and she played her part as a staunch worker and steadfast maidservant of Bahá'u'lláh in helping to bring forward the *'ever advancing civilisation'* we are all striving for.

Joan is greatly missed by all those who knew her.



Mohammad Razavi

1930 – 2012

Mohammad Razavi was born in Yazd, Iran, on 20 June 1930, and *'burst his cage asunder'* in Warwick, England on 14 June 2012. Along that journey he lived in the Iranian cities of Kirman, Esfehan and Zahedan, where he served on its Local Spiritual Assembly, and then as a 'homefront pioneer' in the United Kingdom he lived in the towns of Bletchley, Kettering and Wellingborough, again serving on the Local Spiritual Assemblies of Milton Keynes and Kettering.

One of six children, Mr Razavi was born to parents who had themselves embraced the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh years earlier; his father having had the privilege of meeting 'Abdu'l-Bahá during a Pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 1920. A faithful and attentive son, he served his parents throughout his life and nursed them in their old age.

During his university studies in Tehran he was a varsity swimmer and gained a degree in engineering, a field in which he served his country as a senior technical adviser in the Ministry of Industry and Mines, at a time of great industrial expansion in Iran. He had a particular gift for mathematical matters and he took great joy in playing chess with accomplished opponents – simultaneously fending off two Russian players on a recent family holiday!

He moved with his family to the United Kingdom in 1978 and on the advice of the National Spiritual Assembly took up residence with his family in Bletchley to help establish the first Local Spiritual Assembly of Milton Keynes. Following the Iranian Revolution the following year he, like so many Bahá'ís of his generation, rebuilt a life in this country centred on Bahá'í service, and on raising and nurturing the next generation. He enjoyed fifty-one years of devoted, contented marriage and took immense joy in his family – his three children, Shirin (Tahzib), Shahriar and Shamim, seven grandchildren and numerous nephews and nieces – and encouraged them always to serve the Faith.

An ardent believer, he was ceaseless in his proclamation of the Bahá'í teachings and was never daunted by obstacles – whether opposition to the Faith in his homeland or linguistic challenges in his new country. In simple ways he was forever looking for an opportunity to engage those around him. For example, when riding a bus he would always choose a seat next to a fellow passenger, regardless of how empty the bus was, and would strike up a conversation which invariably would turn to matters spiritual. His sincerity and radiance shone through and he was almost never rebuffed. A pamphlet, prayer book or copy of *The Promise of World Peace* was always close at hand, and he distributed countless of these in his unique heartfelt manner.

His teaching approach also included serving the neighbourhood. Polite to a fault, he took a keen and genuine interest in those around him, always able to find something of interest to his listener. His method, born of genuine affection and utterly authentic, cut across cultural barriers, and so his neighbours became familiar not only with the verities of the Faith, but also with the finer aspects of Persian cuisine, samples of which he would share liberally with an initially

bemused and later grateful neighbourhood. In his own unique cross-cultural way, he embraced the English love of gardening, and made it his own through the cultivation of delicate Persian herbs and vegetables. Immensely generous, he would often insist that visitors take home a bag full of home-grown produce.

His personal style was fearless. Nothing would stand in the way of his will to share Bahá'u'lláh's message and his desire to reach out and kindle the hearts of those around him. This fearlessness characterised his final years, and the way in which he responded to his terminal diagnosis: prayerfully and with dignified resignation. Even in his final days, his fortitude and rectitude profoundly touched the medical staff and caregivers around him. He died as he had lived—bravely, gently, radiantly – in the companionship of his children and his beloved wife, Parvin.



Audrie Reynolds

1924 – 2012

Audrie Olive Rogers was born on 2 May 1924 at Burton-on-Trent, England. She heard of the Bahá'í Faith at a meeting given by Marion Hofman while she was working as a schoolteacher in Birmingham. She declared her belief in Bahá'u'lláh to Anna Kunz in Zurich, Switzerland in 1953 and returned to England in 1958. She met Johnathan Reynolds, who was from the United States, at the 1963 Bahá'í World Congress in London. They had both been pioneering for several years, she in Chester, England and he in New York. They were married on 27 July 1963 and soon left to live and work in America.

When Audrie was fifteen years old she became interested in the Native Americans and she came under the tutelage of England's foremost authority on the American Indian, Ted Blackmore. This interest continued from then on for her entire life, and manifested itself in a love for all native people throughout the Americas, Canada and Russia.

Educated as a schoolteacher, Audrie was fluent in several languages and became a scholar of current world affairs. Her most treasured gift was her love for her family, friends and dear neighbours, and her high regard for the spiritual depth and brilliant destiny of indigenous peoples. She served on Bahá'í institutions working primarily with indigenous peoples on three continents. It was in the spring of 1978 that she moved with her young family from the Navajo reservation in Arizona to Unalakleet, Alaska, an Inupiaq village in the far north and, two years later, to Juneau. Audrie was a poet and writer. She wrote of her move to Alaska:

'It has been quite an experience to come from canyon land to a house that is just a hundred yards from the frozen sea. We had been used to looking out across sand pinon trees to the high mesas, past the sheep corrals and hogans where the Navajo Bahá'ís live and hold their firesides and assembly meetings. Now we see seal hunters on snow machines setting out towards the edge of the ice, and we wonder which of these wonderful faces will light up at the mention of Bahá'u'lláh.'

Audrie Reynolds' pre-eminent task was to accompany people in the self-discovery of their inherent spirituality, a task she considered sacred, fundamental and urgent.

In 1970 the Reynolds left for Fort Wingate, Navajo Reservation, New Mexico. There, they forged the same kind of relationship of encouragement with the people and, in 1976, assisted in the formation of a Local Spiritual Assembly at Kaibito, Arizona on the Navajo Reservation. It was during this time of heightened spiritual engagement with indigenous peoples that Audrie and Johnathan adopted a little boy from Guatemala, naming him Nur'u'llah, which means *Light of God*.

Audrie travelled throughout Alaska in the 1980s, frequently with Nur'u'llah at her side. She flew many times in small airplanes in inclement weather in the far north, through mountain passes and in the low visibility and windy, rainy skies of southeast Alaska.

In 1991 the Reynolds pioneered to Petropavlovsk-Kamchatski, Russia. There, Audrie spoke at many public meetings with audiences many times of up to 200 attending. People engaged in

uplifting and intimate conversation, studied and learned together and Spiritual Assemblies were formed. There Audrie was able to assist with the Kamchatka Spiritual Gathering in 1999 where Native Bahá'ís from Canada and the United States joined with the Native people of Kamchatka in cultural exchanges.

Audrie was appointed Auxiliary Board Member to the esteemed Continental Board of Counsellors for both the Americas, while living in the United States and Alaska, and the Board of Counsellors for Asia, while living in Russia.

The Reynolds family returned to Alaska in 2009 for health reasons, and Audrie found herself at home in Juneau, with land and weather similar to her native England. She lived out her final days with indomitable courage.

Audrie's life was unswervingly centred in instant, complete and exact obedience to Bahá'u'lláh. The inspiration of her living the Bahá'í life became a catalyst for people to investigate and accept Bahá'u'lláh.

Audrie is survived by her husband, Johnathan, and their son, Nur'u'llah, both living in Juneau.



Kim Rogers-Belson 1964 – 2011

Kim Nicole Rogers was born on 10 July 1964 in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada to Otto and Barbara Rogers. The family, which later included three siblings, was very actively engaged in the Bahá'í Faith's teaching work in the 1960s and 1970s, especially amongst youth and university students. Kim thrived in this atmosphere of constant activity, with often a hundred young people filling their home on a weekly, and later, almost daily basis. Their home became the official centre for the burgeoning Saskatoon Bahá'í community of 200-300 members. It was truly a 'centre for learning' during the

whole of Kim's youth, filled with musicians and artists, and was the template for what Kim strived for in her own later homes. She eagerly declared herself a Bahá'í as soon as she turned fifteen.

She attended public schools in Saskatoon, as well as four years at the University of Saskatchewan. She did not want to leave her family home and go away to college at this stage, as she was very attached to them. Later she would move away to get her master's degree in Ontario, but she was truly a 'homebody'.

She completed her master's degree in Public Administration at Guelph, Ontario and had a number of interesting positions that took her to a variety of places. However, when her parents were called to Haifa, Israel, she longed to be there too. By the 1990s, she had transplanted herself to the Bahá'í World Centre, and served there in two capacities for three to four years.

She then moved to the United Kingdom for a period of time, but by 1998 she had returned to Canada to be close to her family again. There she had some interesting positions, which led to her last Canadian employer asking her to start up a new office in the United Kingdom, which then morphed into a position with Sun Microsystems through a takeover.

She loved the challenge of this start-up, and later the responsibilities with Sun, but she always said they didn't give her enough to do. She was such a quick worker that she finished every assignment way before the target, and she became impatient with the time she just sat there waiting for the next job. This was always her curse. She had an enormous amount of energy and drive and always wanted to get onto the next task. The family called her the 'Futurist', as she was ever focused on what was to happen next, getting through the present as quickly as possible! In 2004 Kim married Paul Belson in a beautiful Bahá'í wedding in Bath, settling in the United Kingdom for good, and most recently buying a home in the Berkshire countryside. She is buried close to this last home in Upper Woolhampton.

At the time of Kim's death on 23 July 2011, she had been successfully running her own consultancy business for a number of years, often contracted by government agencies to manage reorganization of diverse departments such as the British Court System. She relished these challenges and was seldom without a contract for more than a few weeks. She was a born manager and had a knack for bringing divergent parties to a consensus.

In the words of her family, Kim was a spirited, kind and compassionate person who was frank, open and authentic with no hidden agenda. She was a great communicator and was dedicated to her family and her friends, all of whom enjoyed her hospitality and her generous nature, particularly her many nieces and nephews. She was joyful and the cause of much laughter wherever she went, complementing her practical, organized and down-to-earth nature with this ability to make any meeting one of fun. She was so full of life, and is dearly missed.

Sayeid Jalal Saadat Yazdi

1922 – 2011

Jalal was born in September 1922 to a Bahá'í family of Yazdi origin and was the third of five children: three boys and two girls. His father was Sayeid Djavad and his mother was Bibi Rou-babeh. Bibi came from a very rich family and her father, who was a Bahá'í of good standing, was Mirza Youseff. In the most severe persecution of the Bahá'ís in the city of Yazd when over 20,000 men and women, young and old, children and even a baby were martyred, Mirza Youseff remained bravely staunch and steadfast. 'Abdu'l-Bahá in one of His books, *Memorials of the Faithful*, wrote about Mirza Youseff, Jalal's grandfather.

In one of the yet later persecutions in Yazd, Jalal's parents managed to flee and travel to Mashad, a city in the north east of Iran where they were able to settle. It was here that Jalal was born.

Jalal's first marriage was to the daughter of a cousin; he was nineteen years old. One daughter was born to this marriage, Mahin. The marriage had to face much religious prejudice and tension and ended in divorce after ten years. Jalal then married Bahereh with whom he spent the rest of his life. They had no children, but raised Safa as their daughter. Safa was the daughter of Jalal's brother who had died, and she was much loved by Jalal and Bahereh. She was to declare herself a Bahá'í, and later married to live in Tehran with her three sons and three grandchildren. Mahin married too and has one daughter and three sons who in turn now have families of their own. They are all happy!

Jalal worked as a civil servant in the Ministry of Finance in Iran. He was courageous and set examples of honesty for both friends and foes. In the face of others' corruption he was described as a 'problem' for being 'honest, fearless and challenging', but he was respected enough to be left alone.

He was a natural pioneer both in Iran and Great Britain. He was always popular amongst the Muslim community whilst in Iran, and gave a helping hand to anyone: a rare quality.

In 1979 in the wake of the Iranian Revolution Jalal and his wife came to the United Kingdom. They responded to a need for pioneers in Galashiels, Scotland, but after other pioneering service ended up in Bexhill in East Sussex where Jalal passed away, and where he is now buried in Bexhill Cemetery. He is greatly missed.

Tayebeh Sábetián

1919 – 2012

Tayebeh Sábetián was born in 1919 in Bábol, Iran, into a family of successful Bahá'í merchants. She was one of twelve children. She married Dr Atáulláh Sabet, himself a Bahá'í and from a well-known Bahá'í family, and together they brought up three daughters and one son.

Tayebeh lived through two major, traumatic events. The first was the Second World War, when the allies invaded Iran, and she and her husband lost everything. The second was the 1979 Revolution in Iran, when persecution of the Bahá'ís intensified. As a result of this Tayebeh and Atáulláh were forced to leave the country, losing all their possessions once again.

Tayebeh never complained about her misfortunes; on the contrary she always made the best of any situation, and put the welfare of others before her own concerns. She was a devoted, wonderful mother and grandmother. She made new friends wherever she went, and quickly won their respect and admiration.

Tayebeh's great love for her family was only surpassed by her love for God. For many years she was a valued member of the Bahá'ís of Hemel Hempstead, and she always felt blessed to be able to hold any meeting or activity at her home.

She will be lovingly remembered by all who knew her for having an exceptionally generous and selfless nature, a gentle spirit with a boundless love for God.





Amy Shields

1920 – 2011

People remember Amy as a gentle person, very loving, calm and wise. She was prepared to speak up when she felt things were not right. She was ‘a beacon of light in a dark world’.

She was born in East Belfast, daughter of Ebenezer Savage, an upholsterer. The family were Presbyterian. After school she became a sales assistant in Brands and Normans, a large department store. In 1942 she married Alex Shields, a young marine engineer, then employed on convoys to the Arctic and the Mediterranean. Alex and Amy were devoted to each other all their lives. They

had two sons.

Her life did not run smoothly. At the end of the war Alex slipped and fell onto the engine of his ship, breaking his skull. He was invalided out of the merchant navy. He then got a job which involved a lot of travelling. One icy winter's day the brakes failed on his car and the ensuing accident meant that he could never work again. One day soon afterwards Amy met a lady in a friend's house who had heard about Alex's bad accident. She asked Amy if she thought her husband would mind if she called to see him. Amy said he would be delighted, but he might not be well enough to talk to her much.

‘Two days later she arrived and immediately seeing him looking so ill, she just quietly pulled up a chair over beside him and, with his permission, lifted his feet up into her lap and said a little healing prayer as she massaged his feet. I will never forget the look in his eyes when he looked into her lovely face, he just couldn't believe that someone who had never met him before, would want to help him. There were tears in his eyes. This beautiful person was none other than dearest Lisbeth Greaves, who came regularly every week after this, and was so delighted to see Alex a little brighter each visit...’

‘...On one of these visits Lisbeth told us both about the religion she belonged to. Neither of us had heard of it before... She gave Alex a little prayer book and another book which explained a little about the Faith, and how the Bahá'ís embraced all faiths, and how it didn't matter what country people came from or what they were; they were all God's children.’

After reading this Alex immediately knew this was the religion for him. Amy became a Bahá'í a little later. Their home in Castlereagh became the focus of Bahá'í activities, with wonderful warm welcoming weekly firesides, Holy Days, weekend schools and even Bahá'í weddings! They helped form the first Local Spiritual Assembly of Castlereagh. In 1972 Alex and Amy went on Pilgrimage with fellow Bahá'ís. Then they moved to Bangor to be nearer their sons, one of whom was not well. Amy served on the Bangor Local Assembly for many years.

Amy was always immaculate in her appearance as was her lovely home in which she had an array of beautiful little objects and ornaments. The hospitality and welcome were very warm and genuine, and she could produce lovely snacks within minutes. Every day there was a tapping on the window and a little robin came in looking for the piece of cheese which Amy gave it. When fellow Bahá'ís were ill, Amy would cook for them and bring the food. A lady, who

declared at the Shields's fireside, commented 'I thought, if all Bahá'ís are like this, I want to be one.'

Amy was deeply shocked when Alex passed away. She began to suffer severe back pain. Another blow fell when her younger son passed away. Yet Amy never changed; she remained as welcoming as ever with her hair, as always, beautifully curled, and her home still immaculate, even though she had no washing machine and did all her washing by hand.

Amy Shields showed us that to follow the way of faith is not an easy path, but an ongoing struggle. Amy always lived for others and not for personal glory.



Sami'u'llah Shahriari-Zavareh 1920 – 2012

Mr Sami'u'llah Shahriari was born in 1920 to a Bahá'í family in the village of Zavareh in the province of Isfahan. His grandfather Mullá Reza was among the early Bahá'ís of Zavareh. On embracing the Faith Mullá Reza spent the remainder of his life teaching it, as a result of which, more than a hundred individuals came to accept the Faith. He was persecuted and tortured by the enemies of the Faith numerous times, and eventually died of wounds inflicted on him, and is numbered among

the Martyrs of the Faith.

Mr Shahriari's father, Aqá Asadu'lláh, is also regarded as a Martyr of the Faith. He was killed by a bullet of the enemy. At the time of his father's martyrdom, Sami'u'llah was only nine years old. Not unexpectedly this caused him and his family immense hardship. Soon afterwards he was taken to the city of Kashan, where he attended one of the early Bahá'í schools known as the *'Unity of Mankind'*. There, life presented him with many challenges, but he took them in his stride and carried on. Later he moved to Isfahan, where he lived and worked for a number of years. In the absence of opportunities for a formal education he embarked on self-training and learnt essential knowledge and skills, including some Arabic and English, which were very helpful to him throughout his working life.

He also lived and worked in the city of Khoram Shahr for a few years, but after marrying Toba Khanum in 1950, he moved to Tehran where he worked as an accountant. From their union came three sons by the names of Hooshang, Bijan, and Siamack who are all active Bahá'ís.

In 1994 Mr Shahriari, along with his wife, emigrated to England so that they could be close to two of their sons and their respective families.

Mr Shahriari's home, both in Iran and in England was a centre for Bahá'í gatherings. He was an active member of several Bahá'í committees and also taught the Kitáb-i-Aqdas for a number of years.

He had a deep interest in Persian literature and poetry and knew many well-known Persian classic poems by heart, and was able to refer to them in his conversation. He himself had a knack for poetry and wrote a number of beautiful poems.

He was a quiet man who dedicated his life to supporting his family and children in every way possible. He always treated everyone with the utmost kindness, and he was respected by everyone for his integrity, kindness and wisdom.

On 15 October 2012, Mr Shahriari ascended to the Abhá Kingdom in Manchester, England. He is survived by his wife, Toba Khanum, their three sons, their wives, and six grandchildren.

Morna Sibley

1948 – 2012

Morna, a dear friend, lived in many parts of the world, including the Middle East, and when in England she drew close to the Faith. As a young woman, she joined an Oxfam Water Aid project in Algeria for a year, and later one of her first jobs involved helping disadvantaged communities from deprived areas in Glasgow. She was always happy and ready to help others in whatever they needed. Her kindness and compassion towards humanity have been her legacy.

Morna was a professional teacher who taught many children to read. She also helped many adults for whom English was not their first language.

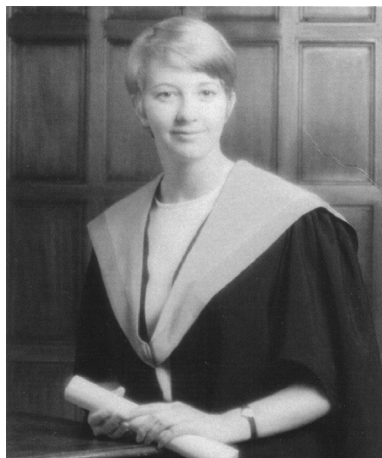
We first met Morna during a devotional that she attended straight after participating in a multifaith talk in Coventry. She was inspired by the Faith and joined a study circle without hesitation. She completed Book One of the Ruhi series and a few more. She declared herself a Bahá'í in 2008, and after that she was elected to serve as a member of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Coventry. For as long as she was able to, the doors of her house were always open to host devotionals, study circles or simply for a chat. She loved a chat, and she was very keen on passing on her knowledge to others. We learnt that the prominent Bahá'í John Esslemont was from Scotland, like her, and she was very proud of that.

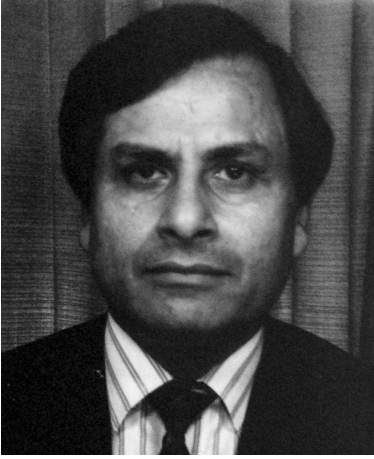
Morna was a special friend and a very active member of our community. She was generous and kind to all, but particularly loving with the children. She had a great sense of humour 'after ten in the morning', as she used to say! Her positive outlook on life, and the courage and dignity she showed dealing with her illness, brought inspiration to many of us.

Morna lived with cancer for many years, but this never affected her passion to serve humanity and learn about the Faith. She was always surrounded by friends and books.

She peacefully passed away in the company of her daughter on 28 February 2012, leaving behind her daughter and a son.

Morna is dearly missed, and she will always be remembered for her courage, generosity and kindness.





Dr Aziz Ahmad Siddiqui 1943 – 2011

Aziz Ahmad Siddiqui was born in Multan, Pakistan on 6 May 1943. He was born into a Sunni Muslim family. He studied medicine and then moved to the United Kingdom in the late 1960s.

Aziz met his wife Sima while they were working in a hospital in Shrewsbury. He first heard about the Bahá'í Faith in 1973 through Sima. He fell in love with the Faith almost immediately, and read many Bahá'í books.

Aziz's interest in the Faith was further heightened when he attended firesides at Knight of Bahá'u'lláh, Dr Hushmat Ta'eed's house, and he became a Bahá'í three

months later. He was then further nurtured into understanding by his fifth generation Bahá'í wife, Sima.

Aziz and Sima were married for thirty-eight years and had two children, a son, Sughrat who is working as a hospital doctor and a daughter, Mujdeh who is working as a nurse.

Aziz served the National Health Service for thirty five years as a doctor, and retired aged sixty due to ill health. He was also a long-term member of the Local Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Lincoln from 1997–2008.

Aziz was a quiet, gentle and wise soul with a sweet sense of humour who brought his wisdom to the service of his Lord Bahá'u'lláh. Humbly he accepted his share of suffering during the gradual maturation of Bahá'u'lláh's administration in his home town. He was very loving, generous and hospitable with a great sense of humour, and had many hobbies, including painting and walking. He particularly loved mountainous regions and collecting beautiful, natural stones and fossils.

He was blessed to visit the Holy Land and Etenna in Turkey on two occasions. His love for the Faith and his family were unconditional. He loved and respected all the institutions of the Faith, completed all the Ruhi book courses, and remained active in his community until ill health severely curtailed his involvement.

Aziz had gradually succumbed to a debilitating disease which took away his sharp and rational scientific mind; nevertheless he painstakingly went through the Ruhi process, even with waning mental powers, but with an indomitable and brilliant spirit, trust in God and a patient and loving demeanour which blessed all who had the pleasure of his company.

Sadly Aziz peacefully passed away to the Abhá Kingdom on 6 December 2011 whilst his wife and two children were praying with him.

His funeral was held at the beautiful Newport Cemetery in Lincoln, attended by a diverse mix of friends and family. A beautiful quotation from Bahá'u'lláh adorns his headstone, which inspires and attracts those who visit the cemetery.

He was deeply loved by many people including his wife, children and three grandchildren, and will always be remembered in the heart and prayers of his family and friends.

Robert Richardson Smith

1919 – 2013

Robert Richardson Smith, or Bob as he was known to us locally, was born in Nelson, Lancashire, and died aged 93 years.

At the age of eighteen Bob was conscripted into the forces. He joined the Royal Navy, and returned to civilian life after the war, and married Winnie, his first wife, and had two daughters, Lynn and Carol.

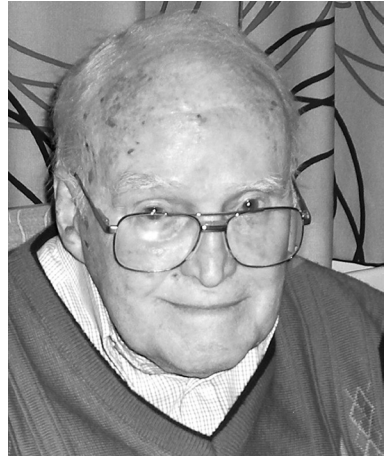
The early death of his wife (she was only thirty-five years old) left him bringing up the two young girls – no easy task. Bob continued to raise his family, eventually marrying his second wife, Anne. They lived for a number of years in Lancashire, but then came the big decision to move to Australia.

Bob and Anne became Bahá'ís in Modbury, South Australia in 1969 and together became active teachers of the Bahá'í Faith. Both served on the Local Spiritual Assembly of Tea Tree Gully Community Area, and on the Regional Teaching Committee of Spencer and Mallee at various times between 1970 and 1982.

When Bob asked to be relieved of service (he and his wife felt that there were many younger Bahá'ís able to serve) Bob and Anne became extremely active in other fields, such as serving as musical entertainers for older, more unfortunate people than themselves. They plainly displayed the fact that they were Bahá'ís on the musical instrument that they played (an organ). Anne also played piano accompaniment. This went on for about 11 years, and a lot of people knew that they were Bahá'ís. They both offered to assist the Local Spiritual Assembly in any way possible.

Bob was transferred back to the United Kingdom on 18 October 1993, after Anne passed away. He maintained contact with the local Nelson Bahá'ís right up to his death, and showed great interest in his friends' activities, and was able to provide some interesting suggestions for the development of the Faith based on his experience of teaching at firesides in Australia.

Bob was a very pleasant, wise friend, and always had a joke with us, and a twinkle in his eye, especially when he spoke about the Faith. We will miss him.





Mohammad Vali Nakhaei

1929 – 2013

Mohammad Vali Nakhaei, who passed away on 3 February 2013 at the age of eighty-three, was born in Birjand, a city in the easternmost part of Iran on 28 October 1929.

His happy childhood came to an abrupt end with the passing of his father when Mohammad was at the tender age of eleven. Following his father's passing, he became the breadwinner for his mother and his siblings, being the second eldest child. He had two sisters and three brothers. The dedication to his family and patient hard work, that were to characterise his life, immediately became apparent as he began to work endlessly to help and support his mother, and provide for his brothers' and sisters' education, while he continued his own studies in the evening.

Mohammad Vali was born into a Bahá'í family and married the love of his life Aghdas Nabili in 1958, the beginning of a wonderful union lasting 54 years. After their wedding they moved to Tehran to begin a new life and start their family. He began modestly as a storeman working for the American company Westinghouse, but his organisational ability, industry and honesty soon bore fruit, and within a few years he had not only been promoted into management, but had started a car dealership for Citroen. The couple were blessed with three children: two sons and a daughter.

In 1977 the family began the process of pioneering to Scotland, and after consultation with the National Spiritual Assembly of the United Kingdom, settled initially in Motherwell, Scotland. Unfortunately, Mohammad had to make a visit back to Iran, but owing to the revolution, when he wanted to return to Scotland, he was unable to, and so had to escape across the mountains to Pakistan and eventually to the UK.

Having served in the Bahá'í community of Motherwell along with his wife for many years, the couple moved to Stirling, and then in 1999, they moved to Bearsden, near Glasgow, to be near their children and grandchildren whom they loved dearly.

Friday nights at the Nakhaei household were open house when all the family and many of their friends would gather. Everyone relaxed together at the end of the week in great company and with good food – often enhanced by Mohammad's own cooking, and sometimes even music and dancing (which was one of his joys in life).

Mohammad Vali was a loving, gentle and caring man, and he will be missed dearly by all who knew him, especially his family.

Tahireh Vojdani

1920 – 2012

Tahireh Vojdani was born in Ghamsar, Kashan in 1920 and when she was two years old, the family moved to Tehran. She studied at the Tarbiyat School in Tehran. At the age of fifteen, Tahireh married a Bahá'í, named Enayat, from Eshghabad and had two children, Iraj and Rosette, and later enjoyed three grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. While bringing up her family she was actively involved in Bahá'í activities and would host many Bahá'í events. Tahireh loved organising and hosting events so much that at the age of seven she even organised a birthday party for one of her friends!

After thirty-five years of marriage, her husband Enayat passed away. Tahireh decided to start pioneering and volunteered to go to the north of Iran for three years. After her return, the Pioneering Committee told her that there was an urgent need to go to Natanz. She went there and became the secretary of its Local Spiritual Assembly for nine years.

After the Iranian Revolution, life for all the Bahá'ís became very difficult. Tahireh was subject to stone throwing, and she faced verbal abuse on a regular basis because of her faith. However, Tahireh was very strong and brave. Once while she and a number of other Bahá'ís were sheltering in the Ḥazíratu'l-Quds (the Bahá'í Centre) they heard a mob approaching. In order to protect the Bahá'ís, Tahireh stood at the front of the Ḥazíratu'l-Quds to shield the others from being attacked.

In 1992 after trying for many years to get her passport, she was successful in obtaining her passport and visa, and she came to live in England. However, she always wanted to go back and live in Iran. She used to say that if Iran is the birthplace of Bahá'u'lláh, it is very important for me.

While she was in England, although she didn't speak or understand much English, she always loved to go to the Feasts. She would take Bahá'í pamphlets with her to shopping centres and give them to people sitting next to her. Her Faith was her life.

To the end of her life she stood on her own feet, was a magnificent host and lived independently. That was what she always wanted.



In
Memoriam

168–169 B.E.

Following is a list of Bahá'ís who passed away during the periods indicated, and for whom no obituaries have been obtained. We list the names of these individuals in loving remembrance.

May the Blessed Beauty surround them with His grace and bounty, and bring comfort and solace to their families and friends.

Jonathan Atkinson (17 November 2011)

Feroze Dallas (10 November 2011)

Sheila Cassidy (6 June 2012)

Arminel Cowper (19 October 2012)

Jim Grimshaw (13 September 2012)

Parviz Khazali (4 March 2012)

Ann Kyne (31 May 2012)

Adrian Love (1 November 2012)

John Macpherson (22 October 2012)

Christine Mainprize (26 October 2012)

John Morphew (7 February 2012)

Alice O'Brien (1 September 2011)

Ezatollah Roshan (3 October 2011)

Narcisse Sabour (24 December 2012)

Soha Samimi-Seyedi (2 March 2012)

Ezzat Tabibi (29 October 2012)

Parvine Taraz (8 February 2012)

Hany Mustapha (8 November 2012)

Violda Dobbs (28 November 2012)

Brian Wetton (21 July 2012)



In
Memoriam

169–170 B.E.

Following Bahá'ís passed away quite recently – we include them in our prayers

Obituaries for them will be included in next year's publication.

Farhang Afrán (5 May 2013)

Moussa Atlassi (17 March 2013)

Ataollah Bagherzadeh (2 February 2013)

Hedayatolla Djauid (11 April 2013)

Bahman Farahbakhsh (17 March 2013)

James Haughton (31 March 2013)

Malcolm Lee (6 April 2013)

Ailsa Lewis (16 January 2013)

Saiednasroll Miraftab (23 April 2013)

Ghodsí Monadjem (3 March 2013)

Andrew Mortimer (13 March 2013)

Pasha Nazerian (18 April 2013)

Winnie Neill (11 February 2013)

Angela Richardson (5 April 2013)

Colin Rodgers (8 February 2013)

Sarajollah Samari (11 February 2013)

Veronica Swan (5 April 2013)

Maliheh Vargha (6 January 2013)

Eddie Whiteside (9 March 2013)

Simin Wilson (27 January 2013)

Published by
the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United Kingdom