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In Memoriam 

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Know thou that the souls of the people of Bahá, who have entered and been established within the Crimson Ark, shall associate and commune intimately one with another, and shall be so closely associated in their lives, their aspirations, their aims and strivings as to be even as one soul.

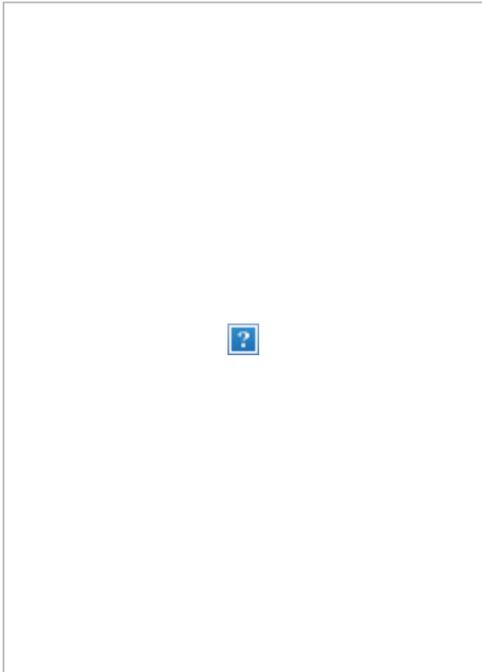
Bahá'u'lláh: *Gleanings*, pp.169-170

These souls have recently passed on to the 'Abhá Kingdom. We send our deep sympathy to those families and friends who have been bereaved.

Elena Marsella, Hawaii

Elena Maria Marsella, Knight of Bahá'u'lláh to the Gilbert and Ellice Islands – now known as Kiribati and Tuvalu – has passed away in Kailua, Hawaii after a heart attack. Born in Rhode Island and raised in New Hampshire, Elena pursued careers as a pianist, diplomat and a teacher. She and her husband, Roy Fernie were the first Bahá'ís to settle on the Gilbert and Ellice Islands in March 1954 and were designated Knights of Bahá'u'lláh. In 1964,

she was elected to the first National Spiritual Assembly of the Hawaiian Islands. Later she served on the Board of Counsellors for North East Asia. In addition to her many spiritual qualities and steadfastness in the Covenant, Elena was known for her encyclopaedic knowledge of the Faith, world history and current affairs.



Mr Heshmat Sabet-Sharghi, caretaker of the Mother Temple of Africa in Uganda

Mr Heshmat Sabet-Sharghi, Kampala, Uganda

Mr Heshmat Sabet-Sharghi was, since 1997 with his wife, the caretaker of the Mother Temple of Africa in Uganda. From his early 20s, he was a pioneer to several countries in the Middle East and a keen travel-teacher to many territories in Africa, the Far East and the former Soviet Union. He was resident for a while in Bristol in the early 1970s and his house was then the Bahá'í Centre in the city. Mr Sabet-Sharghi's funeral was held at the National Bahá'í Centre in Kampala, preceded by prayers at the House of Worship. He was buried in the cemetery in the Temple grounds. He is survived by his wife Minoo (Anvar), three children and four grandchildren. Many memorial services have been held for him around the world. He will be remembered for his always cheerful smile and his deep knowledge of the Faith.

Barbara Sims, Tokyo, Japan

Barbara Sims, who has died aged 84, pioneered to Japan in 1953 and was a National Spiritual Assembly member for 36 years. She was a third-generation Bahá'í – her grandparents were taught by Hands of the Cause John Henry Hyde Dunn and his wife Clara. At the beginning of Shoghi Effendi's Ten Year Global Crusade, and inspired by the Hand of the Cause Agnes Alexander, Barbara pioneered with her husband Sandy, who was not a Bahá'í, to Japan where he had been born and raised. The couple found jobs with the US Government and Barbara also taught English, up until a few months before her death. Barbara was elected to the Local Spiritual Assembly of Tokyo in 1954 and served on it for

four decades. In 1957 she was elected to the first National Spiritual Assembly of North-East Asia and in 1974 to the first National Assembly of Japan, serving until 1993. She was Secretary for many years of both institutions. Barbara considered the bounties of service to infinitely outweigh the hardships. Besides her administrative service, she assisted many Hands of the Cause on their travels and participated in six International Conventions. She instilled in her friends and family an appreciation of the importance of steadfastness and sacrifice in service to the Cause. On her passing, the Universal House of Justice wrote, "She was well known for her devotion to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh and her unwavering commitment to the promotion of its interests."

Mr Mohammad Ali Forghani-Ashrafi, Gillingham

Mr Forghani-Ashrafi, who has died at the age of 79, arrived from Iran last December to stay with his daughter and two sons who live in the United Kingdom. He was born in Behshahr in the Mázinarán province of Iran to a Muslim father who was a Mulla and a Bahá'í mother. Professionally, he was a high school and college lecturer in biological science. After investigating the Faith for himself, he became an ardent believer who served on many Local Spiritual Assemblies often as Secretary. Following the Iranian revolution, Mr Forghani-Ashrafi spent four months in prison in 1984-85 during which time he underwent severe torture and beatings. He was so badly injured that he had to be taken under armed guard to a doctor who turned out to be one of his former students. The doctor was so shocked that he protested to the local and national authorities over Mr Forghani-Ashrafi's treatment in prison. Mr Forghani-Ashrafi's health was damaged for the rest of his life. He will be remembered for his gentle personality, his love of humanity and hatred of war and injustice.

