

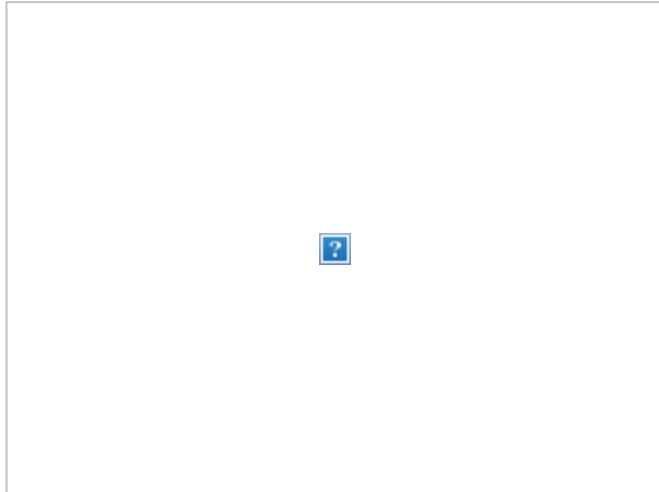
banner

**Bahá'í Journal UK**Journal of the Bahá'í Community of the United
Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
Volume 19, No.4 – September, 2002 / 159BE LARGE PRINT / Standard Print.Musician's Reunion

Musician's Reunion in Germany

Hundreds hear of the Faith at celebratory concert

FIVE people from Northamptonshire experienced a remarkable musical trip to Germany and Switzerland. The trip came about through an invitation to participate in the anniversary concert of Chor96 based in Ottobeuren in Southern Germany. The director of Chor96, Helmut Scharpf, is brother-in-law to Bahá'í composer and musician, Richard Leigh. Last year Helmut and his wife Sarah brought about twenty members of his choir to the spring school in Saffron Walden.



On Sunday June 2, Chor96 were holding a celebratory concert and Helmut invited Richard, Anne Sparkes and Mina Beint to take part in the concert. Kevin Beint and Alfred Sharpe also joined the trip. Ottobeuren is in a very conservative Catholic area where it is difficult to proclaim the Faith. However, the concert took place in the Emperor's Hall of the enormous basilica. Over three hundred and fifty people attended including various priests and dignitaries. Included in the programme was a rendition by the choir of "O Son of Earth" composed by Richard; Mina sang "In the Garden of Thy Heart" and "Allah'Umma" and Anne and Richard played a selection of their own, lively compositions on marimba and violin. Helmut explained to the audience that the songs were from the writings of Bahá'u'lláh, founder of the Bahá'í Faith. "O Son of Earth" is also featured on the choir's CD.

The author (far right) and friends enjoy an evening relaxing together

Three local Bahá'ís attended the concert and had never experienced such a proclamation of the Faith to such a large and important audience in their area.

The following day Mina, Richard and Alfred were able to provide a selection of music at the Catholic ladies' prayer group meeting in Ulm. The Bahá'í ladies of Ulm attend this group and once a year they are allowed to organise the programme and by amazing coincidence this was the night. They really felt their prayers had been answered. On Tuesday the group drove to Landegg in Switzerland and gave a concert for the students attending courses, local Bahá'ís and their friends. The concert took place in the beautiful hall with panoramic views overlooking Lake Constance. Richard was also able to talk about his composition of nine Hidden Words, "Myriads".

During the visit the group became close friends with their various hosts who had showered kindness and hospitality on them and asked lots of questions about the Faith. On the Thursday three hosts attended an interfaith meeting arranged by Bahá'ís in Lauben. Again, at that meeting, Mina, Richard and Alfred were able to offer music to enhance the very spiritual atmosphere. The host families thoroughly enjoyed themselves and it was difficult to drag them away even at midnight. All the host families were given literature in German.

On the drive back to the UK the group visited the temple for prayers and called in to see Fleur Bartlett in Dormagen and had a brief time to visit the children's class gathering. The group had travelled one thousand eight hundred miles, met Bahá'ís in three German towns, sung and played to well over four hundred people and introduced the Bahá'í Faith to numerous people who were hearing about it for the first time.

Kevin Beint



Copyright, © 2002, National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United Kingdom. All rights reserved.

