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National Spiritual Assembly

National Spiritual Assembly 'A Change of Time II'

4th November, 2002

THE NATIONAL Spiritual Assembly is delighted to report the overwhelming success of this year's National Bahá'í Festival which took place on the weekend of November 1 to 3, in Scarborough.

More than 1000 people attended the event which achieved its purpose of presenting a vision of hope and peace for the world and celebrating the activities of the Bahá'ís in working towards this goal. The weekend was characterised by an overwhelming spirit of love and unity, the full integration of the arts and multimedia into every presentation, the enthusiastic participation of large numbers of children and junior youth, and a sizeable group of friends of the Faith who attended.

From feedback already received, it was an experience which inspired, empowered, encouraged and moved the participants, which managed to engender a sense of pride in being a Bahá'í and represented a landmark in the change of culture which our community is experiencing. It was truly open to all and many expressed their strong desire to bring friends next year.

There are too many highlights to mention. Many friends were moved by three beautifully produced films, "Ordinary Heroes" which were commissioned for the Conference. These conveyed through the use of interviews with more than 80 Bahá'ís what it means to be working as individuals, communities and institutions at this time.

The Festival opened on Friday evening with a well-attended public performance by comedian Omid Djalili and the Zarb Ensemble from Northern Ireland which combines the traditional music of Iran and Ireland in a unique fusion of eastern and western cultures. They returned on Saturday night, preceded by a highly creative evocation of the life of Táhirih, conceived and performed by Sarah Clive, which used shadow theatre, movement, sound and music to create a highly moving and inspirational performance. Throughout the weekend, music and dance from our highly skilled and talented community captivated those attending.

Happy friends at the Dayspring stall

Auxiliary Board member Viv Craig presented a compelling vision of the three core activities of the Five Year Plan as gates or portals into the garden which Bahá'ís have been sacrificially creating for more than a century.

Italian National Assembly member Giuseppe Robiati conveyed the need for transformation in the context of the processes which are underway in the world.

Scarborough



The National Spiritual Assembly showcased the wide-ranging activities of believers around the country and dedicated a session to reflect upon the recent letter of the Universal House of Justice to the world's religious leaders, demonstrating the challenge of its message and the speed and efficacy with which it has been spread throughout the world.

There was also a well-attended panel discussion on the issues of social cohesion featuring the National Secretary Barney Leith, Laurie Quinn, the MP for Scarborough and Whitby, and anti-racism campaigner Steve White.

The National Spiritual Assembly conveys its deepest love and thanks to the scores of friends who literally contributed months of their time to making this Festival such a resounding success. Their sacrifice, dedication, skill, conscientiousness, care and brilliance was evident in every detail of the event which represents a great victory for the UK community in the Five Year Plan and holds every promise for our future growth and maturation.

National Assembly to meet in Bristol

The National Assembly will be meeting with the friends in Bristol on Saturday, February 15, 2003 in the Sunderland Suite, The Seeley's Hotel, 19-27 St Paul's Road, Clifton, Bristol BS8 1LX.

The meeting will start promptly at 7.30 pm.

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