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UK Community News 

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First Local Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Camberley formed

THE PHOTOGRAPH on the right shows the first ever Local Spiritual Assembly of Bahá'ís of Camberley, in Surrey, formed this Ridván. Members are: sitting, L to R, Taraneh Pee, Kamy Missaghi, Jamila Kielhorn. Standing, L to R, Foad Rahimi, Elham Rahimi, Jason Lee, Sharon Lee, Sureya Stratton, Adrian Kielhorn.



National Spiritual Assembly meets friends in Bristol

AS WE WALKED along this pathway, our thoughts turned back to the time when these flagstones had been twice blessed by the footsteps of Ábdu'l-Bahá, in 1911 and again in 1913. In fact it was exactly 90 years and one month since that second visit. He made a promise then that the home He stayed in would become Áa centre of peace and rest for pilgrims from East and WestÁ. The Bristol Bahá'ís, reading some extracts of the visits, and projecting a photograph of the visit on a large screen, reflected on this in the opening presentation.

The love and welcome given to our National Spiritual Assembly was evident by the number of local friends crowded into the hotel room. All nine National Assembly members were there; each was introduced by the Chairman Shirin Tahzib. We were treated to some excellent presentations on the progress of the Five Year Plan; the development of the three core activities; how the work is devolving to the Bahá'í Councils; the all-important work of the External Affairs which can now be pursued more actively now that we have the Councils.

As well as Shirin's Tahzib's introduction, there were presentations by John Paris, Iain Palin and the secretary, Barney Leith. These were followed by an opportunity to ask questions. Later, over coffee, there was a chance to chat with the members informally. It had been a very special day – the chance to make the pilgrimage to the house Ábdu'l-Bahá had visited – to pray there for the success of the Five Year Plan and for peace in the world, and to have the privilege of meeting with our National Institution.

London Children Speak Out!

ON SUNDAY, March 16, 2003 an enthusiastic group of students from the North London Thomas Breakwell School (held at QE Girls School, Barnet) ascended the towering heights of the Canary Wharf tower to the top (50th) floor. This was the venue which the Mayor of London had chosen to invite children from different ethnic, cultural, faith groups and

community schools to share their visions for the future of London.

The event lasted all afternoon and was hosted by TV personalities from Children's BBC and Channel 4. There



were around 250 adults and children present representing around seven different schools and faith groups, which included the Chinese community, two local schools, a Jewish school, Vivekananda community school and all event organisers. All groups made their presentations. The Bahá'í children shared the message and teachings of Bahá'u'lláh and, based on these, thoughts for a more unified London. After this, workshops were held and the feedback was hosted by the Deputy Mayor of London, Nicky Gavron.



Chesterfield Ruhi Book 1 course



THE SECOND collaboration of the Ruhi Book 1 course in Persian was set up in Chesterfield, attended by Persian friends from Chesterfield, Dronfield, Sheffield, and Rotherham. The friends met every two weeks to study the course within a delightful atmosphere of welcoming hospitality and warmth, sharing stories and insights which resulted in an enriching and uplifting atmosphere of love and fellowship at each meeting. The course recently ended in Sheffield with a most enjoyable party with Persian food and live music.

Golden Jubilee in Jersey

THE GOLDEN JUBILEE year got off to a good start in Jersey, with the Naw-Ráz party. Thirty five out of the 38 people who attended were non-Bahá'í friends and enquirers. The hall was decorated with gold tinsel and stars and everyone was able to share in a buffet the community laid on. We had live music this year from two very different people who sang for their supper! Each person or couple was able to take away a copy of "Peace" from the jewels series of the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.



On the Saturday, March 22, there was a short but very good piece in The Jersey Evening Post situated on The Faith Page, which mentioned Naw-Ráz, the jubilee and our Knights of Bahá'u'lláh. The Guernsey and Jersey Communities also put Naw-Ráz greetings in each other's newspapers, something which has become a bit of a tradition. Unexpectedly, we were also invited to do a week of "Morning Thought" on BBC Radio Jersey for the first week of April. Generally, this seemed to go well although they did not edit one of them properly and it did not actually make sense. However, we hope they might give us another opportunity at a later date! Marlene Morris has also just learnt that an extract, The Mountain from her personal account of The Official Opening of the Terraces, gained a Certificate of Merit in the Guernsey Literary Eisteddfod. Whilst the certificate is nice, hopefully it was a useful bit of proclamation. We now look forward to a visit from our National Spiritual Assembly secretary and a member of The Council for England in June and July respectively.

We would again take the opportunity to remind people we are here and would really like to have more visitors and your prayers.

Marlene Morris

Barnet Assembly delivers letter to the World's Religious Leaders



THE SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY of Barnet posted out 150 copies of the Universal House of Justice's letter to the world's religious leaders. The Assembly also decided to present copies of the letter to some religious leaders by hand. These included; The Reverend Jim Lithicum, Chaplain of Barnet Hospital; The Reverend Adrian Benjamin, of All Saints' Church (pictured above) and the Bishop of Edmonton, The Right Reverend Peter Wheatley. All three of the clergymen accepted the letter with respect and thanked the Local Assembly warmly.



Bath Mayor joins children to explore faith

THE MAYOR of Bath took time out to have a cup of tea with children who were learning to explore religion and faith. Cllr Loraine Morgan-Brinkhurst visited a service sponsored by the Bahá'ís of Bath that was focused on 4 to 11 year-olds living in Newbridge.

The youngsters spent the afternoon exploring aspects of the Bahá'í religion – one of the world's youngest faiths – and took part in a treasure hunt as well as arts and crafts. The mayor made a pledge to meet as many people from as many different religions and creeds as possible during her term in office and was invited to the community event after the Bahá'ís heard of her intention.

Cllr Morgan-Brinkhurst said: “The children were really being encouraged to get involved and think about aspects of love and loyalty and respect, and they also had such fun.”

(from *The Bath Chronicle* March 31, 2003)

Relaxing day at Connor Downs

CHILDREN and adults at Connor Downs primary school in Cornwall recently benefited from a “Quiet Zone” based on the Tranquillity Zone model. Michaela Smith, an ancillary at the school, set up the zone as part of Cornwall's Healthy Schools curriculum. One hundred and seventy children took part and all enjoyed the experience. Adult helpers and teachers found it a profoundly moving experience.

