

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY

Dates for Unit Conventions - 2000

Friends, please make a diary note - all Unit Conventions will be arranged during the week of 14th - 22nd October.

The host Assemblies should be approved soon and information sent to them by July.

They will be asked to arrange the exact date and venue of the Unit Convention and to let the friends in their respective Units know the information as soon as possible (to enable as many of the friends as possible to attend these important events) where they will:

elect the delegates consult on important matters pertaining to the Twelve Month Plan (and the forthcoming Five Year Plan) make recommendations of a national nature to the National Spiritual Assembly consult on local initiatives making recommendations to the local Spiritual Assemblies

Pillar at the Guardian's resting place in safe keeping

The eagle on the top of the pillar at the Guardian's resting place was stolen some time ago and the globe on which it stood knocked to the ground. For safety, the Corinthian capital which held up the globe has been moved into a secure storage space pending the restoration of the site.

Annual Report now available

Hard copies of the Annual Report of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United Kingdom are now available on request from the National Office. It is not necessary to send a stamped addressed to receive your copy.

Qualified in the building trade?

The National Spiritual Assembly would be interested to hear from suitably qualified people in the fields of building, property maintenance, civil engineering, property surveying, architecture and related fields who would be available for an important voluntary position with the National Assembly. Contact the National Office, 27 Rutland Gate, London SW7 1PD.

Sixth European Bahá'í Conference on International Law and Order The Netherlands

Friday 29th September - Sunday 1st October

Distinguished speakers include Hanne-Sophie Greve, Judge of the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg, and Renée Jones Bos, Human Rights Ambassador of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Following the historic session last year commemorating the 100th anniversary of the 1899 Hague Peace Conference, there are plans to hold part of the Conference at the Peace Palace in the Hague, the seat of the International Court of Justice.

I read it in the daily NEWS

Messages from the Universal House of Justice, Messages from the National Spiritual Assembly - both urgent and informative.

Messages and information from the Bahá'í Councils and other bodies, both in the UK and overseas.

Reliable Information - with so much misinformation or mischievous output from the Internet, it is good to have an oasis of solid fact.

If you are on-line, all this can be yours. In a message dated 10th April 2000 the National Assembly said -

"New technology can be used to serve the Faith, and the National Spiritual Assembly follows the example of the Universal House of Justice in using e-mail to ensure the rapid transmission of announcements and information.

Thus the National Spiritual Assembly's e-mail list: <mailto:NEWS@bahai.org.uk> will be where the Friends will first see important items.

The National Assembly would like to remind the Friends that (a) all UK Bahá'ís who have e-mail access are urged to subscribe to this list, and (b) in each local community where there are Bahá'ís on e-mail - and we know this to be the great majority of communities - there should be one person (at least) specifically charged with sharing urgent news and important announcements that have appeared with the Assembly and the Friends in that community..."

NEWS has built up such a good reputation as a fast reliable news service that some 20% of our subscribers are from overseas - several of them being other National Spiritual Assemblies or agencies thereof.

Subscribing to (joining) NEWS couldn't be simpler: just send an e-mail message with the subject "Please Subscribe" to <mailto:NEWS.admin@bahai.org.uk> and include in the body of the message your postal address and, if known, your Bahá'í ID number (from your credential card).

National Conference 2000

10/11/12 November - National Conference, Scarborough Spa Complex Theme ENDS AND BEGINNINGS committed to growth, prepared to learn

Guest speakers: Counsellor Patrick O'Mara Counsellor Sohrab Youssefian

"Growth, Retention, and Consolidation in the US" document available

The National Spiritual Assembly recently received a copy of a most interesting document. Entitled "Issues Relating to Growth, Retention, and Consolidation in the United States" it is the report of a major study carried out by that country's National Teaching Committee.

Although it deals with the USA, the National Assembly found that it struck many chords with the UK experience and appeared to have a lot of relevance to our own situation in this country.

With the permission of the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States we have shared the report with Bahá'í Councils and the NTC here, believing it will be of great interest and use to them, and have commissioned a similar study for the UK.

The US report is almost forty pages long and the National Assembly believes it makes a major contribution to thinking and discussion about teaching the Faith in this country. It is available on request from: The National Spiritual Assembly, 27 Rutland Gate, London, SW7 1PD.

Carry your credential card

The National Assembly recommends that the friends ensure they carry their Bahá'í credential card with them at

all times as in case of emergency it gives both details of the Bahá'í law of burial, and a contact number for the National Office on the back.

Bahá'í Information Office Third Floor, Bridge House, 97-101 High Street, Tonbridge, Kent TN9 1DP Tel: 01732 369694, Fax: 01732 569733 e-mail: <mailto:bio@bahai.org.uk>

More pictures on Heritage Website

We have extended the number of displays in the picture gallery of the UK Bahá'í Heritage Website. The Friends are invited to view the site: <http://www.iol.ie/~isp/heritagewhich> is both interesting and contains material which is useful in the study and teaching of the Faith.

New resource "Christianity and the Bahá'í Faith"

Now available: a series of six fifteen-minute radio scripts on the theme "Christianity and the Bahá'í Faith" as successfully used elsewhere. Ideal for your local radio spot. For a copy of the set please contact BIO.

BIO resources - waiting for YOU to use them

Over the past few years we have gathered resource papers from a variety of sources. Many of these have addressed topical concerns. They have helped Bahá'ís in media work and in sharing the ideas of the Faith with other organisations and individuals. The community was notified when these were first released and many took advantage of our offer of copies. We want you to know that these papers are still available: something that might not have seemed relevant to your needs in the past may well be appropriate and useful now.

We have papers on such subjects as Aids, HIV, world order, environment, equality of women and men, alienation in our society, disability issues, Bahá'í funerals, religious discrimination, local government, Bahá'ís as hospital patients, moral leadership and sexual education. We also have statements and discussion papers on the document "The Prosperity of Humankind" as well as papers on local Agenda 21, sustainable development, social development, youth, and the advancement of women. Others are in preparation.

During the Centenary year, many papers were written. These now form a resource library bank called the UK Bahá'í Heritage. The papers included in this bank cover some of the lives of the early believers such as Thomas Breakwell, Mary Thornburgh-Cropper, Ethel Rosenberg and Lady Blomfield. Other subjects that are featured are the oneness of humankind, fostering racial harmony, advancing the equality of women and men and promoting religious understanding. There are also two papers that deal with the Bahá'í Faith in the United Kingdom and the first public mentions of our Faith.

All of these papers are yours for the asking. If the variety is too overwhelming, why not request a few this month and a few each month during the rest of the 12 Month Plan?

For those of you who are thinking of getting involved with other areas of the media such as radio and newspapers, we have some radio scripts and newspaper ads that we would be happy to share with you. And if you have developed scripts and newspaper ads, please send them to us so that we can share them with others.

The field of local television is just opening up in this country. As they are hungry for information, it is a good time to get involved if you have a station in your district. While we don't have any first hand experience, we know of people that do. We are always happy to link people with no experience to people with experience.

The UK Bahá'ís have significantly increased their presence on the World Wide Web, an activity warmly encouraged by the National Spiritual Assembly, and BIO's Web of Faith materials can help your community with this. The widespread availability of personal computers means that more and more communities are getting involved with the Local Information Officers' training programme (Show-on-the-Go). It can be shared with all members of the community: even an individual living in a district where he or she is the only Bahá'í, can take part in this programme. Each one of us can play our part by doing one thing to help take the Faith to the wider public.

Why is that important? In the Ridván message 2000, the Universal House of Justice stated, "Equally of

relevance to integrating the essentials of the process were the strategies defined for the work in social and economic development, which is a critical part of consolidation, and in external affairs, which is a vital factor in enabling the Faith to manage the consequences of its emergence from obscurity." What a wonderful sentence! It focuses us and gives us purpose for our work. To know that what we are doing is to help us "manage the consequences" of our Faith's "emergence from obscurity".

To some of us it seems that it is taking and has taken a long time, but it is now HAPPENING. And BIO is here to help you with it.

Browse Bahá'í Web sites ...

<http://www.bahai.org>

<http://www.library.bahai.org>

<http://www.bahaindex.com/http://www.onecountry.org>

<http://bci.org/prophecy-fulfilled>

<http://www.promise-dday.com/http://chiron.valdosta.edu/whuitt/religion/bahai/radio/overview.html>