

# Glimpses

Newsletter of the Anthroposophical  
Society in Canada

No. 78 Winter 2015



encountering our humanity  
à la rencontre de notre humanité

OTTAWA 2016  
AUGUST 7 - 14 AOÛT

## Council in Ottawa



Warm greetings to all the members.

From October 10<sup>th</sup> to October 12<sup>th</sup>, the Council had the opportunity to meet and work together in Ottawa. We stayed at the residence on the campus of La Cité collégiale, which is the location of the 2016 Conference, Encountering our Humanity. It felt good to experience and warm the space towards the August 2016 gathering. We are excited by the location.

What is going on in the world around us? What is happening now in Canada? What do we see in the Anthroposophical Society? What are we being asked to do? How do we move from being a “sense organ” to taking action?

These questions were the starting point for an artistic exercise that had a lot to reveal about how we work together as members of Council and about the capacities we are being asked to develop. We had the experience of needing to let go of what we had planned, to be awake to the moment, and what is emerging in our meeting together. We needed to be in a space of “not knowing”; and to be able to give up our own idea of what needed to happen, for the emergence of the “whole.”

We discovered that when we can work in this way, it is an inspiration. The results spread outward. And we could see in our meeting, that it allowed us to move more easily through items in our agenda, without getting stuck.

We are sharing this with you as part of our council imagination. It's a picture of leadership "with." It's a picture of a way of working together that is different, that is out of the moment, and that "lets live" what is emerging with the people who are present. This is conscious social work. It reflects the mood needed today.

It also reflects the change in the Purpose of the Society. This is the Purpose sentence we have arrived at, to now approach Industry Canada, and change it in our Charter.

"The purpose of the Anthroposophical Society in Canada is to foster the life of the soul and a true spiritual understanding of the world, both in the individual and in human culture, based on the path of knowledge brought by Rudolf Steiner."

During the course of our weekend meeting, we also had a day of planning for the 2016 Conference. This included a larger group than the Council, others who are carrying this important project. We are very grateful for this group of volunteers for all the time, energy, and expertise they are contributing.

We have been actively searching for a new treasurer for the Council, as Doug Wylie's term will end in 2016. Our way of doing this is to meet with potential candidates, and have a conversation, and work together to see if we can work in a collegial way. John Glanzer from Calgary met us in Ottawa. We are pleased to announce that John has accepted to be proposed to the membership of the Society for the role of Treasurer, at the next AGM in Montreal, May 21 2016.

Other items we engaged with, that you will hear more about in the near future are the National Library move to a smaller space in Hesperus, the website for the Anthroposophical Society, how the Council engages with members, and questions from the last AGM.

We wish everyone a warm Advent season, and look forward to our next encounters.

Dorothy LeBaron, on behalf of the Council

## Candles for Advent

Reg Down

Advent:  
one candle lit and wondered  
on its greeny wreath  
as oak leaves wither  
and waste themselves  
upon the stony mantle.

Advent:  
the white light twains  
as an ill wind blows  
and the river drives its dark metal  
over the bitter land.

Advent:  
the Trinity speaks in flames  
only the One remains —  
above my head  
thrush and blackbird  
flock their thirsty wings  
to the broken bread.

Advent:  
Four candles sear my soul  
Christ himself is near  
as the pale dove  
rides the wind.

The winterlands  
hard with hail  
scourge the oak and ash  
— the earth broods —  
the acorn rests  
within its grail.

## **Des bougies pour l'avent**

Par Reg Down

L'avent :

Une bougie s'est allumée et songeait  
sur sa couronne de verdure  
à mesure que les feuilles de chêne se fanent  
et s'étiolent  
sur l'âtre de pierres.

L'avent :

la lumière blanche se dédouble  
pendant qu'un triste vent souffle  
et que la rivière creuse de son métal sombre  
le sol amer.

L'avent :

la Trinité parle avec une voix de flammes  
il ne reste que l'Un –  
au-dessus de ma tête  
la grive et le merle  
foncent avec leurs ailes assoiffées  
sur le pain partagé.

L'avent :

quatre bougies brûlent mon âme  
le Christ Lui-même est proche  
la pâle colombe  
vient vers moi, portée par le vent.

Le paysage hivernal  
qui envoie ses durs grêlons  
fouette le chêne et le frêne  
- la terre est maussade-  
le gland repose  
dans sa coupe.

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## **Interview and reflections on the achievements of Kenneth McAlister MD**

“What is really at the core of Hesperus' mission is to explore, develop and support what is truly human. It's like the snowflake. Each snowflake is the same - and different. And that's also the case with human beings. Each of us has our own path. With the vagaries of life, the individual can very often be suppressed or wounded to the point where the sense of meaning in life - the thread of the biography - is lost. We are very committed to trying to help ourselves, and those who come to us for care, to find that thread again. And it's a mystery really, how each of us does that. And through the various modalities we have, we try to support the individual in the journey, and to help them somehow to reconnect, to deepen the connection with their biography, so that life becomes precious again, not just a waiting, but a precious adventure of becoming more human.” Kenneth McAlister from the Hesperus video. Link <http://www.hesperus.ca/>



### **Is the above quote why you came to Hesperus in 1990 or has this philosophy evolved over time?**

“I'm not sure I could speak like that when I first came to Hesperus. In 1990 I was five years into learning medicine on the front line as a country GP in Bobcaygeon, ON. In many ways it was a good time in my life and probably I was working through some issues arising from my Egyptian incarnation. The best part was that I met Nedi there. Otherwise I was pretty isolated from

more conscious spiritual community that I had initially pursued medical training to support. I remember one of my mentors, Francis Edmunds, looking intently into a group of young people of which I was a part and saying, "When I come back I'll be asking you: where are your communities!" This somehow impacted me deeply, as he had just given a talk about the need to create "islands of culture" to maintain and cultivate what is human in us. My desire for community transformed from a vague tribal notion living under the banner words of peace and love, to a more clear sense of intentional community that would collaboratively nurture individuals and the Earth, with professionalism that bridges contemporary practice with an Anthroposophic world view. That's a wordy way of saying that after I discovered what was important to me, I could wade into life to earn the tools I needed to get to work. In any case, many years later a call came about the dire needs Hesperus had, and am I going to come or not!"

**Is anthroposophy at the core of your philosophy on 'ageing well' - on care? Could you explain, briefly, how anthroposophy has contributed to your way of working in the world?**

"For me Anthroposophy is really a friend in the spiritual world who is nurturing, ever present, and seeks to help us become more aware of the mystery, the great gift of being human, and asks that we be ever more consciously creative as we awaken to this deep and gentle resource residing in us all. I am still very much a work in progress, a play in progress, but I am learning through Anthroposophy that life isn't so much about what goes on inside me, but rather what lives and moves between us, between us and the Kingdoms of Nature, between us and the Kingdoms of the Spiritual World. Movement, growth, insight comes through relationship at all these levels."

Kenneth you have truly helped to create an "island of culture"

and I know there is much gratitude living in the community for all the time and energy you have given to Hesperus Village. I know you will continue to be an active community member and we look forward to your future contributions, whatever form that may take. *Vibeke Ball*

At the Hesperus AGM on November 18th Kenneth was presented with a book. Sybille writes "I hope this book and it's outpouring of gratitude and well-wishes from many in the community helps to confirm the worthiness of the love, time and effort you allocated to this part of your life. This place truly is a 'finishing school' - all of us struggling to progress and / or survive and possibly thrive. How can one not learn and grow in such rich soil?"

Below are two pages written by Sybille Hahn for the introduction to Kenneth's book.

The Myth: Once upon a good time when minstrels and seekers re-emerged from a distant past, a young lad grew up as one of five brothers. They were a competitive lot. There was much jockeying for position and favour. Their forefathers came from theological and academic stock. Three boys easily fit into moulds bound for prosperity. Two had a more idealistic and philosophic bent.

As common in those years, in their student days, these two grew their locks to the shoulder and they danced with maidens in flowing gowns and flower crowns. It was said that even the odd mushroom passed their lips. The world beckoned and young Kenneth yielded to the call of the open road. Well acquainted with winter winds, his feet turned south and south again until the soft Spanish loving tongue enchanted his heart. He remained some time under the Southern Cross and traversed in the foot prints of cougars and alpacas.



Stories reached him about a fellowship community back in the distant North where one might practice good work and contemplation, pondering the words of Rudolf Steiner. Kenneth betook himself there to the enchanting settlements of Spring Valley and Chestnut Ridge. Along Hungry Hollow Road, in The Fellowship Community he met the healer, Dr. Paul Scharff.

While mixing biodynamic preparations, working on Threefold Farm and in the Fellowship Centre, the desire to become a healer himself grew and Kenneth returned to his home ground to undertake medical studies and training. In time, his formal training concluded, he addressed himself to the practical work of studying human beings, their stages and their conditions. He sought to serve, young and old while experiencing all aspects of personal life, some greatly fulfilling and some disappointing.

Among Kenneth's significant undertakings was taking up the leadership of Hesperus, a life's finishing school. It was teetering on failure and with patience, his steadfast vision brought it to stability. In time, Hesperus Village grew and flowered into a model environment for saging, for people to grow in body, spirit, wisdom and love; - truly a grand enterprise!

The Professional Man & his biography: Kenneth Russell McAlister, BA. MD., was born in Windsor Ontario on July 6, 1949. He received his Bachelor of Arts from York University in Toronto in 1977 and his Medical Doctorate from the University of Western Ontario in 1982. After completing his postgraduate requirements at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, he worked as a general practitioner in Trail, British Columbia and Bobcaygeon , Ontario.

In 1990, he moved his practice to the Hesperus Fellowship Community of Ontario (incorporated in 1983, opened in September, 1987) where he continues to cultivate a team practice in Anthroposophic medicine. He is a founding and active member in the Ontario Society of Physicians for Complementary Medicine, the Complementary Medical Section of the Ontario Medical Association and the Canadian Anthroposophic Medical Association. He maintains privileges at York Central Hospital.

Kenneth was elected to the Hesperus Fellowship Community of Ontario board of directors and subsequently to the Executive as President in 1990. For a brief hiatus of almost two years, he stepped out of the presidential role. The pressure of a waitlist in excess of 150 for 19 units led to expansion plans drafted in 2003. These required severance of land and the incorporation of a second corporation, Hesperus Fellowship Village, to qualify for government funding which was granted in 2008. Construction commenced in 2009 reaching completion in September, 2011. Both corporations, as associated charities, operate under the name Hesperus Village.

With the end of the financial year 2014/15, Kenneth stepped away from the presidency and chairmanship on March 31, 2015 and submitted his resignation from the Board effective at the Annual General Meeting of members on November 18, 2015, whose ranks he will join with continued good will and support. His 25 year leadership provided a singular contribution to a truly unique anthroposophic initiative in the Americas that has touched hundreds of lives and will continue to enhance the lives of future generations.

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## **An Interview with Arie van Ameringen**

A major conference entitled Encountering our Humanity: From Knowledge to Conscious Action will be held in Ottawa from August 7<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016. This conference is the initiative of Arie van Ameringen, General Secretary of the Anthroposophical Society in Canada. The following is an interview given by him.

**According to you, the conference has a threefold objective. Could you please elaborate?**

First of all, this event is an attempt to tighten what have become the rather loose connections between the Anthroposophical Society and the various initiatives inspired by anthroposophy. Secondly, we shall underline what anthroposophy has accomplished in its nearly one hundred years of existence. And finally, and most importantly, we shall explore how we can prepare for the future. How can the anthroposophical (universal human) impulse be experienced and put into practice in daily life? Can we find through our work together answers that traditional ways of thinking can no longer supply? How can we bring a humanizing (spiritual) quality to the various fields of daily activity?

These questions are fundamental if human evolution is to lead to a renewed connection with the spiritual world. The ability to enter so deeply into the soul of another human being that I actually suffer his or her pain – this is a quality belonging to the future sixth epoch; and yet I can already begin to prepare myself for this eventuality by cultivating a rich inner life. If I am able to transform myself, I shall be better equipped to help another human being – to begin with by simply learning to accept that being as he or she is. Rudolf Steiner refers to this in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> lectures of his cycle From Symptom to Reality in Modern History (G. A. 185), stating that in our age of the consciousness soul, life must become penetrated through and through with ideas that have their origin in the spiritual world.

## **What does our Michaelic era demand of us?**

That we move from knowledge into the realm of conscious activity! Information about anthroposophy is widely available today, and as anthroposophists we have certainly quoted Steiner profusely during the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century! Now that we have amassed this wisdom, what do we do with this legacy? We must do more than merely remain content with the knowing; this means that we must experiment with anthroposophy in our lives and see how it can inspire us in our deeds. Here, we enter into the “how,” and this always carries with it the danger inherent to the “how,” that of acting according to prescribed formulas. For example, if I choose to work as a Waldorf teacher or an anthroposophical doctor, I must ask myself whether I have really made the necessary effort to connect with the living source of anthroposophy – or whether I am merely a technician applying a prescribed methodology. Is my activity still relevant and does it respond to the needs of our epoch?

We must bring anthroposophy into a new phase, a phase of conscious activity. Act with discernment and sensitivity, and you will soon see whether or not your deed was morally just – and you may then have to make adjustments as you go along, being aware that you are bound to the consequences of the deeds you perform. This means finding the morally right path through heart-connected thinking rather than by responding to outer imperatives. Extensive examples of this are to be found in The Philosophy of Freedom. And the exercises contained in the Foundation Stone Meditation can also be of great help in this sense.

**You also have stated that the Ottawa conference is one in a series of events. Could you be more specific?**

Yes, things are coming together in a time-space convergence. As far as space is concerned, let us consider the actual location. Ottawa is the capital city of a country that is officially bilingual;

and historically, Ottawa is a meeting point on the North American continent. For centuries First Nations Peoples have held a small island in the Ottawa River to be a sacred meeting place. And the city itself is the result of a compromise directly connected with the history of Canada – a capital situated midway between Montreal, the French city, and Toronto, the English city. Something of the intellectual soul is still living in North America due to the French influence. The very history of Ottawa, with its diversity of influences, seems to point towards the possibility of building a community of the future.

And as far as convergence in time is concerned: 2016 will mark the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Shakespeare's death, the writer whose plays most vividly depict the multiple facets of the human being. The year will also see Goethe's Faust performed at the Goetheanum (where the Michaelmas conference will be held as well): Faust – contemporary man's confrontation with evil. All of this prompts us to strengthen (within ourselves and also with the help of others) the "awareness of our humanity," the unique contribution anthroposophy brings to the world and to evolution.

## **Conference Information**

The North American anthroposophical conference Encountering our Humanity will be held at the Cité collégiale in Ottawa from August 7<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016. The event has been planned to correspond with the rhythm of the week: Sunday, words of welcome and opening lecture; Monday, biography and karma; Tuesday, pedagogy; Wednesday, medicine; Thursday, our earth and the sciences; Friday, the arts and architecture; Saturday, community building; Sunday, religion, spirituality, meditation. Woven throughout the week there will be, among other activities, study relating to the General Anthroposophical Section and artistic workshops.

Six members of the leadership at the Goetheanum will be

featured among the keynote speakers: Bodo von Plato, Paul McKay, Seija Zimmermann, Constanza Kaliks, Joan Sleight and Marianne Schubert. There will also be several contributors from North America including Kenneth McAlister, Regine Kurek, Michael Schmidt, Irene François, Duncan Keppie, Bert Chase, Jonah Evans, Nathaniel Williams, Arie van Ameringen, and Douglas Cardinal.

In addition to the main activities scheduled for each day, space will be allotted for individuals wishing to present the results of their personal research, based on their work with a fundamental question or on their involvement in a field of activity or initiative connected with the conference theme (please contact John Bach at [jbbach@yahoo.ca](mailto:jbbach@yahoo.ca).) It is our hope that the Youth Section will also be able to meet during the week.

The conference web site is slated to be functional by the beginning of December of this year at:

[www.encounteringourhumanity.ca](http://www.encounteringourhumanity.ca)

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## **Biography course in Nelson**

report from Diane Saibil

Last spring, the Canadian Anthroposophical Society very generously agreed to backstop an initiative to bring Regine Kurek to Nelson, BC to lead a biography workshop. The workshop was originally planned as a 4.5 day session to be held at the end of June. Our plan did not materialize at that time, but we persisted by rescheduling in a slightly shorter format. Regine came to Nelson in September and led a 3.5 day workshop. There were eight participants, five of whom are teachers at the Nelson Waldorf School. The workshop was extremely well-received and there is talk of following up with a small group to take up some of the questions that Regine left with us.

In terms of our budget, we were able to squeak by, partly due to Regine's generosity, so we will not need to access any Anthroposophical Society funding. However, I was very grateful for your offer to act as a financial back-up as without it I would have been reluctant to risk going ahead with the workshop. One thing I learned about living in this part of the country – people tend to sign up for things at the last minute

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### **Three Lectures on Esoteric Christianity**

The Toronto Branch of the Anthroposophical Society in Canada was delighted to host Reverend Jonah Evans, of the Thornhill Christian Community Church, who provided three excellent, highly original lectures on esoteric Christianity at the Metropolitan United Church in the heart of the city earlier this fall. The three lectures were organized by Theresia Schier and were held on September 17, 24 and October 8 with good attendance on all three evenings.

The three lectures were simultaneously accessible to anyone and grand in scope, as suggested by their titles:

- ☐ The Hidden God – Christ in You
- ☐ The Evolving God – Christ in Us
- ☐ The Resurrecting God – Christ and the Earth

Drawing on his deep understanding of Rudolf Steiner's Christology and his years of experience as a Christian Community priest, Reverend Evans lectures built up a wondrous sense of Jesus Christ that touched the intimacies of the human heart and shed light on the great cosmic dramas of the evolution of humanity and the earth.

In the first lecture, working with several powerful stories of human becoming, Reverend Evans traced the activity of Jesus

Christ in the heart forces at work in moments of personal transformation. Quoting the Gospel of Matthew (Chapter 12, Verses 38 – 41) where Jesus Christ refers to the “sign of Jonah”, Reverend Evans explained that in addition to the macrocosmic event of the Christ Being’s descent into the centre of the earth, this sign also pertains to each of us as we encounter life’s challenges, as we descend into the heart of our own earthly destiny. He revealed a pattern in human becoming where we endure an experience of dying – of letting go in some way – and through this experience, give birth to a higher soul capacity, and take a step toward becoming ourselves.

In the second lecture, Reverend Evans explored how the Incarnation was a healing event for human beings, showing how the life of Jesus Christ restored the archetype of the human being, thus infusing humanity with the power to undertake the ascent back to the spiritual world. He showed how this process of working toward spiritual development requires us to work together in this world - which we must take up the healing work in relationship to each other, and as communities. In this context, he explored the meaning of illness and death, karma and reincarnation, showing these as gifts that can help us achieve a greater victory.

In the third lecture, Reverend Evans moved to macro- cosmic level, drawing out a magnificent picture of how Jesus Christ is working now as the driving force in the evolution of the earth itself. It was an amazing experience to move from the personal, to the social, and to the cosmic in a way that linked our day-to-day challenges with these great forces, to gain a glimpse of Jesus Christ as both intimate guide and world-shaping power.

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## Obituary

RUTH ALICE (GREENBLATT)  
MANSON 1935-2015

Ruth Alice Manson died on Sunday, October 11, 2015 at Wellesley Central Place in Toronto, two months before her 80th birthday. Ruth was born in 1935 in Moncton, N.B. to the late Moses and Pauline Greenblatt. Ruth was also predeceased by her four siblings, Mendel Greenblatt, Jayson Greenblatt, Esther Fine and Mildred Woods, and by her niece Ilsa Greenblatt Shore. Ruth is survived and will be much missed by her sons Tycho and Leif Manson, by her grandchildren Elijah Forget-Manson, Aviva Forget-Manson and Ishai Forget- Manson, by her nieces and nephews, and by many good friends.

She attended high school in Moncton and Halifax, and then Dalhousie University and the University of British Columbia, from which she graduated with a BA in English literature. After having her children, Ruth moved to Montreal and earned a Master's in Library Science from McGill University in 1968. She worked as a librarian at the University of Vermont in Burlington, Vt.; St. Lawrence College in Brockville, Ont.; the College of the Bahamas in Nassau; and finally in the Metro Toronto library system.

Ruth was diagnosed with MS in 1977 and spent the past 38 years doing her best to ensure that this terrible disease did not prevent her from living as full a life as possible.

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## **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
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### **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
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A NORTH AMERICAN ANTHROPOSOPHICAL  
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UNE CONGRÈS ANTHROPOSOPHIQUE  
NORD-AMÉRICAIN

encountering our humanity  
à la rencontre de notre humanité



OTTAWA 2016  
AUGUST 7 - 14 2016

For more information go to  
[www.encounteringourhumanity.ca](http://www.encounteringourhumanity.ca)

Pour toutes information aller à  
[www.alarencontredenotrehumanite.ca](http://www.alarencontredenotrehumanite.ca)