

The Story of the last One Hundred Years of the Baha'i Faith in Seattle.

Looking back over the first one hundred years of the Baha'i Faith until its arrival in Seattle is a journey that started almost exactly with the formation and settling of the first pioneers in Washington State. It all begins on the afternoon of Easter Day April 15, 1907 around 3:15 pm on Beacon Hill for the Baha'is, but much had to occur that lead up to this time in history. We will need to go back to 1844 in far away Persia.

If one had to summarize the last one hundred years of the Baha'is in Seattle we would say that it started with a small band of pioneers who embraced a God given mission that was far ahead of its time as envisioned by Baha'u'llah (The Glory of God), the founder of the Baha'i Faith in Persia. Our pioneers here immediately grasped the idea to lay the foundation and infrastructure for a future society that would take for granted a global community, elimination of prejudices of all kinds be they racial, economic or educational. The equality of woman and man was not an option and the sharing of wealth was a self-imposed spiritual quest. Today these principles are well advanced and commonly accepted. However, in the 1850's or by the turn of the century our local citizens still find them to be a challenge.

It does not take long until our early Baha'i pioneers are asked to go to the four corners of the earth to help open up new countries for this new world-embracing message. They do so for the next few decades up until just very recently. You will find that many of those early Seattle Baha'i pioneers scatter far and wide and many bury their bones on continents such as Africa or Australia. Many of them leave good jobs and careers behind. Others travel throughout the country to spread the message of "*The earth is but one country and mankind its citizens*" from city to city. It is only recently that our Baha'i community has begun to build up our own local community. One could make the comparison to Christ when he asked His early disciples to scatter to the four corners of the earth and they did. In the same manner and with the same focused mission and vision they arise heroically to sail and travel to distant lands often under back-breaking and despairing conditions.

Now back in 1844 James Knox Polk is elected President and promises to settle the Oregon boundaries. Britain is proposing that what is now western Washington should be part of Canada, but he stands firm. Thus finally on June 15, 1846 the US-Canada border is settled at the 49th parallel from the Rocky Mountains to the sea.

This is the same year that the Baha'i Faith has its beginning in a far away land in Persia. A young merchant named the Bab (the "Gate") arises and announces to the world the beginning of the latest, but not last of the world religions. His movement throws Iran into turmoil between 1844 and 1853. Out of this turmoil emerges the Baha'i Faith which is founded by Baha'u'llah (The Glory of God). He was a Persian nobleman who served in the courts and in high places. The Bab is put to death in front of a huge crowd of a hundred thousand by a firing squadron in the city of Tabriz. Many a Christian and Moslem eyewitnesses are present and write about the wrongful death of this young 31-year-old Prophet. He was almost the same age as Christ was during His crucifixion.

Some even write plays about His life and have them performed in cities such as St. Petersburg, Russia, and Paris, France, to be performed by no less than the famous actress Sarah Bernhardt. The Bab announces the coming of Baha'u'llah, the Promised One of all ages and religions.

He begins to lay the cornerstone and foundation for a new race of man. The Baha'is call it a blueprint for an ever-advancing civilization. They are made up of just a few principles as we call them and every Baha'i around the world adheres to them. Here they are:

The oneness of mankind

"It is not for him to pride himself who loveth his own country, but rather for him who loveth the whole world. The earth is but one country and mankind its citizens." --Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'llah

The oneness of religion

"All these divisions we see on all sides, all these disputes and opposition, are caused because men cling to ritual and outward observances, and forget the simple, underlying truth. It is the outward practices of religion that are so different, and it is they that cause disputes and enmity -- while the reality is always the same, and one. The Reality is the Truth, and truth has no division. Truth is God's guidance, it is the light of the world, it is love, it is mercy. These attributes of truth are also human virtues inspired by the Holy Spirit." -- `Abdu'l-Baha, Paris Talks, pp. 120-1.

Independent investigation of truth

"Furthermore, know ye that God has created in man the power of reason, whereby man is enabled to investigate reality. God has not intended man to imitate blindly his fathers and ancestors. He has endowed him with mind, or the faculty of reasoning, by the exercise of which he is to investigate and discover the truth, and that which he finds real and true he must accept." -- `Abdu'l-Baha, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 291.

Religion as a source of unity

"He (Baha'u'llah) sets forth a new principle for this day in the announcement that religion must be the cause of unity, harmony and agreement among mankind. If it be the cause of discord and hostility, if it leads to separation and creates conflict, the absence of religion would be preferable in the world." -- `Abdu'l-Baha, Baha'i World Faith, p. 247.

The evolutionary nature of religion

Baha'is view religion as a progressive, evolutionary process which needs to be updated as humanity evolves mentally, socially, and spiritually. Every so often a new Prophet is sent to humanity to update religion to the current needs of mankind. These Prophets bring essentially the same spiritual message to mankind; in a form that meets the needs of the people of Their time. Baha'is believe that Baha'u'llah has brought an updated message for mankind today.

"There is no distinction whatsoever among the Bearers of My Message. They all have but one purpose; their secret is the same secret. To prefer one in honor to another, to exalt certain ones above the rest, is in no wise to be permitted. Every true Prophet hath regarded His Message as

fundamentally the same as the Revelation of every other Prophet gone before Him... The measure of the revelation of the Prophets of God in this world, however, must differ. Each and every one of them hath been the Bearer of a distinct Message, and hath been commissioned to reveal Himself through specific acts. It is for this reason that they appear to vary in their greatness... It is clear and evident, therefore, that any apparent variation in the intensity of their light is not inherent in the light itself, but should rather be attributed to the varying receptivity of an ever-changing world. Every Prophet Whom the Almighty and Peerless Creator hath purposed to send to the peoples of the earth hath been entrusted with a Message, and charged to act in a manner that would best meet the requirements of the age in which He appeared." --Gleanings Harmony between religion, science, and reason

"Religion and science are the two wings upon which man's intelligence can soar into the heights, with which the human soul can progress. It is not possible to fly with one wing alone! Should a man try to fly with the wing of religion alone he would quickly fall into the quagmire of superstition, whilst on the other hand, with the wing of science alone he would also make no progress, but fall into the despairing slough of materialism." --`Abdu'l-Baha, Paris Talks, p.143.

Peaceful consultation as a means for resolving differences

In the Baha'i Faith, difference of opinion is not squelched, in fact it is encouraged. "The shining spark of truth cometh forth only after the clash of differing opinions." --Selections from the Writings of `Abdu'l-Baha, p.87.

However, differences of opinion can be expressed in a way that doesn't humiliate another human being. The Baha'i principle of consultation requires that an individual be detached from his or her opinions and always be open to the truth, from whoever or wherever it comes from.

"They must then proceed with the utmost devotion, courtesy, dignity, care and moderation to express their views. They must in every manner search out the truth and not insist upon their own opinion, for stubbornness and persistence in one's views will lead ultimately to discord and wrangling and the truth will remain hidden. The honored members (of the consulting body) must with all freedom express their own thoughts, and it is in no wise permissible for one to belittle the thought of another, nay, he must with moderation set forth the truth..." --Selections from the Writings of `Abdu'l-Baha, p.88.

An international auxiliary language

"It behoveth the sovereigns of the world -- may God assist them -- or the ministers of the earth to take counsel together and to adopt one of the existing languages or a new one to be taught to children in schools throughout the world, and likewise one script. Thus the whole earth will come to be regarded as one country." --Baha'u'llah, Tablet of Bisharat (Tablets of Baha'u'llah, p. 22.)

Universal education

"Unto every father hath been enjoined the instruction of his son and daughter in the art of reading and writing and in all that hath been laid down in the Holy Tablet. He that putteth away that which is commanded unto him, the Trustees of the House of Justice are then to recover from him that which is required for their instruction, if he be wealthy, and if not the matter devolveth upon the House of Justice. Verily, have We made it a shelter for the poor and needy. He that bringeth up his son or the son of another, it is as though he hath brought up a son of Mine; upon him rest My Glory, My Loving-Kindness, My Mercy, that have compassed the world." -Baha'u'llah, Tablet of Ishraqat (Tablets of Baha'u'llah, p.128).

The elimination of all forms of prejudice

"...again, as to religious, racial, national and political bias: all these prejudices strike at the very root of human life; one and all they beget bloodshed, and the ruination of the world. So long as these prejudices survive, there will be continuous and fearsome wars." --Selections from the Writings of `Abdu'l-Baha, p.249.

Equality of men and women

"To accept and observe a distinction which God has not intended in creation is ignorance and superstition. The fact which is to be considered, however, is that woman, having formerly been deprived, must now be allowed equal opportunities with man for education and training. There must be no difference in their education. Until the reality of equality between man and woman is fully established and attained, the highest social development of mankind is not possible."-- `Abdu'l-Baha, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p.76.

The abolition of the extremes of wealth and poverty

"O Ye Rich Ones on Earth! The poor in your midst are My trust; guard ye My trust, and be not intent only on your own ease." --The Hidden Words of Baha'u'llah, p.41.

"We see amongst us men who are overburdened with riches on the one hand, and on the other those unfortunate ones who starve with nothing; those who possess several stately palaces, and those who have not where to lay their head. Some we find with numerous courses of costly and dainty food; whilst others can scarce find sufficient crusts to keep them alive. Whilst some are clothed in velvets, furs and fine linen, others have insufficient, poor and thin garments with which to protect them from the cold. This condition of affairs is wrong and must be remedied. Now the remedy must be carefully undertaken." - `Abdu'l-Baha, Paris Talks, p.151.

Universal peace

"The time must come when the imperative necessity for the holding of a vast, an all-embracing assemblage of men will be universally realized. The rulers and kings of the earth must needs attend it, and, participating in its deliberations, must consider such ways and means as will lay the foundations of the world's Great Peace amongst men. Such a peace demandeth that the Great Powers should resolve, for the sake of the tranquility of the peoples of the earth, to be fully reconciled among themselves. Should any king take up arms against another, all should unitedly arise and prevent him. If this be done, the nations of the world will no longer require any armaments, except for the purpose of preserving the security of their realms and of maintaining internal order within their territories." --Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'llah, p. 249.

These few passages above become the road map and guidance to the Baha'is. Often they feel hopeless and cannot see the wisdoms behind their northwestern experience and horizon, but they believe and are steadfast in this vision.

From 1850 until 1852 under the watchful eyes of a jealous Moslem clergy and with governmental support Baha'u'llah endures and suffers the loss of his family, wealth, and properties. He is stripped of all dignity when he is imprisoned in Tehran along with violent criminals.

In 1851 until 1852 in a dark dungeon in a hollowed out cesspool below the earth on the Shah's palace ground He and his fellow Baha'is suffer daily executions and torture. A much too heavy chain is placed around His neck that needs to be held up by wooden stocks so that His body does not collapse. No light, barely any food and no privacy or release for private matters. Wrenching disease and stench is unbearable for months on end. It was here that, one sudden moment in time suspended, the angel Gabriel, sent by God, touched His burdened forehead. These are the very words that Baha'u'llah shares with us to capture the moment as was sent in a tablet to the Shah several years later: *"O King! I was but a man like others, asleep upon My couch, when lo, the breezes of the All-Glorious were wafted over Me, and taught Me the knowledge of all that hath been. This thing is not from Me, but from One Who is Almighty and All-Knowing. And He bade Me lift up My voice between earth and heaven, and for this there befell Me what hath caused the tears of every man of understanding to flow. The learning current amongst men I studied not; their schools I entered not. Ask of the city wherein I dwelt, that thou mayest be well assured that I am not of them who speak falsely. This is but a leaf which the winds of the will of thy Lord, the Almighty, the All-Praised, have stirred. Can it be still when the tempestuous winds are blowing? Nay, by Him Who is the Lord of all Names and Attributes! They move it as they list. The evanescent is as nothing before Him Who is the Ever-Abiding. His all-compelling summons hath reached Me, and caused Me to speak His praise amidst all people. I was indeed as one dead when His behest was uttered. The hand of the will of thy Lord, the Compassionate, the Merciful, transformed Me."* (Baha'u'llah, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, p. 11)

Only by a miracle does Baha'u'llah survive this ordeal for months on end. He is eventually released and returns to his frightened young wife and infant children. Now a series of exiles starts first to Baghdad (Iraq) for 10 years. Then on to Constantinople and Adrianople (Turkey and Europe during that time) between 1863 and 1868. Finally he is sent by boat for His last and final exile to the prison city of Akka, Palestine. When Baha'u'llah arrives in Akka, that city is a penal colony. Its population in the 1880's is estimated to be about nine thousand. The Turkish government has consigned to it from its vast empire a great number of criminals, murderers, political detainees and every type of troublemaker.

Many people think of religion as an activity that is carried out in a church, mosque, a synagogue or a temple. It has an impact on important events in our lives such as births, marriages and deaths. It guides our pioneers and gives them strength when nothing else assists their failing bodies during wars, Indian attacks or just surviving starvation from one day to the next.

Whilst Baha'u'llah suffers in his underground prison in Tehran on this wet and rainy day on November 13th 1851, the Denny party consisting of 12 adults and 12 children land on the beach at Alki Point in West Seattle. It has been a long and difficult journey in four wagons across the prairies, the mountains and eventually across the sea that brings them to this arrival only to find that shelter does not exist to shield them from the elements, The walls of a single cabin without a roof stands nearby. David Denny tried to ready the

cabin for them, but cut himself with an axe as he tries to chop the lumber and is in a deep fever by this time. Daylight soon fades and the women and children huddle around a campfire. A newborn baby (Roland) is just a few days old and begins life under most difficult circumstances. Their first night is spent under hurriedly spread parts of a tent and Indian mats above the log walls to protect them from the rain. They sleep close together, sharing their body warmth for comfort.

It is a monumental test of inner strength and endurance that leads to the founding of Seattle. 1851 is to become a new beginning for this tender city of 37 hills. The same can be said for our unknown small community of Baha'is soon to leave their land of imprisonment.

Around 1850, four years after the border is established, census takers count only 1,049 Americans living north of the Columbia, most of them near that river. It is this same year that 20,000 followers made up of man, woman and children of this young Faith loose their lives across Persia. Little can they dare to dream that within 57 years Seattle will register 56 followers within our city to officially form their blossoming young Faith community.

Most of Seattle's founders are church-going people. The first religious service is about a year after their arrival by Catholic Bishop Demers. He works to save the souls of employees of the Hudson Bay Company and the Indians. The new settlers ask him to come to Yessler's Cookhouse to preach the first sermon. All of the settlers are Protestants, but it does not matter to them as it is the word of God. Seattle's second sermon is delivered by Methodist Benjamin Close, who becomes the first Protestant minister stationed in Washington. The first resident minister Reverend Blaine along with his wife Catherine arrive in Seattle in late November of 1853. His first sermon in the settlement is delivered at Alki Point on Sunday, November 27, 1853 the day after they arrive. About 30 settlers come to listen to them and their contributions add up to \$12.50.

April 30th, 1858 marks the birth of our Baha'i "Mother of Seattle" Ida Finch. She and her husband John both become most instrumental in the rapid growth of the Faith here in Seattle and Tacoma, nay the country and different parts of the world. Ida has many small jobs during her lifetime to sustain her. They moved here in 1897 and eventually move to 2916 Beacon Avenue South on Beacon Hill. The earliest we see her is as a needlepoint teacher in her art store. She works at times at the Bon Marche behind a counter and later during her travels she takes on small jobs working in a store or assisting in a guesthouse. She seems to have a talent for dairy farming costs and production. She reports in almost daily letter to Agnes Parson, a well known early Baha'i at that time Washington, DC. She is a wealthy socialite and appears interested in the dairy industry and asks Ida to give her reports along the way. Apparently she owns properties and a farm that she might be thinking about. Ida is an amazing woman with a strong will to survive to follow her mission and dream. In China we find her teaching English. She is an ardent letter writer on an almost daily basis. Eventually Ida becomes blind and still writes letters by touch and feel. I have read those letters and am amazed how she sustains her correspondence without being able to read a single word. She apologizes for her demise in such an

endearing way that tears come to your eyes. I understand towards the end of her life she still walks around in her neighborhood, blind, with a walking stick and a pamphlet in her hands hoping that somebody will listen to her. John is listed as a realtor around 1907. We see him soon regularly take a boat ride to Tacoma and try to teach those that are ready for this new message. Ultimately he will represent Seattle at our National Convention in Chicago, Illinois on occasion as we see his signature among those that attended.

The 1860's witnessed the birth of another staunch Baha'i pioneer in the Seattle community. Her name is Charlotte T. Zutavern Gillen. She was born July 10, 1869 in Springfield, Ohio. Her father, Charles Zutavern, was a Civil War veteran and received the rank of quartermaster general in the 17th Indiana regiment. She starts to study music at the age of eight and teaches professionally from the age of 12 on. Eventually she studies in the Boston Conservatory of Music and as a pioneer founding member heads the musical department at the Stetson University of Deland (near Orlando) in Florida. It is here that she meets and marries a trustee and on-site staff physician, Dr. Richard Gillen, MD, on August 16, 1894. A daughter named June is born to them Oct. 1, 1895. The whole family eventually moves to Seattle in 1901 when their freshly planted orange grove is destroyed through a most unusual freeze. Dr. Gillen opens a medical practice in Seattle. They live at the corner of Broadway and John Street. Later between 1905 and 1919 they move to 1529 Summit Ave. This is where Charlotte initiated the soon-to-be well-known Seattle School for Music. She teaches here for the next 20 years. This also gives her an opportunity to participate in and become part of Seattle's first World's Fair at the 1909 Alaska-Yukon Pacific Exposition. In 1907 Charlotte meets Ida Finch in her art or fabric store and learns from her the message of Baha'u'llah. She and her daughter June immediately embrace this wonderful new Healer for the Ills of Mankind. Charlotte will serve the Faith for the next 60 years and her daughter June for no less than 85 years. This is a remarkable feat all on its own.

The highlight in both of their lives will be their journey in 1912 to meet Abdu'l Baha (the son of Baha'u'llah) during his visit to this country. Both have an opportunity to talk to him privately for a few moments. June is a shy teenager and tells us that he holds her shaking hands to his chest and says "Teach, teach, teach. And if you cannot teach, do humanitarian work". This guides both of their lives in all of their future decisions. Eventually the family buys an apple orchard on Lake Chelan. Dr. Gillen passes away in 1916, but the family continues for many years to come to work their orchard. It is stated in Charlotte Gillen's obituary that their apple orchard might very well have been one of the first commercial apple orchards in Washington. Charlotte has a thirst for knowledge of an intellectual and spiritual nature. She studies for many years and still continued to do so at age 85 in Wyoming at the university there. At the age of 90 she decides to pioneer to cold and rough Alaska. What an enduring spirit this determined, perseverant, elegant, musical, beautiful and humanitarian petite woman has. She truly is a role model for the modern woman to be always ahead of her time. She never lets hardship hinder her nor let loneliness stop her from teaching music to choirs in the various surrounding churches. When you read her annual letters on the last night of each year you feel you are looking through a window of the last century filled with wisdoms and yearnings for a peaceful

world soon to come. She eventually dies here in Des Moines, Washington, on May 25, 1962 with her granddaughters Rouha and Ulale, and their mother June at her side.

Eventually June Gillen marries Frank Harris and this becomes the first Baha'i marriage initiated by Ida Finch. This takes place during one of the visits of the famous Baha'i travel teacher named Jenabe Fazel. June is one of the founding members of the Standard Grand Opera Company during WWI. She is a beautiful singer trained by Charlotte and a gracious ballet dancer. Later in her life she will become a scholar and researcher for the Writings of the Baha'i Faith. This she did on an old-fashioned typewriter by categorizing and collecting phrases from the Writings and by describing some of the physical and spiritual meanings.

The 1870's witness, however, the birth of a female Baha'i heroine in Richwood, Ohio. Her name is Martha Louise Root. She comes from Puritan family stock settling in this country in 1640 around Salem, Massachusetts, and Connecticut. Her family over the years had a history of missionary workers serving the rough part of several cities. Elihu Root became secretary of war under President McKinley and secretary of State under President Theodore Roosevelt. Eventually he would become the recipient of the Nobel Prize in 1912 which acknowledged his international arbitration for peace. It is of no surprise that Martha eventually will be ahead of her time and become a known journalist as a Society and Religious Editor for the Pittsburgh Post. Spreading the message of Universal Peace is in her genes. But it is not until 1908 at an interdenominational missionary convention in Pittsburgh that she first hears of the Baha'i Faith from a neighboring table. She overhears the conversation of a wealthy coffee broker named Roy Wilhelm residing on Wall Street who just returned from a visit with Abdu'l Baha. Just like Hyde Dunn in Seattle she immediately grasps the universal message of peace promulgated by Baha'u'llah. She knows instinctively the time has come to follow her new fate and destiny. It is this middle-aged early Baha'i pioneer who will arise to meet the challenge to become distinct by leaving this country to travel around the world numerous times and eventually meeting kings and queens, emperors, professors and paupers. She is that humble soul that introduces Queen Marie of Romania to the message of Baha'u'llah. Books have been written about her, but we must mention her here as she comes and visits Seattle to start one of her many journeys to the Orient. She teaches at over 100 universities and colleges alone. You can hear her regularly on the radio or read about her in the local papers. Fortunately for us she is well recorded and leaves a trail of articles on her many presentations and speeches. She is closely involved with and promotes Esperanto, the international language developed by Dr. Ludwig Zamenhof in Poland. This new world language is supposed to bring together the people of the world under one common language. His daughter Lydia later becomes a Baha'i during the time that she works on translating "Baha'u'llah and the New Era" into Esperanto. Lydia has a law degree and is eager to teach this new global message of hope for mankind.

Our dear "Mother of Seattle" Ida Finch is there to greet Martha in Yokohama in 1923. Ida will remain in Tokyo until the great fire and earthquake in November 1923. She travels between Japan and China with a Hawaiian Baha'i pioneer named Agnes Alexander. Agnes is from that renowned early Hawaiian missionary family of the same

name. Agnes had brought the Faith to Hawaii in 1901 and is the first to open Japan and Korea to the Baha'i Faith. It is Ida Finch who becomes one of her outstanding helpers between 1919 and 1923. Eventually she and Agnes barely survive the Tokyo earthquake and the US government puts Ida on a boat back to Seattle. She now has pioneered in the trenches of this country and part of the Asian continent. It is a remarkable accomplishment for a widowed woman in her early 60's during those trying times.

But back to the 1880's the world experiences the 1st Boer War in Africa and the Holy War in Sudan. The Statue of Liberty is unveiled and the Eiffel Tower is constructed. Van Gogh paints his famous sunflowers and the Brooklyn Suspension Bridge opens. Saccharin is discovered and the first petrol fuelled car is developed.

Seattle consolidates its status as a leading city in the 1880's. US president Rutherford B. Hayes is the first president to visit here. Spring Hill Water Co. is our first true water system. Even the "Great Fire" of 1889 proves a blessing in disguise. Transportation improvements are the key to the city's growing success. A few roads outside of the original downtown are planked or paved. Regular scheduled ferry service will be introduced around 1888.

October 9, 1889 is the year that Richard St. Barbe Baker is born in Southampton, England. He soon will lead the way in the field of ecology and speaks to "Saving the Greening of our Planet." He will become lovingly known as the "Man of the Trees" as he plants trees all around the world. Eventually he finds the Baha'i Faith and leads the community around him into a global awareness and consciousness. Just before he dies he comes to Seattle in 1982 and meets with some of the Baha'is such as Shirley Ballard and Julie Worthington and other ecologists only to find him on the threshold of the next world.

During this time we also find Tolstoy in one of his books say that we spend our lives attempting to unravel the mystery of life, but adds, "There is a Persian, a Turkish prisoner, who knows the secret." Tolstoy was one of those who was in communication with BAH'A'O'LLAH. With him he held that a life uncompromisingly sacrificed to the ideals is the life of the superman. (Abdu'l-Baha, Divine Philosophy, p. 8)

In far away Akka in 1887 in Palestine that little band of Baha'is around Baha'u'llah experience the tragic loss of His own true and loyal brother. In 1870 Baha'u'llah loses his son to a tragic accident. One of the early Baha'i historians named Nabil finishes writing a well known historical biography of this young Faith entitled "The Dawnbreakers". Many of the early Baha'is by now are murdered, publicly tortured or banished. The vengeance of the clergy knows no limits. But overall it is still in obscurity.

That all will change with the coming of the 1890's. The well-known orientalist E. G. Brown from Cambridge University travels to Palestine to meet with Baha'u'llah. He has read the eyewitness reports of the deaths of the followers in Persia and becomes curious why such intense hatred is directed at this newly formed Faith. He meets with Baha'u'llah and stats on that occasion: "*The face of Him on Whom I gazed,*" is the

interviewer's memorable testimony for posterity, "I can never forget, though I cannot describe it. Those piercing eyes seemed to read one's very soul; power and authority sat on that ample brow.... No need to ask in whose presence I stood, as I bowed myself before one who is the object of a devotion and love which kings might envy and emperors sigh for in vain." "Here," the visitor himself has testified, "did I spend five most memorable days, during which I enjoyed unparalleled and unhoped-for opportunities of holding intercourse with those who are the fountain-heads of that mighty and wondrous spirit, which works with invisible but ever-increasing force for the transformation and quickening of a people who slumber in a sleep like unto death. It was, in truth, a strange and moving experience, but one whereof I despair of conveying any save the feeblest impression." (Shoghi Effendi, God Passes By, p. 193)

Two years later in 1892 Baha'u'llah passes away. It is this somber occasion that will bring about the first western account into this country in 1893. His son Abdu'l Baha becomes the new head of the Baha'i community.

The historic occasion for this change is in Chicago during the World's Columbian Exposition World's Fair in 1893. The Northern Pacific arrives in January just in time for some of our townspeople to cross the country in comfort during the month of September. Overall some 100 nations participate and 28 million visitors flood through the gates. And yes, of course, the State of Washington has one of the most interesting and largest buildings named "The Washington Building". Warren P. Skillings from Seattle is the architect for this very northwestern 140 x 220 foot building made entirely of huge logs from our Evergreen State. It is highly visible with its 208 foot high flagpole of red fir. We don't know exactly how many visit from our state but surely some of them might have attended the first World's Parliament of Religions. Some religious dignitaries from 19 countries representing a total of 12 major world religions share ideas on how to find common ground towards a more peaceful world. This has never been attempted in the past. How we yearn for another opportunity such as this in the year 2007.

It is on September 23, 1893, a little over a year after Baha'u'llah's ascension, that, in a paper written by Rev. Henry H. Jessup, D.D., Director of Presbyterian Missionary Operations in North Syria, and read by Rev. George A. Ford of Syria, at the World Parliament of Religions, held in Chicago, in connection with the Columbian Exposition, commemorating the four-hundredth anniversary of the discovery of America. He announces that "*a famous Persian Sage,*" "*the Bábí Saint,*" has died recently in 'Akká, and that two years previous to His ascension "*a Cambridge scholar*" had visited Him, to whom He had expressed "*sentiments so noble, so Christ-like*" that the author of the paper, in his "*closing words,*" wished to share them with his audience. Less than a year later, in February 1894, a Syrian doctor, named Ibrahim Khayru'llah, who, while residing in Cairo, had been converted by Haji Abdu'l-Karim-i-Tihrani to the Faith, had received a Tablet from Baha'u'llah, had communicated with 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and reached New York in December 1892, established his residence in Chicago, and had begun to teach actively and systematically the Cause he had espoused. Within the space of two years he had communicated 257 of his impressions to 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and reported on the remarkable success that had attended his efforts. In 1895 an opening was vouchsafed to him in

Kenosha, Wisconsin, which he continued to visit once a week, in the course of his teaching activities. By the following year the believers in these two cities, it was reported, were counted by the hundreds. (Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 256)

Following this, by 1898 Mrs. Phoebe Hearst, the well-known philanthropist (wife of Senator George F. Hearst), becomes attracted to the Faith and expresses her intention of visiting 'Abdu'l-Bahá in the Holy Land. She invites several early believers, among them Dr. and Mrs. Getsinger, Dr. Khayru'llah and his wife, to join her, and complete the necessary arrangements for their historic pilgrimage to 'Akká. In Paris several resident Americans, among whom were May Ellis Bolles, whom Mrs. Getsinger had won over to the Faith, Miss Pearson, and Ann Apperson, both nieces of Mrs. Hearst, with Mrs. Thornburgh and her daughter, are added to the party, the number of which is later swelled in Egypt by the addition of Dr. Khayrullah's daughters and their grand-mother whom he has recently converted. (Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 257)

By the time we close off that decade of the 90's we will have experienced the Battle at Wounded Knee, the Spanish American War, a Panama Canal scandal, votes for Woman were for the first time in the world assured in far away New Zealand. A controlled glider and the first airship take flight. Radio communication is developed and we see the first X-Ray technology come into existence. The first virus is identified, Freud steps onto the world scene in psychoanalysis, the diesel engine is invented, chemotherapy is developed and the first modern Olympic Games have started.

This also is the decade when in 1894 the first American Baha'i, Thornton Chase, embraces this newly arrived Faith within months of its first mention in Chicago at the World Fair. Hyde Dunn, a chocolate salesman for the just recently established chocolate factory known as "Hershey's" arrives in California from far away London, England to become part of the Golden West. He had the pleasure in his early years in England through his family to sit on the lap of the famous author Charles Dickens. Thornton Chase, Hyde Dunn and Colonel Nathan Fitzgerald's paths will soon cross in Seattle to bring this world-embracing message to our fast-growing city for the first time.

The turn of the century is arriving. We can only imagine the hopes and aspirations that must have filled our pioneers in this northwestern Evergreen State.

1902 is the year that Colonel Nathan Fitzgerald finds the Baha'i Faith in Washington DC and immediately leaves for Akka in 1904 to meet the son of Baha'u'llah, namely Abdu'l-Baha, in Palestine. He is encouraged to spread the message of Baha'u'llah across this destined American country. He takes this to heart and around 1905 arrives in Tacoma and Seattle. Altogether there are 24 established Baha'i communities at this time in the US. Theodore Roosevelt visits Seattle this same year. Both bring different messages of hope for mankind and its future.

Colonel Fitzgerald knows the destiny of America prescribed to this country by Baha'u'llah half a century before. Finally this message arrives here along with hopes for this newly founded Evergreen State. Here is what Baha'u'llah stated:

“And finally, as if to crown all His previous utterances, is this solemn affirmation embodying His Vision of America's spiritual destiny: "The moment this Divine Message is carried forward by the American believers from the shores of America and is propagated through the continents of Europe, of Asia, of Africa and of Australasia, and as far as the islands of the Pacific, this community will find itself securely established upon the throne of an everlasting dominion. Then will all the peoples of the world witness that this community is spiritually illumined and divinely guided. Then will the whole earth resound with the praises of its majesty and greatness." (Shoghi Effendi, The World Order of Baha'u'llah, p. 77)

It is in 1905 in a tinker shop in downtown Seattle that Colonel Nathan Fitzgerald and Hyde Dunn cross paths for the first time. Hyde overhears Nathan mention that he has just returned from a visit to Akka, Palestine and quotes the now famous Baha'i statement by Baha'u'llah: *"Let not a man glory in that he loves his country, but that he loves his kind."* (*Abdu'l-Baha, Abdu'l-Baha in London, p. 55*) This leaves a huge impression on Hyde to the point where he immediately becomes a follower of Baha'u'llah and joins this fledgling faith in Seattle. Within a few years he and his soon-to-be new wife Clara will leave for Australia and open the whole continent to the Baha'i Faith. Clara Davis, as she is then known, lives in Walla Walla. She too is from London, just like Hyde, arriving in this country in 1902. Hyde and Nathan travel there to that still tiny city in southeastern Washington in 1905-6 and begin to lighten a candle here and there. Thornton Chase joins them on his travels on several occasions. Dozens of people now join the Baha'i Faith. Nathan writes a booklet named *"The New Revelation: Its Marvellous Message"* which is sold in downtown Seattle in the New Thought Bookstore around 1906. In 1905 he speaks before 70 ministers in Tacoma announcing and declaring the arrival of *"God's Kingdom on Earth.....and the government shall be upon His shoulders"* meaning the future blueprint for humanity has been once more revealed.

1907 now becomes the most historic year for the Seattle Baha'i community and its surrounding localities. The United States census counts a total of 1280 Baha'is. On April 15, 1907 we have a total of fifty six Baha'is registered in Seattle. Thirty of those have good addresses known to us at the present time. It is decided to officially form the first Seattle Baha'i Assembly. A well-known *"Disciple of Abdu'l Baha"* (son of Baha'u'llah) has extensively traveled throughout the country helping and assisting communities to form. She is invited by Wallace Busselle who resides right here in Seattle. He is a young attorney and filled with energy and enthusiasm He had met Isabella Brittingham in Washington DC and invites her to come for a visit. She gives a series of talks around Seattle. It is Easter and she encourages the friends to gather to form themselves into a Spiritual Assembly. Thirteen of the local Baha'is organized themselves to meet at 2916 Beacon Ave South on Beacon Hill at the home of Ida and John Finch around 3:15pm. Ida herself had just found the Baha'is this very year in spring. Ida Finch becomes the *"Mother of Seattle"* until her death on December 28th, 1942.

The thirteen signers of this historic Seattle Baha'i formation document are:

F.R. Wassener
Mary Anglin
Mrs. Julia Davie
Lydia (May) Rainey
Flora Weatherby
Dora A. Dunbar
Sara E. Lamon
Wallace Busselle
Ida A. Finch
Mrs. M.M. Rabb
Mrs. Lamon
Mrs. A.H. Harmon
Mrs. Lena Southard

Here is a list of those pioneering first Baha'is in Seattle in order of being recorded in that first set of minutes:

Ida and John Finch, D. Babcock, Julia Davies, Lydia Hainey, Lena Southard, Mary Anglin (sec), Wallace Busselle, Flora Weatherbee, Dora A. Dunbar, Sarah Lamon, M. Gabb, A. M. Lamon, Louis Bush, E.H Harmon, William F. and Frances Richardson, Ruth Harmon, George P. Bush, Mary Klein, Ada M. Lotz, Laurel L. Shelle, Alex Fairfield, Dr. Barston, Dr. Henrietta Crofton, Teresa A. Johnson, W. M. Patterson, C. A. Smith, Mrs. Sargent, Lida Tyler, Leda B. Wood, Mrs. I. A. Palmer, Dr. T. N. Berlin, D. M. Campbell, A. W. Farley, Dr. and Mrs C. F. Lathrop and their two children, T.C. Peterson, John Finch Jr., Herman Dunlap, Dr. Stone, Lillie King, Laura and Mr. Luther, Mabel Geary, Mrs. Robinson, Mrs. and Mrs. La Vales, Charlotte and June Gillen, Byron Potter, D. Overlook, Dr. Jackson Mrs. McLean

Their professions were recorded as six physicians, one teacher, one music teacher, an attorney, a realtor and a floor man.

During this year Seattle is in much turmoil for an area of 40 city blocks. The Denny Regrade makes part of Seattle look like a moonscape and surely our friends had a hard time finding their way around to the various newly established meetings. Ballard and West Seattle are being annexed. The Pike Place Market opens and Carnegie-funded libraries are opening up. We have reason to believe that we also have the first gas station in the country. UPS, United Parcel Service, starts from Pioneer Square. Next year Thomas Edison visits us and of course the big event is in 1909. A World's Fair arrives right here in Seattle with the *Alaska Yukon Pacific Exposition*. With it Seattle is launching a new international profile. As many as 3,140,551 visitors rush through the gates for the next 138 days.

Around the world Albert Einstein just revolutionized the world of science with his theory of relativity (1905). The great fire of San Francisco (1906) kills 700 people. Isadora Duncan dances herself into the hearts of Americans and Europeans alike. Enrico Caruso

appears on the opera scene. William Taft becomes our President. In 1909 the NAACP is founded. Our very own Baha'i, Dr. Nettie J. Asberry, becomes a founding member for this newly founded chapter in Tacoma in 1913, the first chapter west of Kansas City. In 1909 as recorded in the "Seattle Republican" Horace Clayton says of her in his biographical accounts of Black people he felt were prominent: "Dr. Nettie Asberry. A graduate from the Conservatory of Denver has lived in Tacoma now for 12 years. She is a music teacher of rare ability. She is regarded as an expert pianist and a lady of rare accomplishments, speaking French and German fluently." The great fire of 1889 arouses much Midwest interest in the Northwest. Many disposed of their belongings and moved to Seattle, Dr. Asberry and her family being some of them. She visited the 1893 Chicago World's Fair and might even have heard her first mention of the Baha'i Faith.

Mr. Kenzo Torikai, around 1908-09, becomes the first Japanese Baha'i here in Seattle and with that conversion the third Japanese in the world to do so.

Whilst for the first time in this decade (1910) Seattle opens its doors to the world through its first very own World's Fair, Abdu'l Baha, the son of Baha'u'llah, in Akka too releases His view and mission for a global community. A total of 3000 letters and tablets have been received by the Baha'is in the United States reminding them to think in terms of opening the world to this world-embracing message.

The 1910's brings with it the arrival of the First World War. The big snow storm of 1916 allows people to skate on Greenlake. This decade starts here in November when women win the right to vote. Seattle literally climbs to new heights when a young timber baron named William E. Boeing begins to build airplanes at the Red Barn factory. By the end of this decade passengers are being flown and the first sack of mail takes to the air.

The Baha'is report that around 1910-1911 regular meetings are held at Mrs. Geary's home at 127 Bellevue Ave E. The friends are endeavoring to organize their own Baha'i Assembly in Tacoma. Mr. and Mrs. Washington MacCormick build a home in Everett which opens this town to the Baha'i message. Drs. Lathrop are holding regular meetings at 213 Peoples Bank Building. Laura Luther is very actively spreading the message in Omak and Mr. Dirk Vanderloop has undertaken journeys from town to town to spread the message of Universal Peace. Mr. D.D. Babcock is isolated in a distant lumber camp around Bremerton and is actively sharing his new Faith. Mrs. Charlotte Gillen has summer outings for children on Whidbey Island. Mr. Finch takes the boat daily to Tacoma delivering the words of hope to whoever is interested in talking to him. Mrs. Emma H. Harmon goes regularly to North Bend, Oregon, and Miss Lydia Rainey goes back and forth between here and Yakima. Mr. Grant takes on the trip between here and Olympia, a four hour ride at that time. Mr. Babcock reports that weekly Sunday meetings are ongoing and that Mr. Thornton Chase comes back to be with them for several days. Roy Wilhelm comes here from New York to Spokane. Baha'is in Seattle have distributed 3000 tablets (letters) of Abdul'l Baha and 200 of Ida Finch's pilgrimage notes including 50 of Mrs. Goddall's notes from her travels to meet Abdu'l Baha in Akka. As we can see our newly enrolled friends are busy and setting their individual goals and follow their mission.

In a treasurer's report that year we observe that a total of \$820.00 has been given out of which the friends spend \$139 on printing books, \$152 on general expenses, \$6 to sponsor children in Tehran, \$109 for teachers in and around that city, \$123 on philanthropic work for the needy right here in Seattle and a total of \$260 to help build the new House of Worship in Chicago, Illinois. As we can see nothing is left for building up centers for themselves here in Seattle. Their view is outward bound at all times.

But 1912 is a year of joy for the small Baha'i community. Abdu'l Baha is finally free from the imprisonment of a total of 60 years during the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. He becomes knighted for his humanitarian work in Palestine and is commonly known as Sir Abbas Effendi. At last he is free and able to travel. He arrives in New York April 11, 1912 and leaves December 5th of that same year. He is offered a ticket first class on the Titanic, but he returns the money and asks it to be given to charity. We are happy that he refused this generous offer and sails economy class on the SS Cedric after extensive travel throughout Europe. His voyage is well recorded by reporters around the country in all major newspapers at the time. He talks on the Brotherhood of Man, Universal Peace, One Common Language, the Harmony Amongst the Races, and future Universal Houses of Justice everywhere. He is invited to speak at universities and churches and synagogues. He meets with a member of the Supreme Court in Washington DC, is invited to visit the White House and is a guest at the US Senate. He meets with the Secretary of the Treasurer of the United States and with Daughters of the American Revolution. He meets with the President of Labor and the Secretary of the American Peace Society. He also exchanges thoughts with members of the United States Department of Education. Scientists such as Alexander Graham Bell have invited several of their friends to meet him. Admiral Perry who just returned from the North Pole is anxious and curious to shake his hand. These are just a few to mention.

Eventually he arrives in San Francisco and rents a house at 1815 California Street. Nineteen of the Seattle Baha'is makes it down by train to meet Him. They are really hoping that He will come up to Seattle, but in the end his itinerary is too full. He wanted to meet the first Baha'i in America, Thornton Chase, who unfortunately dies just shortly before his arrival. Instead Abdu'l Baha visited his grave in Los Angeles and says prayers for this wonderful sacrificing robust man that helped to open Seattle to the Baha'i Faith just a few years earlier. This memory will stay with our Seattle Baha'is forever and will deepen their passion to spread the message here in Seattle with a deeper understanding and mission.

Our dear "Mother of Seattle" Ida Finch loses her husband in the same year. The Baha'is are working towards racial integration and Ida Finch takes it upon herself to travel throughout the country going from city to city all the way to the East Coast teaching the message of Racial Unity. She exists on a frugal budget trying to find work here and there so that she can sustain herself, believing that her message of elimination of racism will bring about a more peaceful country, nay world. She is in her late 50's and widowed and meets a sprinkling of Baha'is here and there, but stays mostly in tiny hotel rooms and at the YWCA. This journey lasts almost 4 years until she returns to Seattle with a

committed heart. She finds the rest of the community having survived the influenza epidemic. Several of the Baha'i physicians gave endless hours helping those in need and comforting those left behind by their loved ones.

In 1918, Mark Tobey, the famous painter and artist becomes a Baha'i through a friend at Greenacres, Maine. Her name is Marie Sterner. She has organized a showing of his paintings and soon they become friends. Tobey embraces the Baha'i ideals immediately. In 1923 and moves to Seattle and checks himself into the Marne Hotel. He is guided here by George Brown who had told him that he could find a job at the Cornish School of Arts. This conversion leads him to explore the representation of the spiritual in his art and paintings. Soon after he moves into a room in one of the row of small brown cottages on Spring Street, between 8th and 9th Ave. His studio ultimately is in the University District at 4752 University Way, Room 203. This is when Anne Hauberg, a doyenne of the art world meets Mark Tobey at the tender age of 9 at the Cornish School of Arts for some lessons. Theirs will become a friendship that lasts until his death in Basel, Switzerland on April 24, 1976. Mark Tobey brings Anne into the Baha'i Faith. During one of his visits to Japan Mark also meets and travels with the famous British potter Bernard Howell Leach. He too becomes a Baha'i through Mark in 1931. There is much whispering about the Baha'i Faith in the art circle right here in Seattle.

World War 1 rages around the world during this time, but the Baha'is stay focused on the larger picture to bring about a community working towards Universal Peace. By 1919 with the help of President Wilson's 14 points the League of Nations is founded. The idea is to offer arbitration between nations. President Wilson's daughter herself becomes a Baha'i. There are now a total of 2884 registered Baha'is in this country and over 100 books on the Baha'i Faith are available. In 1920 one of the world's leading scientists from Switzerland, August Forel, becomes a Baha'i. His correspondence with Abdu'l Baha on the proofs of the existence of God has become a classic read for Baha'is still today.

Mark Tobey leaves for a while for Paris, but returns to Seattle around 1928. He now co-founds the Free and Creative Art School. He has regular fireside discussions on the Baha'i Faith at his home and becomes very involved in Baha'i activities.

The Baha'i community fully embraces now the work of the equality of women and men and the harmony between the races. They do not believe in segregation much to the concern of their neighbors as they meet together in each others' homes. Mr. Robert Roberts becomes the first black Baha'i in Seattle in 1920 and eventually ends up buying several dozen acres of land in the northern part of town. He serves on the Seattle Local Baha'i Assembly for many years until he passes on in June 1947. Up until then he envisions building a small Baha'i village but in the end the donated funds to help build the first Baha'i House of Worship in Wilmette, Illinois. Speaking of which, a Mr. Lehman, who comes into contact with the Baha'is here in 1907 learns that there is a more organized group of Baha'is in Chicago since 1894 and decides to go there to find out more about this newly discovered Faith. He, by sheer accident, arrives there at the right time and the right place as he becomes one of the 19 original Baha'is to select the place

where the Temple was to be built. He also is the first Baha'i to bring back a photograph of Abdu'l Baha to the West Coast. This is the first time that most of the friends ever see the face of the son of Baha'u'llah. What a treasure it must have been. Most of the Baha'is still go regularly to their mostly protestant churches and feel comfortable being Baha'i and being part of their Christian community. After all as a Baha'i we believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and uphold the Old and New Testament in its entirety. To make this point it is of interest that a Unitarian Minister becomes an elected member of our National Board of Council.

But tragedy strikes the Baha'i World in 1921. Abdu'l Baha passes away in Palestine. At first the friends feel lost. It does not take long to remember that it was just two years before in 1919 that He had unveiled His "Divine Plan". This was to launch and focus the Baha'is into a global community. Hundreds of those few Baha'is in this country arose and truly sacrificed all they had to reach out to the world! Those are ordinary men and women living very ordinary lives. Only in hindsight do we know and understand their acts of heroism, nay at times saintly deeds. Still today the Baha'is around the world recall their lives and feel that we are still under Abdu'l Baha's Divine Plan uniting the world one soul at a time. Several of the Baha'is from Seattle arose and left for the African continent to die there.

Ida Finch arrives back from her extended four years of travel to Japan and China with Martha Root between 1919 and 1923. Ida is already in Japan when Martha Root sends ahead all of her luggage to Seattle. This includes her typewriter and a lantern unit to show her collection of 250 slides. She arrives here from Portland on March 22, 1923 accompanied by Mrs. J.W. Latimer for a full two weeks. She gives a total of 14 lecture heres. Later she writes to the National Teaching Committee "The days in Seattle were days in heaven. They do things in such a BIG way. They are original". She must have become ill however, as she had to cancel her trip to Vancouver. She also states during this trip "There has been the greatest awakening of the colored people in Seattle, and it is our longing wish that our beautiful friend Louis Gregory will soon return to the Coast. Through his efforts the people of Seattle opened their doors for our blessed sister." She left from our pier to face the Grand Pacific Ocean aboard the *Kaga Maru* with its destiny being Yokohama for the next three weeks. There was only one sunny day throughout the trip and Martha was ill in bed for four solid days. But no matter how sick, she still made slide presentations to over 100 guests including the captain.

Another one of the exciting events for the Baha'is in the 1920's in Seattle is the visit of Queen Marie of Romania accompanied by both of her children. She has just become a Baha'i a few weeks prior to her departure to New York. She comes here as a guest amongst others of Sam Hill, the wealthy industrialist, to help open a museum that he had built and dedicated in her name near the Colombia River at Maryhill. Her travels across the country allow her to meet with President Calvin Coolidge and the Prime Minister in Canada. She has written an article on the Baha'i Faith that is published in the Toronto Star which causes quite a stir. She is a sensation all along the way in her own railroad cars, donated for this occasion. She is considered the Princess Di of her era, as the 'Queen. She is the granddaughter of both England's Queen Victoria and Tsar Alexander II

of Russia. Being married at the age of 17 to King Ferdinand of Romania makes her a highly public romantic figure. She serves as a Red Cross nurse during WWI in the trenches and leads by example. She represents her country at the 1919 Paris Peace Conference in Paris, France. Time Magazine names her the most beautiful woman in the world. She arrives in Seattle November 4th, 1926. The mayors from surrounding cities come to see her. Thousands of Seattle citizens line the streets to watch her motorcade go by. The Baha'is in Seattle stay in the background so as not to impose themselves upon her. This is their very own first queen and she came to visit their very own city. She visits Sandpoint Field, Fort Lawton, along 23rd Avenue, down to 14th Avenue, the University of Washington, across the Montlake Bridge, and to Denny Blaine Park. She stops long enough to meet with the Roosevelt Girls Club. She visits the Seattle Yacht Club and plants a tree in the yard. She stays with Sam Hill at his home at 814 E Highland Drive. She entertains and greets the Business Woman's Club at the New Washington Hotel. Much to her amazement she finds Seattle having its very first female mayor, Bertha Knight Landes. Her own diary later states "I feel quite in love with Seattle, it is really in every way a lovely, beautiful town". How proud the Baha'is must have been to have her in their midst.

During the 20's the Baha'is make several moves. They establish a Baha'i home at 1503 10th Ave North in Seattle. This is for the purpose of teaching and learning how to spread the message around the world. It is started in May during which time the famous Baha'i travel teacher Jenabe Fazel visited them here. He gives 56 lectures and talks before local clubs, churches, the Theosophical Society, Spiritualists' Meetings, Woman's Clubs and holds Noon Talks at the Arcade Building. At this time he organizes the Council Board and the first officers are elected. Later their meetings are moved to 106 Madison Street for the next four years when Jenabe Fazel visits the Baha'is here in Seattle again. After that for a while the Baha'is meet at 4144 University Way and in 1925 move downtown into 217 Bay Building on 1st Ave.

This now ushers in the 1930's. In 1931 Martha Root visits the friends in Seattle once again and embarks on her last trip to the Orient. Her body is riddled with cancer, but she arises to her vision of Universal Peace. Nothing stands in the way to stop her until finally she has to be taken off her last ship's voyage from Australia on to Honolulu. Her destination actually was San Francisco, but the captain of the boat decided she would not survive the trip. Indeed he is right as she dies in Honolulu. The Baha'is from around the world stop off at her grave to say prayers. She later has the distinction to become appointed by the Guardian as the foremost Hand of the Cause of God.

Shoghi Effendi becomes the Guardian of the Baha'i Faith after the passing of Abdul Baha in 1921. To him the Baha'i world turns for direction and vision. It is under his direction that a huge number of Baha'is embark to open the countries around the world. In the 1930's he begins to encourage the Baha'is to become incorporated and form their official institutions. In 1931 all local assemblies begin to arise to legalize their status to be able to perform Baha'i marriages and funerals. Our first National Spiritual Assembly is elected in 1931. All local assemblies across each country report to them. There is no paid clergy.

All assembly members volunteer their time. This is through a highly democratic secret ballot election each year. No electioneering or politicking is allowed. Serving members are elected on merits and deeds of accomplishment within serving their community and those in need around them.

Our first married couple in Seattle prior to that time was June Gillen and Frank Harris. They said Baha'i prayers, but had to have a minister to legalize their marriage in the eyes of the State. Later Shirley and Robert Ballard will become the first couple to have an official Baha'i marriage. Shirley's grandfather was the grand overseer and in charge of the formation of Pike Place Market back in 1907. They too are having their centenary celebration this year with us. That is a first for both the grandfather and granddaughter in Seattle. What a special year it must be for Shirley. Her mother becomes a Baha'i in 1945 and Shirley will follow her in just 5 years as a 15-year-old teenager.

But back to the 1930's world view for a moment. Ghandi begins his campaign of civil disobedience in India. A work program for the unemployed is initiated by Hoover, but it cannot stop the devastations for the thousand of families during this oncoming depression. President Roosevelt is elected and offers "The New Deal" to try and beat the economic recession. The Star Spangled Banner becomes America's official national anthem and Arnold Toynbee begins his 1st volume of the Study of History. He has much to say about this newly formed new world religion called the Baha'i Faith. Walt Disney brings us "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" and by the end of this decade we see "Gone with the Wind" completed. John Steinbeck gives us "Grapes of Wrath" and, yes, the ball point pen is invented to mention a few.

Here in Seattle the Aurora Bridge finally opens and by the end of this decade we even have a floating bridge, I-90 across Lake Washington. Roland Denny dies, the last of the original Denny Party and is buried in Lakeview Cemetery. The Depression brings about the building of Hooverville shantytown south of Pioneer Square. It is named after President Hoover who himself becomes unemployed after he loses the election. The Seattle Art Museum and Harborview Hospital are completed. A massive longshoremen and maritime strike cripples Seattle and all along the West Coast. Our local population in Seattle stagnates around 368,000.

Ida Finch publishes a new booklet called "Recurring Cycles" which brings a message of hope for the future during these difficult times. When we look into our archives \we find that this is the first year that the Baha'is make Baha'i Historical Record cards. These are a treasure for those of us who try to recapture our past. They are filled with their names, where they came from and when and where they became Baha'is. They even have a photo of themselves attached. It is with great joy that we now can look at their faces and see what they have to say and how they found their Faith. Here are some of their faces. See attached photos of 1930's Baha'is. They also took several group photos and we are proud to see that they reflect diversity and color. See attached photos.

The Baha'is hold summer schools and winter schools and meet as often as possible to be with each other from all around Washington and the Northwest. It is at one of those summer schools in 1939 that Mark Tobey spends time with the Baha'is as he does whenever he travels around the world. He has overstayed his time at the Baha'i camp and almost misses his deadline for a showing in New York. Annual conventions are special as this is an opportunity to talk about how the other Baha'i communities around Seattle are doing.

This brings us into the 1940's. The world reels from WWII. Our servicemen are serving in Europe and slowly the world is becoming a different place. Destruction and famine are everywhere. We see the first atom bomb strike terror into men's hearts forever. 110,000 Japanese-Americans are relocated into interior camps right here in this country. And on the lighter side Rogers and Hammerstein open "South Pacific" and Picasso paints his famous "Man with a Sheep".

The United Nations selects New York as its permanent headquarters. Mahatma Ghandi is assassinated in India. The Chinese People's Republic is formally proclaimed. Most important to the Baha'is, Israel is proclaimed an independent Jewish State on May 14, 1948.

Here in Seattle we witness the last streetcar with its final run in Ballard. Hooverville burns down. The installation of anti-aircraft guns forces our children from city parks. Boeing hires its first Afro-American employees. Our own city of Seattle orders 9700 Japanese-Americans forcibly to be evacuated to "Camp Harmony" at the Puyallup Fair Ground and from there are shipped to Idaho for the duration of the war. This costs our region its most productive farmers. Women and Blacks are being hired to do the work whilst the men are overseers. This influx of new labor quadrupled the Black community to nearly 16,000. Women pilots ferry Boeing bombers to the front. Finally the war in Europe ends May 8, 1945. By the end of the 1940's a new Cold War dominates headlines. Ivar Haglund opens Ivar's. Kenneth Arnold reports seeing the world's first flying saucer near Mount Rainier. The Seattle public school system hires its first black instructors, the first wide-audience TV broadcast is seen around Puget Sound and a 7.1 earthquake rocks the city.

In the middle of all of this trauma and chaos our very own Hoy Fon Look becomes a Baha'i in 1948. He is believed to be the first Chinese Baha'i in Seattle, though he found the Baha'i Faith in Denver just prior to his arrival here. He has been a staunch Baha'i serving on our Local Spiritual Assembly for many years. He is well respected in the community and amazes us with his inspirational photographic memory. He can recite poetry and the Writings of Baha'u'llah by heart. He touches everybody who comes in contact with him.

In 1947 the Baha'i students and faculty at the University of Washington establish for the first time the UW Baha'i Association. They have been on campus ever since. Our youth have had many wonderful opportunities to share the Baha'i principles in a meaningful way to build bridges for the future. Their talks and presentations deal with Spiritual

Solutions to Economic Problems, The Unity of Mankind, the Abolition of Prejudice of All Kinds, Global Education, Universal Human Rights and so on. As many as 200 students attend some of their talks. The University of Washington Baha'i Association has served as a vibrant component in the teaching, service, spiritual, intellectual and academic life of the Seattle Baha'i Community, and beyond, for sixty years now.

Whilst Mark Tobey was our most famous Baha'i here in Seattle at that time it was Anne Hauberg (Anne Gould) who becomes one of the most influential Baha'is still to this day. She has been a woman of "public standing" for more than half a century. Her spirit touches the lives of countless people. This wonderful aristocrat of our city is known for being engaged and engaging, bold and even audacious. Her life is one of astonishing and diverse accomplishments. She is a third generation Seattleite born in 1917 on Bainbridge Island. Her father, Carl Gould, was an eminent architect who studied at Harvard and at L'Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris. He founded the architecture department at the UW. Amongst some of his designs are Suzzallo library, the Seattle Asian Art Museum and the Montlake Bridge. Her mother is the first woman to teach English at the UW. She herself studies architecture at the UW where she is the only female student at the time. She also studies at Vassar College and at art and design schools in France and Cambridge, Massachusetts. She returns to Seattle in 1939 when her father becomes very ill. She opens an interior design business with a friend and in the process works on an apartment that belongs to John Hauberg, grandson of the co-founder of Weyerhaeuser. They have known each other casually in college. In 1941 they are married. But tragedy strikes within the family. Childbearing is not easy for Anne. Three of her children survive childbirth, but one dies at the age of four. However she is also told that her daughter, Sue, will never walk or talk. Anne rejects the idea and founds the Pilot School to work with developmentally difficult children. Today her daughter is an expert horsewoman with a beautiful smile. Today the school is internationally recognized for training teachers and conducting research, and for helping with hundreds of children.

Through all of these tests and difficulties Anne is glad to have the Baha'i Faith in her life. Anne buys countless numbers of books from our Baha'i librarian Shirley Ballard over the years. She leaves the Baha'i library filled with books for her many diverse friends in the community. Nobody is more dedicated and an example of commitment to Seattle. She is a role model and mentor for many of the young and old Baha'is around her. She in turn is mentored by Mark Tobey. Theirs is a friendship in soul and spirit that will leave a profound mark on Seattle forever.

Her credits in the civic landscape include the discovery, funding and mentoring of Dale Chihuly of the Pilchuk Glass School, (though the property was offered to Mark Tobey who resides in Switzerland and declines). It is ultimately our gain as instead this young glass blower rises to world recognition in his art. Her other accomplishment include Freeway Park, the preservation of Pioneer Square and Pike Place Market, the above-mentioned Pilot School for Neurologically Impaired Children, now the University of Washington's Experimental Education Unit. After a difficult divorce Anne emerges with a new sense and mission in her own right. She aligns herself with the University of Washington libraries, the Tacoma Art Museum and the Glass Museum in Tacoma to

mention a few. The Baha'is are most thankful for the most recent biography by Barbara Jones, former chief curator at the Tacoma Art Museum and executive director of the Pilchuk Glass School of Anne Hauberg's life entitled "Fired by Beauty". She writes and describes Anne's life filled with passion for beauty and for universal access to art. Priscilla Beard writes, "The Northwest would be a far less colorful place were it not for her personal vision, style, and indefatigable energy of this thoroughly modern Medici."

One cannot help but wonder if Anne did not ponder in her heart when she became a Baha'i the following quote by Baha'u'llah, the founder of the Baha'i Faith "...make the utmost efforts to educate My people and incite to morality, the acquisition of the sciences and arts of all countries, kindly dealing with all the nations of the earth, desire for the welfare of all peoples, sociability, concord, obedience, submissiveness, instruction of their children, production of what is needful for the human race, and inauguration of true happiness for mankind."

She truly has mirrored forth all the qualities described above and more.

The 1950's can be described as the last decade where the average American still lives in relative peace and has dreams of a home with a white picket fence, where mother, father and children all eat dinner together around the table and frequently say prayers together. Most families have a car and televisions arrive as the new entertainment. We start to watch the world arriving daily in our living rooms.

Dwight D. Eisenhower is elected as our new President. Queen Elizabeth II becomes the Queen of England. Charles de Gaulle will become President in France. Castro begins a civil war in Cuba and the Korean War leads more of our men into battle. And once again on the lighter side Leonard Bernstein gives us West Side Story and Elvis takes the stage. NASA is established and Alaska and Hawaii become the 49th and 50th states.

Here in Seattle we make history with the opening of one of the country's first shopping centers, a covered mall, at Northgate. The population of Seattle tops 465,000 and the city of Bellevue becomes incorporated. Dick's Drive-Ins begin serving hamburgers and Elvis shakes up Seattle. It was in 1959 that some of the UW scientists collect blood samples in the Congo which turn out to contain the first documented AIDS virus. And let us not forget that the same year the concept of the Space Needle is born by a doodle from Eddie Carlson while on a visit in a restaurant in Stuttgart, Germany.

Within the Baha'i community we see Mark Tobey in 1953 profiled in Time Magazine along with some of his other friends in an article called "Mystic Painters of the Northwest." Mark has visited the Baha'i Holy Land in Haifa, Israel and falls in love with the ancient style of Persian calligraphy. This passion leads to his famous "white writing" style that he will forever be remembered for as it is infused with profound spirituality and sympathy towards humanity. He will be with us until 1960 in Seattle. The Baha'is here gather around him and enjoy his firesides and meetings at his studio on University Way. Often at night after a meeting they would gather for coffee and endless conversations in his inspirational environment. Many of the old timers share stories of laughter and

listening to tales of his travels around the world. To our small Baha'i community it was our backyard as many of them arose and traveled far and wide themselves.

The 1950's is the decade which the Baha'is call "The Ten Year Crusade" a vision and plan shared by the Guardian of the Baha'i Faith in Israel. He calls on the Baha'is all around the world and Seattle to go forth once and for all to the four corners of the world to open each and every country of the world to the message of Baha'u'llah. And travel they did! It ends in 1963 and indeed almost every country in the world by then has Baha'is residing there and starting to form communities.

Over the years, starting in the 1950s, the Seattle Baha'is have given more than their fair share of pioneers. There are Helen and Bill Wilkes who go to Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) in Africa. George and Bessie Washington go to Liberia, as does Arthur Banks. Fred and Elizabeth Laws are the first Baha'is to arrive in Basutoland (now Lesotho). Clyde and Pauline Johnson go to Paraguay. Robert and Christy Wilson, and later David and Wendy Burns go to Honduras. Vi Walkup goes to Uganda, Cynthia Selde to Mexico, Britt Johnson (Barer) to Norway where she was born, Scott and Billie Kay (Simmons) Bodie to Uruguay and eventually to Brazil, Dale and Nahid Eng to Hong Kong and eventually Taiwan, David Simmons to Finland, and John and Sandy Bolz go to Australia. Hazel and Prudencio Mori return to Prudencio's homeland, the Philippines. David Takagi leaves for Peru and later settles in Venezuela, Beth and Gerry Lew went to New Zealand and Wes Baker went to Uganda where they all remain to this day. Mary Farwell (Alston) goes to South Africa. [As an author's aside, I might add that many years later in 1969 I will meet this wonderful pioneer with her husband Al in Hawaii. It is in their home that I become a Baha'i myself.] How the world goes around in an almost pre-destined and fateful way. It seems that Baha'is become global citizens almost immediately and leave for some strange land to find and meet their mission.

But 1957 once again brings the global and local Baha'i community into deep mourning. The beloved Guardian of the Baha'i Faith, Shoghi Effendi, passes unexpectedly of pneumonia in London, England. He had given the Baha'is their guidance and global vision for 36 years. Suddenly he is there no more. It is a tragedy that hit unexpectedly and all too soon. He leaves no will and the Baha'is realize that life under that guiding umbrella will be no more.

Within a short while upon the passing of the Guardian the Baha'is of Seattle have the privilege of a visit from his widow Ruhhiyih Khanum. She speaks to the Baha'is about their new journey and how to continue on with the plans to open the world as envisioned by him. This visit gives them much comfort, but little do they know it also will be her last visit here.

It is during this decade that the Baha'is of Seattle witness a very special historical visitor. Hand of the Cause Mr. Samandari is the last surviving member of the Baha'i community that has been in the presence of Baha'u'llah. He speaks to the Baha'is to give them courage, shares stories of laughter and tragedy and allows the friends to inhale the

fragrance of the nearness of Baha'u'llah for the last time. Indeed it is a blessing for those that lived in Seattle during that time.

This is also the era of the Civil Rights Movement. Since the turn of the century the Baha'is have led by personal example and are forming race unity groups everywhere. They take to heart these words:

” Bahá'u'lláh once compared the coloured people to the black pupil of the eye surrounded by the white. In this black pupil you see the reflection of that which is before it, and through it the light of the Spirit shines forth.” (Abdu'l-Baha, Abdu'l-Baha in London, p. 68)

This ushers in the 1960's. Nelson Mandela is jailed in South Africa. The Vietnam War comes onto the horizon. President Kennedy is shot and then Martin Luther King and Senator Robert Kennedy. Golden Meir is elected president of Israel. TV pictures are transmitted from the moon landing. Sir Winston Churchill dies. On a lighter side again Bob Dylan arrives with his song “Highway 61 Revisited”. The Beatles arrive from Liverpool and of course there is the Woodstock Festival which attracts 200,000 people alone. Dr. Barnard performs the first heart-transplant surgery. Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon are elected presidents this decade.

Seattle starts with a bang in 1961 when the Huskies go to their second consecutive Rose Bowl game January 2nd and win. These are changing times now for Seattle and maybe even the world. The above-mentioned events shake the world. In the case of Seattle we once again enter the world scene April 21, 1962 with Seattle's second World's Fair. It gives Seattle the Space Needle, the Monorail, revives the Seattle Symphony and eventually provides homes for the Seattle Repertory Theater, the Seattle Opera and the Pacific Northwest Ballet. Nearly 10 million visitors come this time through our city. The Beatles visit us right here in Seattle in 1964. Bellevue Community College opens and our population peaks at 574,000. I-5 is completed from Tacoma to Everett and Southcenter Mall is ready for our busy shoppers. “Here Come the Brides” airs on ABC based on the Mercer Girls' arrival way back when.

During this time the overall Baha'i community becomes very diverse. Baha'is from Seattle once more leave to open smaller towns like Yakima, the San Juan Islands, the various reservations and rural areas. It seems we just get started here and a new marching order arrives. But our energetic youth are inspired by their pioneering Baha'is gone before them and are anxious to help with the same here in Washington.

Finally in 1963 the Baha'is of Seattle hear the call from Haifa, Israel. The intermediate Hands of the Cause of God call for the global election of the first Universal House of Justice. This is to commence with the first Baha'i World Congress in London, England. Several of the Baha'is from Seattle leave to be part of this historic occasion. We still listen to them tell us their stories of the global Baha'i community coming together in their

traditional costumes at Royal Albert Hall in London. What follows is the election of nine members to oversee the administration of the Baha'i world. Democratic elections from here on out occur every five years by all of the members of every National Spiritual Assembly in Haifa, Israel. For the first time the Baha'i community experiences global democratic governance that will endure until we reach the era of the Most Great Peace as promised by Baha'u'llah. He Himself has laid the foundation and cornerstone for this changing moment in time. Each year we send delegates from Seattle to elect our National Spiritual Assembly and they in turn every five years travel to Haifa to elect the Universal House of Justice.

This also ends the "Ten Year Crusade" as started by our Guardian. Now we begin a series of Plans that will give us goals toward bringing about race unity, promoting the equality of women's rights, education for everybody, to name a few. Baha'is in Seattle once again join hands with organizations such as the United Nations, local clubs and interfaith activities. This time surely we will stay home and start building up our own community.

It is time to have some fun. In 1968, Dizzy Gillespie, the famous trumpet Jazz player finds the Baha'i Faith through the sister of Mary Prough who lived in Seattle not too long ago. Her sister's name is Beth McKintey. She has contacted Dizzy in Milwaukee. Their conversation soon changes from music to religion. They both have traveled the country with a different mission, but soon join hands. Over the following years Dizzy, in numerous interviews and in his autobiography, shares that with this conversion his creative period is about to start and blossom. Music and spiritual enlightenment brings him on the road to musical genius. He is generous with the Baha'is everywhere around the world. The Baha'is here in Seattle still remember his visits and how he will meet with them and play for them afterwards.

The 1970's finally sees the end of the Vietnam War. President Nixon resigns from office. President Ford becomes our new President. The Ayatollah Khomeini removes the Shah from power in Iran. President Carter becomes President in 1976. Watergate becomes a political scandal. And on the lighter site we ABBA arrives on the scene. Pablo Picasso dies and Fiddler on the Roof becomes the longest running musical. We get the first test tube baby and Intel of California produces the first micro chip. Andrew Lloyd Webber gives us *Evita*.

The population of Seattle shrinks to 530,000. Uwajimaya opens its Asian retail store. The University of Washington's enrollment tops 32,600. Starbucks opens its first store in Pike Market November 1st, 1971. Festival '71 launches what will soon become Bumbershoot. Gas Works Park opens in Wallingford. The Kingdome opens its doors to 54,000 Seahawks fans. The Mariners play their first game in Seattle on April 6, 1977. Microsoft opens its first Eastside office in December 1978.

Our Baha'i community is trying to find their vision within Seattle instead of the world. Many of our youth take planes to meet up with some of the old timers at the front of the trenches in developing countries. A summer here on this continent and another on the other side of the world. They are indeed becoming global citizens and are sensitive and

aware of different cultures. Burl Barer, a well known Baha'i is a top disk jockey in the 70's on KJR and KOL. His wonderful personality makes friends easily and is a joy to be around. He still gives the most wonderful firesides today!

Speaking of radio and music, there is one musical group the Baha'is in Seattle welcome with open arms. This popular soft rock group comes onto the scene in the 70's. Their names are Seals and Croft. Dash Croft meets his wife Billie and they both become Baha'is. Dash Croft soon follows him into this latest world religion. In 1972 they record a song named "Summer Breeze" and as one drives around in the car today we can still hear it almost daily on the radio. Eventually they record a wonderful song about the life of Baha'u'llah which warms the hearts of the Baha'is. After each concert, including the ones here in Seattle, they ask the audience to stay and share with them the message of the Baha'i Faith and its principles for today. Hundreds and hundreds of young people become Baha'is through them including right here in Seattle. Looking back over the last 25-30 years it can be stated with certainty that Seals and Croft impacted more than any other individuals in the Baha'i world to enroll new members into our community. All of the baby boomers here remember those days with much fondness when they came to visit the Baha'is in Seattle.

In the late 70's the Ayatollah Khomeini takes over ruling Iran as he ousts the Shah. Many of our Baha'i friends there become martyred and killed throughout the country. Those who have an opportunity leave Iran and many settle in this country, including Seattle and Bellevue. Bellevue increases from 12-15 Baha'is to over 400 today. They welcome their brothers and sisters who have survived prisons, torture and loss of family members and properties right here in Seattle. For the first time in our Baha'i history we are able to share the stories of our common history in person two worlds apart. We suddenly all realize how easy it has been for us to be Baha'is here. We can openly talk about our vision for the world and exchange the principles for peace and racial and religious harmony. Back in their homeland this will cost them their precious lives. We realize that we can never take life for granted. We learn from each other. Those early Persian immigrants teach us patience, acceptance, a deeper capacity to meditate and pray and how to look after each other in a more meaningful way. We learn to love their wonderful rice dishes and delicious fruit and meat dishes with exotic cardamom tea from a samovar. They learn from us to drink coffee and to enjoy different northwestern dishes such as salmon. They were amazed how many of us have pets and keep them right in our homes and take care of them as if they were our children. For many this was and still is foreign to their culture. We help them to learn English so that they can start a new life and they contribute in infinite ways enriching our Baha'i communities. God's invisible hand at work.

Now this brings us into the present. The last 25 years still feel like it was yesterday. A New Millennium waits to be ushered in. By now the world has become indeed a global village. We see strife and struggle on our TV screens every night in our living rooms. Old enemies are becoming friends and forming economic bonds.

If we glance back to 1907 we find that only 14% of the homes in the US had a bath tub and only 8% a telephone. A three-minute phone call from Denver to New York cost \$11.00. We only had 8,000 cars in the US with a total of 144 miles of paved roads. The maximum speed was 10 mph. California had 1.4 million people and was the 21st most populated in the Union. The average wage was 22 cents per hour. 90% of all doctors did not have a college degree. Coffee cost 15 cents a pound. Woman only washed their hair once a month and used Borax and egg yolks for shampoo. The population of Las Vegas was 30. Nobody ever heard of a crossword puzzle, canned beer or iced tea. We never heard of Mother's or Father's Day. Two out of every ten adults could not read and only 6% of all Americans graduated from high school. There were a total of 230 murders in the whole country and, yes, heroine and morphine were all available over the counter at local corner drugstores to clear up one's complexion and regulate the stomach and bowels.

Now that we are approaching 2007 we find that our lives are dramatically different. Knowledge and information reaches into the homes of our youth and children through the internet at a rate that is unimaginable. Medicine and the sciences are beyond our comprehension. The universe has shrunk. Our genes and DNA discoveries allow us to reach into a world that feels like the day after creation.

A hundred years ago Abdu'l Baha counseled the Baha'is to take to heart, to listen, and to keep our eyes glued to the horizon of the future:

“In the estimation of historians this radiant century is equivalent to one hundred centuries of the past. If comparison be made with the sum total of all former human achievements it will be found that the discoveries, scientific advancement and material civilization of this present century have equaled, yea far exceeded, the progress and outcome of one hundred former centuries. The production of books and compilations of literature alone bear witness that the output of the human mind in this century has been greater and more enlightening than all the past centuries together. It is evident therefore that this century is of paramount importance. Reflect upon the miracles of accomplishment which have already characterized it, the discoveries in every realm of human research, inventions, scientific knowledge, ethical reforms and regulations established for the welfare of humanity, mysteries of nature explored, invisible forces brought into visibility and subjection, a veritable wonder-world of new phenomena and conditions heretofore unknown to man now open to his uses and further investigation. The east and west can communicate instantly. A human being can soar in the skies or speed in submarine depths. The power of steam has linked the continents. Trains cross the deserts and pierce the barriers of mountains; ships find unerring pathways upon the trackless oceans. Day by day discoveries are increasing. What a wonderful century this is! It is an age of universal reformation. Laws and statutes of governments civil and federal are in the process of change and transformation. Sciences and arts are being molded anew. Thoughts are metamorphosed. The foundations of human society are changing and strengthening. Today sciences of the past are useless. The Ptolemaic system of astronomy, numberless other systems and theories of scientific and philosophical explanation are discarded, known to be false and worthless. Ethical precedents and principles cannot be applied to

the needs of the modern world. Thoughts and theories of past ages are fruitless now. Thrones and governments are crumbling and falling. All conditions and requisites of the past unfit and inadequate for the present time are undergoing radical reform. It is evident therefore that counterfeit and spurious religious teaching, antiquated forms of belief and ancestral imitations which are at variance with the foundation of divine reality must also pass away and be reformed. They must be abandoned and new conditions be recognized. The morals of humanity must undergo change. New remedies and solutions for human problems must be adopted. Human intellects themselves must change and be subject to universal reformation. Just as the thoughts and hypotheses of past ages are fruitless today, likewise dogmas and codes of human invention are obsolete and barren of product in religion. Nay, it is true that they are the cause of enmity and conducive to strife in the world of humanity; war and bloodshed proceed from them and the oneness of mankind finds no recognition in their observance. Therefore it is our duty in this radiant century to investigate the essentials of divine religion, seek the realities underlying the oneness of the world of humanity and discover the source of fellowship and agreement which will unite mankind in the heavenly bond of love. This unity is the radiance of eternity, the divine spirituality, the effulgence of God and the bounty of the Kingdom. We must investigate the divine source of these heavenly bestowals and adhere unto them steadfastly. For if we remain fettered and restricted by human inventions and dogmas, day by day the world of mankind will be degraded, day by day warfare and strife will increase and satanic forces converge toward the destruction of the human race.” (Abdu'l-Baha, Baha'i World Faith - Abdu'l-Baha Section, p. 228)

In the 80's the Seattle Baha'is host a national conference “To Move the World” addressing race relations and how they can make a difference. Thousands come to be with them here in Seattle as they commit to come to terms with this deep-seated issue. One Hundred Fifty years ago Baha'u'llah has commanded that the Baha'is lead the world by example.

The Baha'is right here in Seattle have come a long way. Our youth form the Diversity Dance Workshop here in the 90's. They dance and perform their hearts out to demonstrate the oneness of the races. They put their energies into this new blueprint and race of man. Some of their dances address social ills such as substance abuse, poverty, sexism, domestic violence and injustice. Everywhere they go they share the message of hope in their own artistic way.

The Baha'i Faith is one of the most integrated religious communities on earth. Today Washington State has the second largest number with 85 Local Spiritual Assemblies after California in the United States. In total we have 140 communities and are happy to share that every county has Baha'is in Washington.

There are about 7 Million Baha'is in every country on earth, but small as this may seem, one can just look on Google and notice that the Baha'i Faith ranked among all of the world religions by number of adherents in 13th place. The Encyclopedia Britannica still announces that the Baha'i Faith is the second most widespread religion on earth. Thanks to all of our early pioneers who worked so hard to cover the globe.

In closing we would like to say a few words to our future Baha'i community who will celebrate once again with us here in Seattle our 200th anniversary in 2107. How we wish we could have enough imagination to begin to envision the world around us then! We started our journey in Seattle with awe and wonder at the possibility of making a difference by introducing the message of a future generation of a new race of men and women. Baha'u'llah's principles became our passport, though little did we comprehend them when they first arrived in our still young city. We pioneered around the world to establish an infrastructure, frail as it was. Eventually we gained in strength and courage to come to "believe it because we saw it". Our eyes are always on the horizon of possibilities. If we had to dream we like to think that we have grown in numbers so that we don't feel so alone at times yearning for a more peaceful, sharing, tolerant, loving world. We wish we could have accomplished more for you to build on, but feel assured that each and every one of us tried our very best to make a difference under difficult circumstances.

It has been a glorious journey up until now knowing that soon we can pass on the baton to you.

Will this century be filled with global peace? Will we have eliminated our racial differences? Can no one go to bed hungry or scared of violence in their neighborhood? Has war ceased to exist as we know it today? Are we speaking a universal language? Are men and woman truly equal? Does every child have an education? Have world leaders come to respect and treat their citizens fairly? Is the world still able to grow green trees and are the icebergs still standing tall and majestic? Has religion ceased its fanaticism and learned to respect one another?

Those are our dreams and hopes that kept us going each hour of each day for the last One Hundred Years right here in Seattle.

"I hope that each one of you will become just, and direct your thoughts towards the unity of mankind; that you will never harm your neighbours nor speak ill of any one; that you will respect the rights of all men, and be more concerned for the interests of others than for your own. Thus will you become torches of Divine justice, acting in accordance with the Teaching of Bahá'u'lláh, who, during His life, bore innumerable trials and persecutions in order to show forth to the world of mankind the virtues of the World of Divinity, making it possible for you to realize the supremacy of the spirit, and to rejoice in the Justice of God.

By His Mercy, the Divine Bounty will be showered upon you, and for this I pray!"

(Abdu'l-Baha, Paris Talks, p. 160)