



# Bahá'í Journal UK

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National Committees and Departments 

## Office of Huqúqu'lláh

*Well is it with them that have fulfilled that which is prescribed in the Book of God. It is incumbent upon everyone to observe that which God hath purposed, for whatsoever hath been set forth in the Book by the Pen of Glory is an effective means for the purging, the purification and sanctification of the souls of men and a source of prosperity and blessing. Happy are they that have observed His commandments.*

Bahá'u'lláh: Huqúqu'lláh, p. 502

Please make specific queries and requests for deepening programmes to the Representatives covering your area at their home telephone numbers.

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## Committee for International Pioneering & Travel Teaching

THE LORD OF THE AGE HAS SAID:

*“The signs of impending convulsions and chaos can now be discerned, inasmuch as the prevailing order appeareth to be lamentably defective.”(1)*

*“Soon will the present-day order be rolled up, and a new one spread out in its stead.”(2)*

It is truly astonishing to live in a time when the fulfilment of these words is so obviously being unfolded before our eyes. The titanic struggle of the nation states to try to hold the old order together, to patch it up and keep it afloat, is daily becoming more desperate and unproductive. Meanwhile whole populations are riven by disease, threatened by extremes of violence both from within and without, everywhere the moral vacuum destroys hope and reconciliation between generations, families, races, cultures and religions.

What an extraordinary privilege we have been given to bring to a suffering humanity the vision and clarity of the new world order! The Universal House of Justice is directing us to the World Order letters of the beloved Guardian, Shoghi Effendi, to better understand the significance of our times and our destiny. Is it too much to suggest that the infallible institution is guiding us, preparing us for an unprecedented response by humanity to the call of Bahá'u'lláh, that the breakthrough is nigh? Will we be in the right spot at the right time as the newborn come streaming through the “portals”?

Think hard about this. Are you really in the best of all possible places to serve the Cause? Is there even a little niggles that your life's fulfilment is somewhere else on this planet? If so, then act now, before those pearls of destiny are covered over by the silt and debris of everyday concerns and problems.

The challenge of overseas pioneering and travel teaching is not for the fainthearted. When we scan through the list of those who serve as overseas pioneers, it is obvious that a special sort of dedication and sacrifice is required to stick at the task, yet, when we talk to or correspond with these dedicated souls, their thoughts are almost always of the joy and happiness that their years of service have brought them, with a fund of stories that will be the envy of future generations who will stand in awe of their services to the Sacred Threshold

The summer and early autumn produced a wonderful crop of travel teachers and some precious pioneers. As an example, in the far north, the Faroe Islands was spiritually stirred by a talented troupe of visiting Bahá'í artistes who struggled valiantly against severe financial constraints to make the trip. In the south, at the opposite end of Europe, Macedonia was the travel teaching destination for a lady in her sixties. In both cases, the visits have led to offers to permanently pioneer. When one experiences first hand the crying need to reinforce these fledgling communities, it seems that, for some at least, the call to service is irresistible.

We are, by Bahá'í standards, an old, established community in the UK, that seems stuck at about the 6000 mark. The beloved Guardian, Shoghi Effendi, referred to the British Bahá'ís in his last letter in August 1957 as “the small band of the ardent, the high minded, the resolute followers of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh” (Unfolding Destiny p. 384). We are still a comparatively “small band”. It is time to rediscover that ardour and resolution. We urge you to look at the very informative CIPTT website for information on the needs of each country and island. The website is at: [www.bahai.org.uk/pioneers](http://www.bahai.org.uk/pioneers)

We know, of course, that you will not forget the European frontier countries in the Balkans or the island jewels of the Mediterranean in considering your response. These are the now familiar goal countries in the Philip Hainsworth Campaign Five Year Plan Goals in Europe: Bosnia and Herzegovina; Corsica; Croatia; Cyprus; Macedonia; Malta; Kosovo; Montenegro; Serbia; Slovenia; Vojvodina. Meanwhile, in the far North, the Faroe Islands still beckon the hardy traveller.

When you decide to plan the details of your act of service please get in touch with the committee and let us help you. You can contact the CIPTT at [pbellamy999@hotmail.com](mailto:pbellamy999@hotmail.com)

*1 Bahá'u'lláh: Gleanings, CX, p.214*

*2 ibid, IV, p.6*

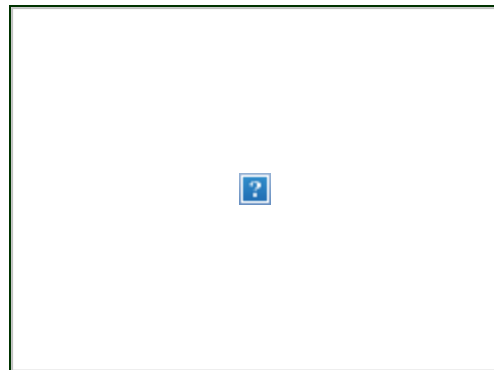
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## YoSDESK UK

**Karmel and Nadia Helmy, two sisters from Scotland, served at the House of Worship in India during the summer of 2003. “It was such a blessing for us both!”**

AS PROMISED here are some quick tips for you to pass on to other volunteers who may receive the opportunity to go out there in the future.

The accommodation is actually set in the grounds of the House of Worship so we are very lucky, our bedroom overlooked the Temple! This means that every morning you can say dawn prayers in the Temple. The accommodation is first class, especially if you compare it to outside of the House of Worship – everything is clean and almost everything you need is provided there – laundry and ironing facilities, fridge freezer, Internet access, telephone, kettle, even Sky TV! We were really not expecting this kind of treatment when going to serve in Delhi.



[Nadia and Karmel Helmy, saris and all](#)

Working at the Temple was amazing: each day you have to talk to thousands of people about the Bahá'í Faith, many of whom ask you on the spot how they can become a Bahá'í there and then! Being surrounded by so many people's prayers all day is a really electric experience.

Volunteers considering service here should also know that the work is physically, mentally and spiritually exhausting. Work lasts more than 10 hours a day, usually with deepenings and group consultations before and after. You are standing on your bare feet in the scorching heat for hours so be prepared to sweat! Volunteers have little time to themselves and need to be spiritually strong and very focused on their mission in order to serve to their

so need to be spiritually strong and very focused on their service in order to serve to their full capacity during their stay.

The most fun part of being a volunteer there was being able to adopt a part of Indian culture – all volunteers must dress in Indian clothes (so remember to take extra money Karmel and Nadia Helmy, two sisters from Scotland, served at the House of Worship in India during the summer of 2003. “It was such a blessing for us both!” to buy a couple of saris/panjabis to wear) and we all learned how to give information in Hindi. In retrospect I feel I would have been of more use if I had learned to speak a bit more of the language before I went to serve. Many of the visitors speak little or no English and so I’m sure I missed teaching opportunities due to lack of communication many times. I definitely recommend that volunteers, if they are able, try to learn basic Hindi.

The food there is delicious – you have all your meals cooked for you and it is all authentic Indian cuisine. However, being a vegetarian I have to recommend that all others take vitamin supplements with them as most of the diet consists of only rice, pulses and spices, tasty but not the healthiest!

The new accommodation was built by the end of 2001. Both the male and female volunteers now stay in the Temple grounds. The volunteers are truly spoilt when they go there to serve. We are surrounded by such poverty, and the House of Worship is so beautiful, peaceful and clean at all times.

Karmel Helmy

**Youth can move the world Shadi Behi’s year of service in the Tierra Santa orphanage continues to inspire her local community.**

WHEN SHADI BEHI from Pwllheli in North Wales decided to work as a volunteer in the Tierra Santa orphanage in Honduras, Central America, there was a lot of excitement as well as concern for her amongst the older Bahá’í friends in the area.

Even before she left for Honduras, the media showed a lot of interest. S4C provided her with a camcorder to make a diary record of her visit. This later became part of a documentary on the Faith.

Shadi’s stay at the orphanage was a deeply moving and rewarding experience. She returned home with many memories, fired and determined to raise desperately needed funds for the children. She inspired and moved the local Bahá’í community to regularly man a charity stall in the local market. Several newspapers covered her story and this brought her to the attention of Christian Aid and the local Soroptomists who were impressed and delighted that a local Persian-Welsh youth had set such a good example to other young people. Shadi won the local Soroptomists’ “Youth in the Community Award” 2003 and came fourth in the regional finals.

In October, Shadi’s “official” year of service came to an end and she moved to Cardiff to study medicine at the university. However, back in her home community, the orphanage stall continues to raise badly needed funds and has also become a very welcome focus for the not so youthful Bahá’ís there, who feel they are following in Shadi’s footsteps. Well done Shadi! You’ve shown that youth can, and do, move the world.

Christine Rees

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## **Bahá’í Office for Religious & Educational Affairs**

### **Faith reaching more children in schools**

CONGRATULATIONS to all the hard working SACRE members across the country! SACRE (Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education) is the council in each authority that advises Local Education Authorities (LEA’s) on religious education matters. Bahá’ís all over England and Wales are (or have been) heavily involved in developing Agreed Syllabuses, which guide teachers in each borough over what religious subjects can be taught in schools.

The Agreed Syllabus is re-written once every five years, giving the SACRE a chance to re-evaluate the situation in the local area so that changes in the religious communities can be

accounted for. It also gives the communities themselves an opportunity to address developments or a chance to be recognised on the syllabus, where they might not have been during the previous drafting.

Bahá'ís often get involved in a SACRE with major disadvantages: there may be very few Bahá'ís within the LEA boundaries and few, if any, children in the community; sometimes there is prejudice from those who administer the SACRE; or the Bahá'ís themselves sometimes feel they are not up to the task and are nervous about “pushing” the Faith.

It has been demonstrated however, that with persistence (sometimes over many years), the Faith can gain respect by the fact that Bahá'ís are willing to contribute to the SACRE process and help develop good relations with the other religious communities. Once this respect has been won, the Faith can become recognised on the Agreed Syllabus.

BOREA is very proud of all the efforts made by the friends in SACREs to get onto the Agreed Syllabus, and by the increasing number of successes of which we have been made aware. A big “thank you” to all those SACRE members which have given us regular updates on their situations.

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