

Glimpses

Newsletter of the Anthroposophical
Society in Canada

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Special Conference and Michaelmas edition



Michael and the Dragon, 14th century relief

General Secretary's Letter

Dear Friends,

Our conference held in Ottawa from August 7th to 14th was able to bring together people from different parts of the globe and of varying perspectives: young and old, Americans, Canadians and Europeans.

Michel Dongois has provided us with an extensive article describing this important event (see page xxx). I would simply like to add here some personal comments.

This was a team effort

A project of this magnitude cannot be brought to fruition without the collaboration of individuals who ascribe to a common ideal. What I carry away from this experience is the participative process our committee took up with vital intensity for 12 full months.

Once the aims of such a conference became clear to us in our preliminary meetings, we set out to visit the potential conference venue in 2015. There was a moment of hesitation and a lingering doubt as to the feasibility of organizing such a conference – and then came a clear commitment that we would forge ahead with the project and support it with all the means at our disposal.

During the months of preparation leading up to the conference itself, each member of the organizing committee found his or her place as the specific needs appeared and each one took on what he or she felt capable of carrying. The number of telephone conferences increased exponentially, becoming weekly occurrences as the conference approached. The challenges posed by refitting the college premises to suit the needs of the conference were a source of pressure up until the very last minute. For example, it was necessary to build a stage and equip it with a lighting system; Hamo Hammond and his Ottawa volunteers took this situation in hand. It was also necessary to find an adequate space for an art exhibition large enough to accommodate all the works sent in by the artists. This challenge was taken up by Sylvie Richard.

The logistics of all the details concerning the conference organisation were ably planned and managed by Siobhan Hughes and Robert MacKay; Doug

Wylie oversaw the budget and Claudette Leblanc took charge of registrations and incoming finances. It was Jean Balekian who created the artistic motifs used in the announcements for the conference and he also took charge of organizing the artistic workshops. And Dorothy LeBaron's role was absolutely invaluable: she oversaw the coordinating of all of the diverse aspects linked to this event.

Eric Philips-Oxford provided the translations of all the elements for the conference website, which was thus made available in both languages. John Bach coordinated the participant research presentations and Judith King brought her enthusiastic support to all concerned. And we must thank Gary Burak, who carefully built the conference website and posted all the information sent to him by the various sources.

And it goes without saying that our most heartfelt thanks goes out to the members of the Goetheanum Executive Committee who so generously gave of their time and expertise: Bodo von Plato, Paul Mackay, Joan Sleight, Seija Zimmerman and Constanza Kaliks.

All of this organisational activity was carried out in a mood of mutual respect and unflinching energy and selflessness. We can truly say that we experienced a beautiful example of what it means to work together towards a common goal.

Participant research presentations

I must also emphasize one other aspect of this event: the participant research projects that were scheduled at the end of the afternoon on each day of the conference. Over 35 individuals took up the call to offer the results of their personal research on a variety of topics. These exchanges on various subjects are a reflection of how anthroposophy is truly alive. It remains to be seen if our members would like to receive summaries of these presentations.

Surely, the future depends on the fact that each individual brings his or her personal impulse into the world. And indeed, the subtitle of our conference spoke to this in a timely manner: "From Knowledge to Conscious Action."

My best wishes for Michaelmas,

Arie van Ameringen

New Council Member - Karen Leidl

Dear members,



I'm impressed and humbled to be part of a council where there is so much talent, experience and vision combined with a genuine interest to serve the flourishing of our society. I have a lot to learn and hopefully much to give.

I'd like to introduce myself biographically. I was born in 1967 to Austrian immigrants in Toronto where I later studied art, met anthroposophy and became a member of the ASC. This meeting with Anthroposophy arrived like a gift on my 21st birthday and led to 14 years of wandering encounter with various anthroposophical initiatives in Canada, the Us and Europe. I eventually settled down in Quebec with my husband (also a member) Colin Beauséjour. Between my 35th and 42nd birthdays we had 4 boys and built our own house. During the past seven years I have been occupied with house, family, the school community (Les Enfants de la Terre) and efforts to be professionally active as a visual artist.

Karen

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Editor's Note

Scattered among the articles in this edition are some comments from participants of the August *Encountering Our Humanity* conference. They are in black-lined boxes and give a real sense of what was experienced in this exciting event.

For more comments and information on this retrospective go to:

<http://anthroposophy.ca/en/encountering-our-humanity-a-retrospective/>

Cultivating our Humanness - Michel Dongois

Nearly 240 participants, for the most part from Canada and the USA, gathered at the Cité Collégiale in Ottawa to take part in the weeklong Encountering our Humanity conference, which was held from August 7th to 14th, 2016. The impressive array of activities was designed to bring together into an organic threefold whole all the major fields of anthroposophical endeavour: lectures, artistic workshops and conversation groups. And all this was carefully scrutinized by the impish eye of a clown who started us off in a good mood every morning.

Each lecture given by a speaker from North America was coupled with a

I really enjoyed the wide range of artistic events at the conference. I could imagine that this type of events require even more efforts to put together. Therefore I am very grateful to the organizing committee and everyone who worked on this conference. Many art forms are presented within this one week of gathering, from architecture, sculpture, painting, music, poetry, to eurythmy. This gave me the experience of the evolution of consciousness within a human being through the evolution of arts. Thank you!

CoCo Verspoor

lecture by one of the five members of the Executive Committee from the Goetheanum who had come to attend the full week's activities: Paul Mackay, Constanza Kaliks, Bodo von Plato, Joan Sleight and Seija Zimmermann. This conference had been in the planning stages for over two and a half

years and was the initiative of both Arie van Ameringen, the Anthroposophical Society in Canada's General Secretary, and of the members of the organizing committee*.

Arie pointed out in his keynote address how scientists, from René Descartes on, are powerless to shed any light on the true nature of the human being other than by comparing man to an advanced animal or even a machine. By considering the human being as first and foremost a spiritual being, anthroposophy lays a solid groundwork for inner work (meditation) which allows human beings to remain human while facing the challenges of technology and the descent into sub-nature so characteristic of our times. In

this light, spiritual work can be seen as a means of fostering the evolution of mankind, society and the world.

Three experiences

Confronted with the daunting, well nigh impossible, task of summarizing the wealth of initiatives presented by the various artists, farmers, educators, doctors, and scientists, I called upon some of the younger participants to help me in this task. From out of this broad canvas that unfurled during 7 days like a magnificent work of social art, they focussed on three moving accounts given during the conference – three experiences which, according to them, made one's heart beat.

- Michael Schmidt, a biodynamic farmer, has been campaigning for over 22 years for the right to distribute raw milk. He has been fighting for the right for the consumer to make his or her own choice, in a country where it is easier to obtain cocaine than raw milk. He had his farm seized by the authorities and has even chosen to spend time in prison. Michael told us how the courtroom became for him a theatre stage for human encounters in which adversaries are not necessarily enemies. The only thing that truly matters is remaining true to one's cause and respecting human dignity throughout the conflict, whatever the outcome may be.
- Douglas Cardinal, the renowned architect, has rediscovered his indigenous roots and has been greatly influenced by the work of Rudolf Steiner. In North America he has created organically designed buildings for First Nations communities and has explored new avenues of urban architecture. For the Ojibwa nation, the North American continent is a gigantic turtle whose heart is located on Turtle Island (Victoria Island), located at the very place where the Ottawa, Rideau and Gatineau rivers converge. Douglas Cardinal presented his plans for creating an ideal village, in which a centre for healing would be included.
- Nigel Osborne, a British composer, created a programme of music therapy he used as a tool for the rehabilitation of children of refugees suffering from post-traumatic stress. One of his compositions, Dedication to Syria, cries out for us to learn to hear one another's suffering and to somehow in this way begin to heal the wounds brought about by the barbarity of war.

Healing wounds

Although it deals with universal ideas, anthroposophy's quest to seek the essence of true humanness is also rooted in concrete daily existence, with the threefold nature of the emerging Canadian identity always lurking in the background. This element was explored in various workshops, bringing to light a truly Canadian imagination including the First Nations, French and British influences and the multi-cultural and ethnically diverse population of the present day.

Mention was made of the karmic debt incurred by Europeans in America regarding First Nations peoples. Under the auspices of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Ottawa has inaugurated a national inquiry into the fate of missing and murdered aboriginal women. The Commission has crossed the country from ocean to ocean trying to unearth the truth about the residential schools where aboriginal children were taken to be "civilized". With the church's blessing, native children were torn from their families and their culture and forced to attend the residential schools in an effort to assimilate them.

In her performance entitled *Reconstructing our Humanity*, Wendy Charbonneau, an elder of the Squamish Nation, sounded with voice and drum a call for peace in her song *Women are Gone*. No longer having access to the language of her ancestors, she rediscovered, through her own research, fragments of her native language. Eurythmists surrounded her on stage with a protective veil as she made her cry heard. "Art frees us. This performance is a gesture of reconciliation and of healing for our collective memory," said Elizabeth Carmack, founder of the Cambridge Music Conference and the person responsible for organizing the evening performance.

Aboriginal inmates make up an inordinate percentage of the population of our Canadian penitentiaries. The Canadian Correctional Service has now been encouraging meetings of inmates with members of the community, either in groups or on a one to one basis. We must work together to repair what has been broken through criminal acts. The circle of healing empowers victims, giving them the means to take charge of their own lives by offering their offenders the chance to relate to the consequences of the acts they have committed. True healing through justice must be experienced in total freedom by both parties even as the criminal process runs its course in the legal system. By meeting face to face, both parties have the chance to break

free from their inner prisons.

Even the rocks evolve...

Building a healthy community requires looking problems in the face and taking them on by calling upon on the specific strengths of each individual. But it is also necessary to be able to identify the opposing forces, in order best to overcome them – these opposing forces which keep human beings from truly meeting one another. Bert chase, architect and lecturer, calls these opposing forces “beings of fragmentation” (language, race, religion, gender, profession, etc.) And even as in our current times this hardening process is beginning to gain control over our culture, the rocks themselves are evolving. This is the main thrust of the talks given by Duncan Keppie, a geologist who explained how he adds the prefix evo, for evolution, to describe the archetypes found in the mineral world. He introduced the audience to several of his “friends” that make up the Canadian Shield – 4 billion years old! – mineral configurations that could be observed on the conference site itself.

Three performances of the Foundation Stone Meditation in eurythmy by the troupe from Spring Valley, as well as concerts and theatre performances all helped to enhance the week’s exchanges. These included A Confession, by Leon Tolstoy and excerpts from Shakespeare’s A Midsummer Night’s Dream. To this was added an art exposition featuring works by various North American artists who derive their inspiration from anthroposophy. There were also several musical compositions evoking the Grail, this lonely path along which one meets at the right time the person who can light one’s way forward. This quest is linked to the great questions that often do not find an answer but that arise within us to give us direction. Broadening our inner being allows us to sense the invisible, that which is not yet manifest, in the way we can sense how a seed contains all the potential of the fully developed plant.

Christ and Karma

The week was designed to explore day by day the great themes central to anthroposophy itself: biography and karma, education, medicine, science and biodynamic agriculture, the arts, community building and the social art, and, finally, religion, meditation and spirituality.

What does it mean to live in the 21st century with an underlying, insidious sense that we are crushed, powerless? This was the question put by Paul Mackay in his lecture. First of all, our personal karma is woven into the karma of the times, and vice versa. He then went on to explain how we think we are living in a time continuum, whereas in reality a break has occurred. One level of complexity can no longer be predicted by observing the previous level; therefore the following stage is no longer simply the result of the former one. This is the concept of emergence. This means that everything is open: by taking initiative, we are able to bring a certain amount of order into the chaos so apparent in these times of ours where thinking, feeling and willing are threatening to go their separate ways.

It is truly an act of healing when we create out of our own free will something that is not connected to the past and would not come into existence without our own activity. This is the challenge of our times, the very same one facing the artist, the farmer or even the schoolteacher who must carry a conscious concern both for his class and for the future of his school. In this searching for a new order of things, each one can gauge the abyss that separates the individual's actual experience from his ideal aspiration.

Several questions came up concerning meditation (mindfulness), which can be distinguished from ordinary consciousness and is often confused with a nostalgic longing for oneness and a desire to dissolve into the great All. Anthroposophical meditation is on the other hand a tool for self-knowledge and, according to Constanza Kaliks, requires reuniting with the spiritual world through conscious effort. Bodo von Plato adds that this is because the spiritual world has a pressing desire to be known by human beings, and can therefore be counted on to offer its help.

The new laws of karma, made available by Christ, give greater leeway to the community and to the individual. Everything has been shaken to the core. An individual's evolution no longer ends at age 63, says art therapist Regine Kurek. There is at every stage the possibility of creating new karma and of taking one's own life trajectory in hand. The human "I," which is still young, longs to unfold, and all our efforts are but a preparation for its development.

But we must avoid falling into the trap of activism or the desire to impose strict rules. It was exactly in order to counter these tendencies that Rudolf Steiner established the School for Spiritual Science, explains Bodo von Plato.

As various initiatives were coming into being, Rudolf Steiner deplored the fact that his collaborators quoted his words but interpreted them in their own way, thus distancing them from their original meaning. These individuals were generally much too consumed by their own will forces, and their energy was quickly exhausted. Though less well known than the various initiatives, the School is the spiritual heart of living anthroposophy; according to Collegium member Monique Walsh, the School must be able to deal with the minutiae of daily life. And the individual's search for spiritual autonomy certainly does not exclude the collaborative working together as a group that the Spirit of the Times requires. In a century in which everything has become specialized, there is clearly a place for the Section for General Anthroposophy.

Research

Anthroposophy is not out to prove anything. It merely seeks to find expression in the world through the inner strength and sense of initiative of individuals. It lives in human encounters and research. And various researchers provided us with the results of their own work, as individuals or

Congratulation! The Conference was extremely well organized.

I very much enjoyed Regine Kurek's Artistic Workshop. Her enthusiasm and warmth were inspiring. A big THANK YOU for guiding us to gain insights into our biographies.

I am sure you have heard this before, but....the first time I was able to follow completely was when Michael Schmidt spoke on Thursday with the microphone attached to him. Why was it not done before?

There were many more impressive moments, i.e. Peter James Haworth presentation of "A Confession by Leo Tolstoy", Eurythmy by the Spring Valley Ensemble, the Concert with Emmanuel Vukovich and Jean-Philippe Sylvestre.

Thank you for making it possible to meet with so many people, old acquaintances and new friends.

With my greetings,
Inge Sell

in collaboration with others. For example: how can anthroposophy inspire us to create our own exercises on the path to knowledge? Can we express an anthroposophical text in colours? Or again, how can we experience the transformative force which results from the exercise of seeing ourselves as a stranger, an effective tool for self-transformation, according to psychotherapist Robert MacKay? Yet others delved into the biography of Frank R. Scott, one of the great proponents of our modern day Canada, and still others gave the results of their research into the riddle of the place of Quebec in North America.

Jonah Evans, a priest of the Christian Community, spoke of how religion, spirituality and meditation are three means of connecting with something greater than oneself, something which strengthens one's humanity. It is not a question of "copying and pasting" a set of given ideas, but rather of being constantly creative; burgeoning spirituality born of a rich inner life can lead to action in the outside world that includes other human beings. I must not allow another human being to become rigidly fixed in my heart and mind according to the feelings I experience towards him or her; but I must learn rather to refine the quality of attention I direct towards the other.

Let us strengthen the good in order to better fight evil. Seija Zimmermann points out how we must concentrate on what keeps human beings healthy and not just on what makes them sick. Taking control of one's inner life is an important factor in maintaining health. It is worthy to note that the European branch of the World Health Organization has asked what anthroposophical medicine has to say about oncology, hypertension and infectious diseases in light of the fact that resistance to antibiotics has reached a critical point and people stricken with mild diseases are now in danger of dying. Dr. Kenneth McAlister showed how sickness concerns not only the karma of the individual but also the destiny of the whole community.

Raphael

What does it mean to be human, and what is my own personal contribution to mankind? Does my ideal include my fellow man? Seija Zimmerman explained how tragic life situations can stimulate us to awaken, to develop new qualities. This is awakening to Raphael. In our times, it seems easier to relate to Michael, the time Spirit, than it does to find the path to Raphael, the Spirit of healing. This was indicated to Ernst Lehrs, one of the pioneers of the Waldorf movement, by Rudolf Steiner himself. Indeed, meeting Raphael requires a level of consciousness which is cultivated especially in

healthy relationships between human beings and created in the space living between them. The being of Anthroposophia incarnates in the earthly sphere through the will of human beings who give form and strength to their personal initiatives.

In our present climate of insecurity, we must cultivate the courage of Michael to strengthen the consciousness soul; commitment is the best remedy against fear. And the more we connect with others, the less we are afraid.

The Ottawa gathering closed with our forming a great circle in the auditorium. In the centre, Wendy Charbonneau, the elder, blessed the participants so that each and every one would have a safe journey home. And indeed, many had already shared during their group discussions the fact that discovering anthroposophy had been their true homecoming.

*Organising committee: John Bach, Jean Balekian, Judith King, Hamo Hammond, Siobhan Hughes, Dorothy LeBaron, Claudette Leblanc, Robert McKay, Sylvie Richard, Arie van Ameringen and Douglas Wylie. These organizers were ably assisted by many devoted volunteers.

Michel Dongois

Inspiring Community at Michaelmas – Elizabeth Carmack

Inspired out of Rudolf Steiner's words in his 1923 Michaelmas Festival in Vienna: "Today humanity... must emerge, must get into the light, into the spiritual light of day. And the call for the Michael Festival is the call for the spiritual light of day!"

We start with a performance of "Echoes of Peace" by Squamish Elder Wendy Charbonneau.

When I first interviewed Squamish Elder Wendy Charbonneau at the time of Thanksgiving in October 2015, I asked her to sing me half a dozen of her own works. Although it appears Wendy Charbonneau's music emerges from

the same spirit as western oral tradition, her music is protected by tight copyright restrictions. Only Wendy Charbonneau is allowed to sing her music unless she offers to share the copyright of her work. Although Wendy Charbonneau stands alone in her performance today, I would like to express my gratitude for her generosity in sharing “Echoes of Peace” with the Cambridge Music Conference so as to develop an active dialogue with western classical music. Many thanks Wendy!

Today I would like to take “Echoes of Peace” as a point of departure for this Michaelmas talk.

In “The Working Together of the Four Archangels” from The Four Seasons and The Archangels (1923) Rudolf Steiner beautifully describes the relationship between the Archangel Raphael and Archangel Michael. At this time of the year you have the Archangel Raphael alive in the human breath providing healing and the Archangel Michael in the heavens providing light. The work of both archangels is ideally captured and portrayed in the first nations song “Echoes of Peace” by Wendy Charbonneau. The healing element of the song speaks for itself. The song inspires peace, echoes of peace, between nations, peoples and individuals. Peace in one's heart leading to peace in the world. Rudolf Steiner in his Michaelmas cycle of lectures in 1923 in Vienna describes how the Archangel Michael is found in the super-sensory realm, in the heavens, in the stars, in a spiritual context that reaches beyond our sense perceptions. How better than to connect with the super-sensory world than through the spirit of the dead, through the spirits of those who have died. In Wendy Charbonneau's song she specifically refers to her great grandmother Agnus Lackett-Joe who is the source of inspiration. Wendy Charbonneau's gift as a Squamish Elder listening for the voices of the ancestors, specifically in her song “Echoes of Peace” inspired out of the voice of her great grandmother Agnus Lackett-Joe holds four lessons for us, which I would like to elucidate in detail.

1. The first lesson from this song is acknowledging our need for healing! “Echoes of Peace” calls forth inner peace within the individual as well as inspires peace in the world.
2. The second lesson is that “Echoes of Peace” in its very creation acknowledges the dead. The spiritual presence of the dead is imperative for a variety of reasons, not least to cultivate our creativity, but to keep our

culture alive.

3. Thirdly, despite destructive forces that compromise our voice, values and identity, we need to learn how to transform whatever violates us into inner resources of healing and resilience.

4. The fourth lesson reveals that the quality of how we communicate our message is paramount. Despite the importance of “what” we want to say, “how” we communicate will be remembered. Whether through music or song or simply silent compassion we can offer others healing.

The first lesson which acknowledges our need for healing I have already touched. The spirit of the Archangel Raphael is palpable in Wendy Charbonneau's song, especially relevant at this time of year. “Echoes of Peace” instills peace in the individual and inspires peace in the world.

The second virtue is Wendy Charbonneau's auditory visionary capacity that allows her to listen for her ancestors who then speak through her like a shaman working for healing in her community. Drawing on the spiritual presence of her ancestors she is able to renew her community. In our time this is an unusual gift, but was much more common in the past when indigenous leaders cultivated healing and renewal through direct spiritual inspiration. Wendy Charbonneau's unique predicament, which I am sure others face today, is that on account of her residential schooling she is now unable to understand her native language. Law enforcement in Canada having imposed legal restrictions forbidding a whole generation from speaking their own language, Wendy Charbonneau can hear her ancestors, but cannot understand their language. As a result Wendy Charbonneau has to write down what she hears, recording both the music and words. She then seeks further help to understand the words she hears communicated in the original Squamish language. Relying on half a dozen people in her community who still speak Squamish, she often turns to her relative Lucile Nicholson and other mother Margaret Locke, who then help in deciphering the language. So the songs evolve with the help of translation from others. Wendy Charbonneau's auditory visionary experiences mean the songs come to her in daylight consciousness or in the dead of night, in a dream vision while she is asleep. She then develops the songs in dialogue with a person in

her community who still understands the Squamish language. Wendy Charbonneau's loss of her native language Squamish results in the third lesson "Echoes of Peace" has to impart.

The third lesson concerns anthropologists and linguists most. Whenever Wendy Charbonneau performs "Echoes of Peace" she always introduces the work with how she heard her great grandmother speaking to her in a dream, but also explaining how the meaning of the words and the dream eluded her. What touched me was her painstaking effort of conscience not only to decipher and understand, but to take action and quite unconsciously preserve her language that was near to extinction. Wendy Charbonneau tells us in her own way how when she went to her grandmother to ask the meaning of the words and dream, her grandmother was grateful, for as she said "these could have been lost words". Hearing words in a dream vision not only help preserve the Squamish language, but re-engender life in the indigenous culture. Linguicide is a term coined relatively recently by the Finnish linguist rights scholar and academic Skutnabb-Kangas and from the anthropologist's point of view "Echoes of Peace" introduces us to the inevitable impending death of the Squamish language. Although the song itself does not introduce us to the idea of linguicide, Wendy Charbonneau's beautiful introduction of how she was compelled to seek help to understand the words and significance of the dream impart her urgency to act in the face of linguicide! Wendy Charbonneau's great grandmother, Agnus Lackett-Joe (1873/6-1970), who lived on Squamish land at the foot of Lonsdale Avenue in North Vancouver, is an example of silent resistance and spiritual integrity. For although Agnus Lackett-Joe knew English she refused to speak it all her life. Granted she was born at a time when most of the Squamish Nation still conversed in their native tongue. Although just a generation a part Agnus Lackett-Joe's example was noticeably different from Squamish Chief Louis Miranda's (1892-1990) [<http://site2.ewart.library.ubc.ca/node/35>]. Louis Miranda was finally recognised and celebrated in 1981 with an honorary Doctorate of Law (LLD) from Simon Fraser University for his invaluable contribution cultivating dialogue and maintaining relations with the white European community settling in this region in British Columbia. However, on account of his advocacy for the Squamish language and culture, Louis Miranda is now acknowledged and remembered for being the first great Squamish linguist. However, returning to the voice of inspiration at the heart of the song "Echoes of Peace", I would like to draw attention to

how in a period of a 100 years or less the Squamish language now faces extinction, were it not for the efforts of bilingual education being taught in both English and Squamish languages to kindergarten and primary school children on the Squamish Reserve, as well as the Language Revitalization Program that starts this September 2016 at Simon Fraser University in an effort to reverse the trend of language extinction. Victoria, Laval and especially McGill universities in Canada have been teaching graduate degrees for many years in Applied Linguistics on how to preserve and revitalize indigenous languages in first nations communities that face losing their native language. McGill University has been extremely successful in a program intended to protect the Mi'kmaq first nation language through Language Revitalization.

To native English speakers linguicide may be an odd term, but it recognises the growing trend of how languages are dying quickly at a rate of 26 languages a year [The Guardian Weekly, 19-25 August 2016] in part on account of the threat English causes in terms of “linguistic imperialism”. Most of us here today would not associate ourselves with the oppressive power of colonization, but we are all more or less guilty of “linguistic imperialism”, the attitude that legitimizes English as the most acceptable language of communication for all forms of multicultural contact. Of course, English is justified as one of two official languages in Canada, so we feel our language should prevail, but think of the language diversity of all of the indigenous peoples of Canada who have been compromised by this law.

Today in a broader global context English is the language of neoliberal capitalism. As English serves the advancement of commerce, capital and technology, the point I would like to make is more subtle than simply linguicide. Do we not face the extinction of a language that can serve the spirit?

Wendy Charbonneau's experience can teach us:

1. That we can only truly heal ourselves, when our sense of humanity and gesture of healing is intended for all;
2. That listening for the spirit of the dead is imperative, for their terms will keep the spirit in our culture alive. Spirits of the dead are speaking to us, even if we cannot hear or understand them;

3. That relying on the spiritual presence of the dead can help transform experiences that potentially threaten our existence into presiding strength for the living; and

4. That if we don't work to advocate and understand the spiritual terms and language of the dead, we may face another form of linguicide, the mortality of our language of the spirit.

The source of inspiration behind the Cambridge Music Conference, my sister Catherine Carmack (1957-2003) performed the closing concert of the third conference in August 2003. Catherine's recital was called "Voice of the Spirit" (1). Her choice of half a dozen works for cello accompanied by piano acknowledged the presence of the eternal expressed through the music. But her performance of the program forged unique terms of immortality for her. In Catherine's performance "Voice of the Spirit" you could see how the individual strength of her spirit, her human courage, to embody the universal terms of the music in one final act, spiritualised her will so she could move consciously through the moment of death forging a unique rights of passage. These are terms we must all seek to find the true spirit of Michaelmas. Not just reaching for the light, we need to create light consciously so we can speak to others of the "Voice of the Spirit".

Aristotle in his work *De Anima* (Of the Soul) refers to the human being as based on four principles:

the mineral kingdom we share with the earth, the life forces we share with the plants, movement and perception we share with the animals, whereas the logos is attributed solely to the human being... specifically language and thought. These four principles mirrored again in Rudolf Steiner's work find expression in the Waldorf School high school meditation:

"I behold the world, in which the sun shines, the stars gleam, the stones exist, the plants living grow, the animals feel and live and the human being creates a spirit dwelling for the soul." A free rendering from the German "Ich schaue in die Welt, In der die Sonne leuchtet, In der die Sterne funkeln; In der die Steine lagern, Die Pflanzen lebend wachsen, Die Tiere fühlend leben, In der der Mensch beseelt, dem Geiste Wohnung gibt." [<http://anthrowiki.at/Waldorfschule>]

Canadian author Margaret Atwood not only espouses the importance of

language to define us as human beings, but endorses story telling and the narrative art as imperative for human survival:

Language is one of the most primary facts of our existence. It's something that you say, what is [it that makes us] human? Well many animals have methods of communicating with one another, but none of them have our kind of extremely elaborate grammar. So it is... it's right dead, smack in the center of what it is to be human, the ability to tell a story.

There is another theory that has it that the narrative art is an evolved adaptation on which we got in the Pleistocene because those who had it had a much greater edge. They had a much greater survival edge on those that did not have it. [Margaret Atwood: <http://bigthink.com/videos/why-we-tell-stories>]

Here we see a valid explanation of why and how Wendy Charbonneau has been able to survive the natural trend of linguicide, which is about to destroy the wisdom of the Squamish nation and their worldview. Embedded in the Squamish language as in every indigenous language and culture is a legacy of beliefs and wisdom that has been shaped out of the voices of the ancestors.

So first of all we have the crisis of linguicide that threatens to destroy a nation's living language, voices from the past and cultural identity. Linguicide is underpinned by the adverse blindness of "linguistic imperialism" so strongly aligned with the English language in terms of capital and commerce that will potentially alienate us from the spirit. Then we have the idea of the logos – that from Aristotle's point of view was decisive in defining us as human beings. In Classical Ancient Greek the logos was understood as a universal principle, that created and defined our humanity. As a result at the time of Christ when the Greeks sought a word that best defined the quality of the spirit of Christ "logos" was chosen. So today you have the word logos that denotes two principles. On the one hand you have the universal principle of human language engendering thought and on the other hand the universal principle of the spirit known as the Word. So we have one word "logos" that defines and embodies both our human and spiritual potential, ideally realised in developing our humanity.

Now I would like to present the interactive part of this Michaelmas talk. We'll take about two to three minutes for each exercise.

1. Please find a partner to talk to. I would like you to talk about light. Please describe any form of light defining it in words that best capture your sense of light in any context. If you are alone, please write down words and phrases that help communicate your sense of what light is and what light can generate.

2. Now please focus in your mind's eye and build up an imagination and picture of light. Please remember some of the words you have used to characterise a particular quality of light. Your active imagination creating a living picture of light as only you can experience it... is most important.

3. Now I want you to think of individuals who are helpless! Victims of inescapable misery. For example, i. children captured to work as soldiers fighting for a rebel cause, made to respond as automatically as the weapons they brandish; ii. children sold into bonded labour by parents to cover an unpayable debt... children who will work a life time in slavery with no thought of freedom; iii. children forced to marry against their will and then coerced into prostitution. You don't need to use any of these examples, but think of a human being unable to escape such injustice. Now take your imagination of light and actively give it in any way you can imagine that will help your victim.

4. Now return to the individual you first spoke to and describe your experience. Has giving your light to an individual in peril transformed you? Has the quality of your light changed as you moved from an ideal or imagination to exercising your light as a form of practical concern? Has your understanding of community changed? How do you feel now in the face of such abuse and injustice?

To close I would like you to think of gifting your light to one of the missing murdered indigenous women and girls whose lives we acknowledge in Squamish Elder Wendy Charbonneau's song "Women Are Gone" (2016) commissioned this year by the Cambridge Music Conference. In an attempt to build our new light-filled Michaelmas community we now turn our attention to individuals who have died in harsh and abusive ways without actively receiving light or love from others.

Is not love invisible light?

We shall end with a performance of “Women Are Gone” by Squamish Elder Wendy Charbonneau.

(1) “Voice of the Spirit” performed by Catherine Carmack (cello) and Carolyn Roberts Finlay (piano) at the Cambridge Music Conference on 9 August 2003: P.I. Tchaikovsky (Russian) “In Church”, Frank Bridge (English) “Meditation, Arvo Pärt (Estonian) “Spiegel im Spiegel”, Ernest Bloch (Swiss born American) “Prayer from Jewish Life”, Max Bruch (German) “Kol Nidre”, and Srul Irving Glick (Jewish Canadian) “Prayer and Dance”.

Our Humanity, found in Canada – Frank Aleph Agrama

To experience the others, and to experience myself, amongst us. The Youth Section shared a rolling stream of meals, words, melodies, meetings, in Ottawa, Canada this August. The Anthroposophical Society of Canada hosted us at their conference "Encountering Our Humanity".

Humanity did show up, and so we had to encounter one another. The conference organizers created a very strong and full form, arriving on a Sunday, working through a full week of programming, and closing again on the following Sunday. As the title infers, each day brings an aspect of the humanities to life. To begin, Arie van Ameringen, General Secretary of the Anthroposophical Society in Canada and the conference’s lead planner, gave a keynote lecture on the individual’s evolving spiritual relationship with the universe. He revealed a progression of the I (each of us) and the it (the universe) following the trajectory of a U. THE IT - TO IT - IN IT - I - FROM ME - OUT OF ME - I INTO IT. This broad gesture foreshadowed our ensuing launch into a dynamic week of anthroposophical presenters, including five of the six members of the Executive Council (Vorstand) of the General Anthroposophical Society at the Goetheanum and several outstanding representatives of anthroposophical work in Canada. Topics included: Biography and Karma - Education - Medicine - Science and Agriculture - the Arts - Community Building and the Social Arts. Each day's theme seemed to flow into the next, building and bringing us in deeper, while a program of

evening performances sweetened and stirred our dreams. lectures and

Each day we also heard from conference participants, regarding their individual streams of research, be it an offering on how to connect with loved ones who have crossed the threshold, to community centered initiatives and explorations. Mediating between these morning and afternoon presentations, we participated in smaller discussion groups and artistic workshops. The youth section specifically met as its own discussion group, where we shared with one another about our own youth section work, and the work of other spiritually striving youths world-wide. Constanza Kaliks, working on behalf of the youth section at the

drawing by Johannes Kronenberg



Goetheanum, also shed light on why the youth section exists and how it works. Paul Zebhauser, a youth at present, working with Constanza at the Goetheanum, shared his work overseeing the youth hostel and study groups around Dornach. Johannes Kronenberg, organizer of youth section work in the Netherlands, announced a forthcoming Youth Section International Gathering 3, taking place in Den Haag, Netherlands next summer.

Artistic workshops were held after lunch, and ranged from poetry, to sculpture, painting, to acting, music, to drawing, Eurythmy to storytelling, as clowning and water based consciousness rounded out the flood of creativity. I participated in Julie Le Gal's offering based in Michael Chekhov's acting method, finding the exercises liberating, challenging, and bewildering. Our mornings began in one of two ways for participants.

Members of the School for Spiritual Science shared a Class Lesson given each day by a different Class Holder. Meanwhile Constanza and youth section veteran Nathaniel Williams hosted an introductory exploration of anthroposophic meditation practices.

We made meals for one another, which led to many interesting combinations. For example, the opening day of the conference was themed "Biography, Karma"... "and Pasta". The youth members of the Eurythmy Ensemble from Spring Valley offered us breakfast that day with the question, "Where does your name come from?"

As each day moved along, we swam

I would like to express my thanks and appreciation for everything that was done to help make this North American conference, 'Encountering our Humanity' a success. I had a wonderful week of meeting with fellow students of Anthroposophy in Ottawa, the capital city of Canada. To my knowledge, the word 'Ottawa' is derived from an indigenous peoples' language, meaning 'Where the Rivers Meet'. The water element of Canada's rivers, lakes, ocean shores and streams surely played into the quality of my experience in meeting with other people from across North America at this conference. The North Saskatchewan river that flows through my home town, Edmonton, Alberta, means "Swiftly running Waters". It was historically known to be a route for the 'Voyageurs' to transport goods across Canada from east to west, particularly before the railways were built.

The French connection comes into play here for me, as a good many of the Voyageur were French speaking. I am especially grateful for the contribution made by French Canadian members of The Anthroposophical Society in Canada towards providing an exceptionally warm, welcoming and well organized place for us to have our conference this summer. I stayed on campus for the entire week, feeling well cared for with a peaceful, clean and quite place to sleep, with delicious meals that offered vegetarian and vegan options, and with courteous considerations offered to us as guests on this French Canadian campus. Staff were always accommodating to English speaking guests, and also respectful of my attempts to speak French to them from time to time. Thank you so much for creating a space for people to meet and develop themselves as members and friends of the world Anthroposophical Society.

There is so much more I could say about the excellent quality of presentations made at the main lectures, discussions shared in my discussion group, skills developed in my Speech and Storytelling workshop, and evening cultural events. I would like to acknowledge at this time the rare opportunity that was provided to me for attending Eurythmy performances accompanied by such talented speakers and musicians. Words cannot express what this means to. Thank you for these memorable and soul enriching occasions.

Sincerely written by Henriette van Hees,

deeper into unfamiliar waters both warm and cold. The sun was pounding us by day, leaving our nights hot enough to sit outside and speak under the stars. The flood of cosmic wisdom meeting earth-bound initiatives, continued to build tremendous amounts of pressure with questions and conviction. Thankfully thick clouds wafted in to soften us, and though they blocked our meteor shower gazing, they blessed us with gentle trickling raindrops showering. Much needed to be washed and cleansed, so the rain grew stronger. It brought the youth and the elders together. We shared a couple conversations, directly addressing one another, and clarifying questions about the school for spiritual science.

The final Sunday of the conference was held open for a plenum about the School for Spiritual Science, where members of the North American Collegium for Spiritual Science and the Executive Council answered difficult questions from conference participants regarding the present practices of the Goetheanum. Christian Community Priest Jonah Evans also spoke. He told the story of his spiritual journey, and drew a distinction between prayer and meditation.

It was a revelation to witness the flexibility and willingness of all members in the conversation. We all found ourselves swimming together, moving forward in some sense, and it felt like a healing, really, as a new seed. May our motions continue, like water, onto these new seeds, these eternal seeds, of loving kindness, trust in one another, forgiveness, and inspiration, growing out in 7 directions, as taught to us by Native American Architect Douglas Cardinal (presenter), as he led us through a ritual on the sacred Island in the middle of Ottawa, considered the heart of North America, where many tribes would meet, and trade, where many rivers come together, generating beautiful power. North, East, South, West, the Earth, the Sky, and our heart. We closed the conference by forming a circle stretching around the entire auditorium, with the words of the Foundation Stone resounding into the space. The final seal came as First Nations Squamish Elder Wendy Charbonneau once again put her walker aside, grabbed the drum, and strode across the stage singing a blessing for our circle to radiate on and out into the world.

Pure Light

Michael!

You cast the dragon down to earth,
So man, on earth, can look up to heaven and witness pure light.

The dragon fell into abyss of matter.
There in darkness, pure light of redemption reaches it not,
For from above, in humanity, divine light becomes lost.

Depth of the abyss attracts man more than height of heaven.
He looks down rather than looks up.
Into darkness, he forgets pure light.

The dragon lures man deeper into its abyss.
In darkness of materialism, he falls asleep.
In endless dreams, he builds up materialistic wonders!

When it comes, death blows man into dust.
The meanings of his existence; Who he is and Why on earth;
All with the light are lost in his wild dreams.

Humanity! Are you waking up?
From the height, Michael's light casts its hint into abyss' depths,
Seeking souls that have awakened.

Following the dim light, man must find his own light!
Brightly, that new heavenly light will shine forth from the furthest depths!
Heaven on earth, humanity must become!

With his divine light, man will then penetrate the dragon!
Redeem it and transcend materialism!
Human beings! May you find your light!

Trinh Huynh

Meeting Micah – Susan Koppersmith

Micah Edelstein, it was a pleasure to meet you in the taxi on Sunday on the way to the airport after the “Encountering Our Humanity” conference in August. You told me that you are living in Halifax and that you are a member of an Anthroposophical study group which you call “Small is All.” Could tell me a little bit more about your group and its initiatives? Why did you give it this special name?

Yes, I live in Halifax and we have a reading group here which meets the first Saturday of every month at the Osmond’s house. We are a core of 5 people age 34 to 90 and have an occasional 6th or 7th member joining us. We have been meeting on a regular bases for 2 years. The form of the reading group is the same every month: dinner at 5:30 with open conversation about life experiences, travel and current affairs followed by one and a half hours of reflections on the reading.



We are careful to mark when the study group portion begins and ends; it’s a gesture that flows from our intention to work consciously together in the spirit of Anthroposophical knowledge and to recognize the being of Anthroposophia in the world. The study group will always begin with an introductory summary prepared by one of the members. This is like a free rendering of the reading.

The term “small is all” I believe was a phrase Arthur and Margaret Osmond first used to emphasize the quality of our group over its quantity. Five people is not a big group but when 5 people work significantly towards the spiritual it becomes a significant number. I should point out that the Osmonds moved to Halifax from the U.K. where they had been living and working at Michael Hall. They arrived in Halifax in 2011, the same year I moved from Ontario.

Halifax did not have an Anthroposophical reading group that we were aware of at the time. Now we can say there is a small group that has recognized quantity is less important than quality. Great work can be done that has purpose for the world within small circles of spiritually conscious people. In this sense “small is all”.

You were able to attend the conference meetings with the youth in the residence of La Cite Collegiale. Could you tell me about what you, as one of the younger members of the conference, gained from these meetings?

It was a real pleasure to be part of the youth circle during the conference. We were very fortunate to have youth members from Germany, The Netherlands, America, France and French and English Canada.

I grew up in Thornhill, Ontario For those who haven't visited Thornhill it's a multi cultural centre with spiritual diversity.

I graduated from the Toronto Waldorf School in 2000, which had at the time a cornfield between it and a Jewish Yeshiva centre. Across the ravine is now the Christian Community church, and between the Yeshiva and TWS is an Islamic centre with the prayer tower and Islamic insignia.

The neighbourhoods all around are filled with people speaking different languages. It's a mini-Jerusalem on many levels — maybe even a new Jerusalem without the historical component.

What inspired me about the youth circle at the conference was the cosmopolitan aspect that continued from the surface to core. Hearing about the various initiatives in different parts of the world affirmed a central theme of spiritual scientific knowledge — the Michaelic epoch transcends restricting concepts of nationhood and ideas and impulses are working across borders and between peoples regardless of where they live or what language they speak. For me this is an affirmation of our modern spiritual reality.

What do you think that young people of today are searching for when they encounter Anthroposophy?

I believe when a young person decides they are going to come to a Anthroposophical conference or read a book written by Steiner, they are

seeking a deeper experience of our humanity than normal everyday experiences provide. There is something inside us that is drawn to spiritual life. In a sense, a young person or someone new to Anthroposophy is already an "Anthroposophist" before they encounter it.

They come to Anthroposophy through an inner recognition or striving to be more humane, to experience truth and love.

In Anthroposophy we have the path to discover our core out in the objective world. This is not possible without spiritual science. I actually have a project

When I arrived, two days into the conference, I was amazed again at the feeling which often happens for me in groups of Anthroposophists: a feeling of belonging to a tribe. Hamo welcomed me with a hug while saying, "Welcome home!", although I've never lived in Ottawa, there was a truth to his statement which runs deep. A short while later I was at the incredible performance by Peter Haworth (directed by Julie la Gal). The piece, Tolstoy's Confession was beautifully done with a simplicity that allowed the audience to really take in the work.

What an introduction to the conference!

The rest of the week was equally engaging, encountering new friends, re-connecting with others...attending the Class Lessons - it is so special to have the opportunity to experience several sequential lessons carried by different people and to experience different ways of bringing a lesson. I also enjoyed the conversations about the Class, and hearing questions that lived in others - both members and non-members of the class.

The keynote addresses were wonderful, and provided two takes on the day's theme complimenting each other. The research presentations that I attended were engaging and gave opportunities for many to share their area of interest.

Not wanting to arrive late to a formed group, I chose not to participate in an artistic class or a conversation group. Still, I had wonderful conversations and meetings - in both French and English - with many people from all over our vast (and bilingual) country and with others from outside of Canada. I so appreciated seeing the results of the week's work so beautifully displayed down the hall, through the lobby of the theatre and into the theatre itself. Wow!

The artistic evening events were varied and high quality. What more could one want in a conference? When I reflect on my week in Ottawa, I feel, "My cup runneth over."

Thank you to all who made the conference successful.
Well done! - Kim Hunter

related to this theme where I'm researching the butterfly from a spiritual scientific perspective.

One of the ideas I'm working with is that the butterfly is an outer objective image of our "I" consciousness. This is a simple idea but what it means is that our humane "I" and a butterfly together are a light that has become conscious of its own being. This happens both inside the humane organism but also in the outer world of nature. We see two different expressions of the same phenomena. The butterfly principle is an aspect of our micro and macrocosm.

In a way every Anthroposophist begins their Anthroposophical journey by discovering something new or unfamiliar about themselves. It's an initiation into a deeper consciousness of self, which we discover through forming intimate connections with each other and also through struggling with our subjective experiences of an objective world.

Anyone travelling this path learns it's neither easy, nor completely enjoyable. It all depends how we orient ourselves in relation to truth.

If truth is uncomfortable then Anthroposophy will be a painful path and people will dismiss its content and intentions. But if truth is revered above everything else then Anthroposophy can give us strength and an awareness to realize our humanity to its full potential.

What I recognized in the young members at the conference was a yearning to be in and work out of the warmth of Anthroposophical truth. There is a karmic destiny component at work when the microcosm that is individual humane experience finds itself mirrored in the macrocosm of a group of souls. This can create feelings of love and joy and peace because the individual "I" is essentially fulfilling its task to unite the spiritual in the individual with the spiritual in the other.

Interestingly, only half of the youth at the conference in Ottawa had experienced Anthroposophical environments growing up through Waldorf schools and Camphills. Other members of the group had been introduced to Anthroposophy through encountering Waldorf graduates or Steiner's work.

I think it's important for youth to meet Anthroposophy and Anthroposophists without them necessarily adopting a particular set

identity. If someone is striving towards spiritual consciousness, Anthroposophy is speaking to him or her even on a basic level.

'Encountering Our Humanity' was not what I expected, to my delight and deep gratitude. My journey was from antipathy to sympathy to love and then to remembering.

The conference at first glance seemed long, expensive, and I wasn't sure if I would survive the dorms and the food. I arrived at the conference having just been at a week long retreat. My state of soul was, to be honest, suffering with antipathy.

It didn't take long for me to open. Living in Thunder Bay for the past four years has not afforded me access to the First Class. One of the reasons I decided to go to the conference was to be at the class lessons.

After the first free rendering on the Monday morning I sat in silence and wept quietly. I have so missed being with those words and with that presence, without even realizing it.

From that inner opening on the first morning, the conference became a deeply inspiring and satisfying meeting with the being of anthropos-sophia.

In many many ways and encounters I fell in love with the wisdom, with people and with being at the conference. I began to imagine what it would be like to be a student again and live an academic life of study, fraternity and perhaps even retreat. Was I losing myself to this amazingly created week?

By week's end I was ready to go home. I woke on one of the last mornings and realized that if I died that day I would have returned home.

I came back to remembering who I Am, where I truly LIVE and what I am WILLING in the world. The conference had worked its magic on me. Thank you to all. Arlene Thorn

Personally I'm excited to see how we can open the doors to the spiritual "Goetheanum" and invite the world in. An Anthroposophist can continually incarnate spiritual realities through the work they do and these realities

Speak to the humane "I" in everyone even during first encounters. This has a lasting impact on the world.

Combining personal experience with Anthroposophical knowledge is very important. Also having steadfast trust in the spiritual content allows the content to really work in the world.

Thank- you, Micah!

Susan Koppersmith

News from Tri-Fold Books - Helen Cass

This man, Doug Cass, in 1981 asked himself, "Should I do it?" "Yes," I said, and so Tri-Fold Books came into being.



In 2008, Doug left for important work over the threshold and I carried on as the caretaker.

Starting July 1st, Gabriele Freydank-Edelstein has taken charge of Tri-Fold Books and will carry it into the future with confidence and enthusiasm, for which I am most grateful.

Helen Cass
(helenmarrcass@bellnet.ca)
Tel: 519-821-9901

Contact: Gabriele Freydank-Edelstein:
Tel: 905-726-0142
e-mail: info@trifoldbooks.com

Thank you, Helen and Doug for 35 years of Service.
I hope to continue Tri-Fold Books in the Spirit of Helen and Doug Cass and keep on serving the Spiritual Community Canada wide.
Helen, with Good Wishes for your retirement, happy reading....Gabriele

Membership News

The following members have crossed the threshold:

Léon René de Cotret – June 3, 2016

Yaquooob Ghaznavi – August 2, 2016

Dean Rachel – September 4, 2016

Remembering Léon René de Cotret – Chantal Lemothe

I am happy to be able to speak to you today of my sweetheart, my life companion, Léon. He left us peacefully and serenely, as he had wished, at home, surrounded by his loved ones, on Friday, June 3rd, 2016.

It is impossible to speak of Léon without speaking of his passion for life; he always sought to go beyond, to push the limits. Whether it was skydiving, canoeing over swift rapids, building a Waldorf school, attempting



to convert his car to run on used cooking oil (long before this became fashionable...), or becoming the farmer who produced the world's best biodynamic garlic, for him life was an encounter with passion. And for me, he was Mr. Happiness.

Léon was a seeker interested in everything – people, phenomena, life. Of course, as a reporter he loved to question, research, learn, discover and cause others to discover. But even greater was his thirst for seeking to understand the

incomprehensible. He wanted to uncover the mysteries hidden behind the veil, mysteries of what exists before life, what comes after life, and what surrounds the living world, both visible and invisible. He dared to say, to name, to question. In this respect the works of Rudolf Steiner were a source of joy and reflection for him, but also a source of deep questioning.

He was a committed father who happily took on the responsibility of raising his children in such a way that they could grow up being happy and prepared to discover their own truths. And for this the Waldorf school was a source of inspiration for parenting his two children, Samuel and Isa. He always said how proud he was to be married to a Waldorf teacher...

For two years he lived with the knowledge that he had been diagnosed with ALS (also known as Lou Gehrig's disease). He was well aware that he would become a prisoner within his own body. This was an enormous challenge for a man who had always had a tremendous life force. And what a contrast it was for him to live with the disease. And then, little by little, the sickness became a way of learning to deal with the unknown. From the start he said that he was not afraid of death but that he didn't know how he would be able to deal with the loss of his autonomy.

Today I can safely say that during his last two years, as the disease progressed, it is as if he had accepted to meet his opposite and confront a place where happiness is not an option, where passion no longer has a role to play, where defeat struggles to engulf everything that previously was so filled with light, where solitude is one's only companion. To dare to be alone with oneself, to meet oneself in one's opposite. The Mr. Happiness of his former self now dared to experience unhappiness, sadness, discouragement. The great communicator that he had once been was now reduced to living with the absence of the spoken word. He appeared to have deep thoughts that he was no longer able to communicate. He who had loved people and social exchanges now experienced solitude and even complete withdrawal. He who had been so self-sufficient had now to experience being totally dependent on others and

allowing others to do for him what he could no longer do for himself.

Several weeks before the end, when a friend asked him how he was dealing with his suffering, he answered: I am cultivating it within me in order to learn humility (for I have not known much suffering during my life), I am learning compassion for my next incarnation or for whatever may be in store for me.

Death was a constant presence for him during these last years, and yet he never complained. Léon, who always wanted to do things his way and by himself, welcomed each of his caretakers with his whole heart. And I think I can say, having heard their comments, that each of them was deeply moved by him.

Even in this last stage of his life he opened a path for many of us – showing us how one can open oneself up to the presence of death, to the presence of life in death. His sickness actually created a network of love around him and around us, the members of his family. Meals, words, chess games, errands, work around the house, singing – these and so many, many other things were brought by those who came to form a community around Léon and, indeed, around the death with which he was coming to terms. I have no words to express my gratitude to all these close friends for having given of themselves to create this mantle of warmth.

During the last year of Léon's life, our daughter Isa announced that a child would soon be born into the family. Léon hoped for the longest while that he would still be there to welcome the baby and be privileged enough to hold it in his arms. And then he convinced us that if he was no longer on this earth to be able to do so, he would have a front row seat to witness the exchange that takes place between those beings who have just left this earth and those who are coming down into incarnation. Élio, his first grandchild, was born 9 days after his passing.

I am convinced that they did indeed cross paths, and that this grandchild was able somehow to experience the essence of his granddad, a being of such

enormous depth.
Good bye, Léon
With all my love.
Chantal

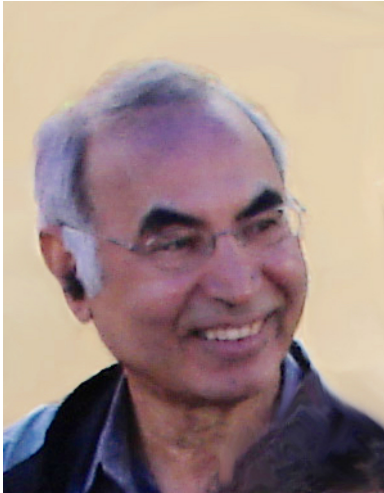
Léon always had a great love of sailing, and this poem expresses beautifully how he thought of death.

Poem by William Blake

"What is dying?
I am standing in the sea shore,
a ship sails to the morning breeze
and starts for the ocean.
She is an object of beauty
and I stand watching her
till at last she fades
on the horizon
and someone at my side says,
'She is gone.'
Gone! Where?
Gone from my sight--that is all.
She is just as large in the masts, hull and spars
as she was when I saw her,
and just as able to bear her load of living
freight to its destination.
The diminished size and total loss of sight is in me,
not in her;
and just at the moment when someone at my side says,
'she is gone'
there are others who are watching her coming,
and others take up a glad shout--
'There she comes!' - and that is dying."

Yaqoob Muhammed Ghaznavi – Eulogy by Rev. Jonah C. Evans (all poems are in Yaqoob's published volume, "Under the Almond Tree")

Yaqoob was born on February 9th, 1942 in Kanpur, India. Yaqoob was born into a loving, large and vibrant family. And even though he had a particularly close relationship with his older brother, grandmother and with significant cousins, Yaqoob didn't talk much about his childhood. One had the feeling that Yaqoob's childhood phase of life was something he carried deep within his heart- perhaps only to be truly glimpsed through his poetry.



The Ghaznavi's moved to Karachi, Pakistan in 1947. It was there that he grew up and received a bachelor's degree. It was there in Karachi where he first fell in love with poetry with his best childhood friend, Nasim.

The question of why Yaqoob left Pakistan perhaps only Yaqoob really knows. But one thing that he told Antje is that his older brother, Farooque, whom Yaqoob respected and loved, thought it would be a very good idea. And so in 1961 Yaqoob

immigrated to England. Nasim, his best friend, went to Germany.

England didn't work out. He saw very quickly the limits of what he could do there. He experienced all too clearly the painful reality of the term "Paki go home". And in one of the last conversations I had with Yaqoob, it was this struggle, the struggle with prejudice that Yaqoob describes as his most difficult struggle in life.

So in '62 he left England and went to visit Nasim in Hamburg, Germany. When he got there, Nasim very matter-of-factly told Yaqoob that he was enrolled in a German language class. And even though Nasim also told him that he should stay in Germany and go to University there because it was free, Nasim himself said that he was moving to another city - to

Braunschweig. So Yaqoob went to University and got a master's degree in a combination of Engineering and Economics. To make money, he mowed the golf course lawn of the American embassy. He fell in love with German literature, Lenz, Böll, Frisch.

1963 was a turning point for Yaqoob. He decided to visit Berlin. And on one fateful night our dear modest Yaqoob, decided to go to a Disco!! It was there that he met the love of his life, Antje. Which began a relationship that would last over 50 years. And after a bit of resistance, some double dating, Yaqoob and Antje were married. Shortly after in '66 Corinna was born and then in '70 Nadim came down. I asked Yaqoob just before he crossed the threshold what was the biggest gift of his life? What was he most proud of - and he said, my relationship with Antje and my children. But when I asked the family what his most difficult struggle and hardship was, they all said Antje, Corinna and Nadim. It is so often the case that our gift is also our weakness. He crossed the threshold with deep love and pride for his family, as well as painful worry and concern.

in '69 Yaqoob graduated from University and quickly was offered a position at Lufthansa tracking the repair schedules for Boeing 747 planes. This began a career at companies that would gladly hand over much responsibility into Yaqoob's hardworking and steadfast hands.

But while still in Germany, and because he was from Pakistan, the writing was on the wall, the family would need to immigrate somewhere else that would allow them to stay for more than 10 years. They tried Australia, Ireland, but in the end Canada would be there new home.

In 1972 the family immigrated to Montreal. Yaqoob went first to find a job. But somehow Yaqoob couldn't get his tongue around the French language. So he hitchhiked to Toronto to find work there. It was there that he got a job for a very good company, Burroughs computers doing accounting. This began his career in accounting and financial management that became the family's bread and butter until today. He also rented a room in Toronto from our dear Sybille Hahn and this began a friendship that would last the rest of his life. Meanwhile in Montreal, the family struggled. Yaqoob would hitchhike back and forth. They struggled with accommodation and money but members of The Christian community and Anthroposophical community really helped the family.

Yaqoob worked hard and rose up the corporate ladder at Burroughs. He was respected and loved. All his life Yaqoob was respected and loved. And, in 1979, he was promoted to a leading position but this meant they had to move to Detroit. And almost immediately after the move to Detroit, Yaqoob was asked by the company to become the financial controller for S.E. Asia. For this career move, Antje and Yaqoob decided to move the family to Hong Kong.

A rich life full of travel and new experiences was had in Asia, but after five years, in '85, the company asked Yaqoob to take a position in Germany, Canada, or Detroit. After choosing Detroit again, they 'restructured' the company after only one year and Yaqoob was laid off.

As Destiny would have it, immediately when Antje heard the news, she called TWS. Allen Hughes picked up the phone. She asked for an immediate full time teaching position, teaching Eurythmy, with a bread winner's salary. Allen said "Yes!" Now that is the way to apply for a job:)

Back in Toronto Yaqoob met James Gillen. Jim offered him a job managing his business accounting. Yaqoob took it and began a career in as an independent accounting and financial consultant which he loved. He said he would never work in the corporate world again. Every company that he worked for respected and loved Yaqoob even up to this day. He was highly valued for his financial abilities and steadfast peace-making. Not only the companies but our whole community benefited from Yaqoob's willingness to help with our financial weaknesses that so often plague our communities. Without Yaqoob for example, some say Hesperus would not be a reality.

In 2002, Yaqoob began to seriously write poetry and joined a poetry group. His poetic colleagues admired Yaqoob for his "clarity of image, simplicity of language, maturity of content and they come 'real' to the page as it is with lived experience well expressed. "

I believe that one could even say that Yaqoob's spiritual path was poetry. He found his muse there. In poetry he found spirit and creativity and Angels... (pg.14, Under the Almond Tree)

"silver night
stand frozen

I sense angels
reaching down

stepping onto
my open palm

they melt
like prayers

warming
my soul”

Yaqoob’s Angels were found in words. But not only there. His religion was also family and modesty. He found light in literature and magic tricks he played with his children and grandchildren. In moments, he also had light in his eyes. Just a few days ago, I walked into his apartment and there he was, his body frail and half gone, sitting up, joy-filled face beaming, Angel light coming out of his eyes, reading poems to his granddaughters. His love and his joy in that moment sitting on his deathbed was like the sun. It was one of the most beautiful things I have ever seen.

The other moment of this light I want to tell you about was also unexpected. It was unexpected because of what led up to it. I always had the feeling that Yaqoob was involved with Anthroposophy and later The Christian Community because of Antje. And when I asked Yaqoob if he wanted to receive the last anointing blessing, he said to me in characteristic fashion 'well, I don't see what difference it will make, I don't really have faith, but who am I to refuse a blessing, it can't hurt.' I had the feeling this was actually not Yaqoob resisting, but his modesty, humility and authenticity. He was always the one to support our spiritual communities with his financial capacities and willingness to carry us. But now he was on the receiving end and wasn't sure. Then the appointed time came to receive the blessing, there appeared out of the blue three pillars of our spiritual community, Renate, Ute, and Alexandra, who had no idea that the sacrament was going to take place. This karmic gathering including Antje, herself a spiritual pillar, strengthened the power of the blessing. And when I placed the holy oil on his forehead the unexpected light shone from his eyes with a strength of which I have scarcely seen. The graced presence of Ute, Antje, Renate and Alexandra was a testimony to Yaqoob’s importance to our spiritual community. He was not an Anthroposophist so much outwardly. Inwardly,

however, he was the deepest kind. Because the true purpose the anthroposophical movement, the true task of The Christian Community is to bear one another, to bear one another in our karma with true tolerance and faithfulness in our weaknesses and strengths, never dismissing, always ready to carry. In so many ways, Yaqoob carried us.

Deeply modest, - he never wanted the spotlight.
Kind, - yet often single minded and stubborn to a fault.
Always with equanimity, - a true peace maker - calming down his fire-filled family
Deeply lonely, - and forever generous
He loved stories and storytelling.

And even though we all must walk alone, Yaqoob can remind us that it is only love that makes our walk bearable- meaningful... (pg.15)

“fresh snow
covers the trail
through the woods

footprints of wandering souls
countless impressions
crowd the white ground

immersed in solitude
I walk the trail
to the end
meeting no one
seeing nobody

looking back
my footmarks are gone
carried away
with tenderness
by the wind
my brother, my love”

In the end, when his body failed and the cancer laid hold, Yaqoob was carried. He was carried by the love of this community, by the love of his Angels, by the love of his family.

New View

New View magazine, a quarterly magazine published in the UK would like to ask your support in alerting your members to the existence of the magazine and a new digital development that might make it more affordable for overseas subscribers.

As New View has no marketing budget, we would be very grateful if you could help us to spread the word by circulating the following announcement to the Branches, Groups and members of your Society. A PDF of the announcement is also attached. Many thanks in advance for any help you can offer in spreading this information.

“The aim of New View has always been to disseminate the ideas and insights of Rudolf Steiner and broaden access to his works across as wide a readership as possible; linking people across the world”

www.newview.org.uk

Message from Michael Glockler

Problems and opportunities in today's educational system – a key challenge for ELIANT

Dear friends,

since the introduction of PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) to education in 2000, standardisation, equality of opportunity and comparability has become increasingly important. Countries are competing with one another for the best position in the league table. This places both teachers and pupils under enormous pressure.

Fundamental criticism and new suggestions

Educational researchers are voicing strong concern about a system of education that is permeated by previously unknown levels of inequality, the unquestioning acceptance of an expanding use of information technology and the drive to adapt teaching to the needs of the jobs market. The climate of true learning, creativity and community in the school is being increasingly displaced by the drilling of facts, fear and isolation, and the lessons a mere routine.

During a conference organised by the European Council for Steiner Waldorf Education in Luxemburg in January on the theme of diversity in assessment, Prof. Heinz-Dieter Meyer from the State University of New York called for Pestalozzi's idea of achieving 'harmony between head, heart and hands' to be taken up anew. This would enhance a pupil's concentration capacity,

overcome their sense of isolation and reduce conflict. Examinations could then be about applying what has been learnt in a reliable way. This is however precisely what is striven for in Steiner Waldorf schools. We are very pleased therefore that Steiner / Waldorf education is represented in the Working Group on schools set up by the European Commission in February 2016!

In January the European Council for Steiner Waldorf Education (ECSWE), one of our founding organisations, successfully applied to join the European Commission's working group on schools and will be actively engaged with it in an advisory capacity until 2018.

ELIANT is strongly supporting these efforts and would like to demonstrate the solid support for child focused schooling within civil society. Please support our work with your donations.

With gratitude and warm greetings

Michaela Glöckler

For UK and Europe:

Allianz ELIANT/Förderstiftung Anthroposophische Medizin

Konto Nr.: 790 255 50 01

BLZ: 430 609 67

GLS Bank Bochum

IBAN: DE66 4306 0967 7902 5550 01

BIC/Swift: GENODEM1GLS

First Class Holders In Canada

British Columbia

Bert Chase, North Vancouver	Tel: (604) 988-1470
Brigitte Knaack, Kelowna	Tel: (250) 764-4710
Olaf Lampson, Duncan	Tel: (250) 746-1740
Christian Reuter, Kelowna,	Tel: (250) 764-4587
Patricia Smith, North Vancouver	Tel: (604) 988-3970
Philip Thatcher, North Vancouver	Tel: (604) 985-3569

Alberta

John Glanzer, Calgary	Tel: (403) 286-8480
-----------------------	---------------------

Ontario

Ingrid Belenson, Spring Bay	Tel: (705) 282-8509
Werner Fabian, Ivy	Tel: (705) 424-3574
Herbert Schneeberg, London	Tel: (519) 641-2431
Heidi Vukovich, Markham	Tel: (905) 927-2286
Brenda Hammond, Ottawa	Tel: (613) 425-0505
Ute Weinmann, Barrie	Tel: (289)-597-5616
Michael Chapitis, Toronto	Tel: (416) 925-7694
Elizabeth White, Guelph	Tel: (519) 821-7210
Gregory Scott, Thornhill	Tel: (905)-737-5019
Sylvie Richard, Ottawa	Tel: (613)-591-2495
Hélène Besnard, Ottawa	Tel: (613) 730-0691

Quebec

Arie van Ameringen, Dunham	Tel: (450) 295-2387
France Beaucage, Montréal	Tel: (514) 384-1859
Eric Philips-Oxford, Montréal	Tel: (514) 524-7045

Nova Scotia:

Arthur Osmond, Dartmouth	Tel: (902) 466-7735
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Collegium – School of Spiritual Science N. America

General Anthroposophical Section/d'Anthroposophie générale~

Penelope Baring: penelopebaring@camphillvillage.org,

Rüdger Janisch: Rjanisch@beaverrun.org,

Monique Walsh: moniqueswalsh@yahoo.ca

Section for Agriculture/ Section agricole~

Sherry Wildfeuer, sherrywlf@verizon.net

Section for the Literary Arts & Humanities/

Section des Belles-Lettres ~

Marguerite Miller, margueritemiller@comcast.net

Medical Section/ Section médicale~ Gerald Karnow, gkarnow@hotmail.com

Natural Science Section/ Section des Sciences~

Jennifer Greene, green@waterresearch.org

Pedagogical Section/ Section pédagogique~

Prairie Adams, prairie.adams@gmail.com

Performing Arts Section, Eurythmy, Speech, Drama & Music/ Section des Arts de la Parole et de la Musique~ Helen Lubin, helenlubin@gmail.com

Social Science Section/ Section des Sciences sociales~

Peter Buckbee, pbuckbee@gmail.com

Section for the Spiritual Striving of Youth/ Section des Jeunes~

Kathleen Morse, morse.kathleen@gmail.com

Visual Arts Section/ Section des Arts plastiques~ Bert Chase, hsc.a.inc@gmail.com

General Council, Anthroposophical Society in America~

Torin Finser, tfinser@antioch.edu

Council, Anthroposophical Society in Canada/ Conseil, Société anthroposophique au Canada~ Arie van Ameringen, arieva.perceval@gmail.com

Executive Council/ Comité directeur, Goetheanum~ Virginia Sease

Anthroposophical Society in Canada

Council Members

Dorothy LeBaron, President, Toronto, ON

Tel: 416-465-2830, Email: lebaron@nauticalmind.com

John Bach, Secretary, North Vancouver BC

Tel: 604-924-0533, Email: jbbach1@yahoo.ca

John Glanzer, Treasurer, Calgary, AB

Tel: 403-286-8480, Email: john.glanzer@gmail.com

Judith King, Baddeck NS

Tel: (902) 295-3141., Email: ajudithmarg@ns.sympatico.ca

Karen Liedl, North Hatley. QC

Tel: 819 842 2440, Email: idapaints@gmail.com

Arie van Ameringen (General Secretary), Montreal

Tel: (450) 295-2387, Email: arieva.perceval@gmail.com

Jef Saunders, Administrator

#130A – 1 Hesperus Rd, Thornhill, ON L4J 0G9

Tel: (416) 892-3656 ; Toll-free: 1 (877) 892-3656 (Canada and USA)

Email: info@anthroposophy.ca

Members' website: www.anthroposophy.ca