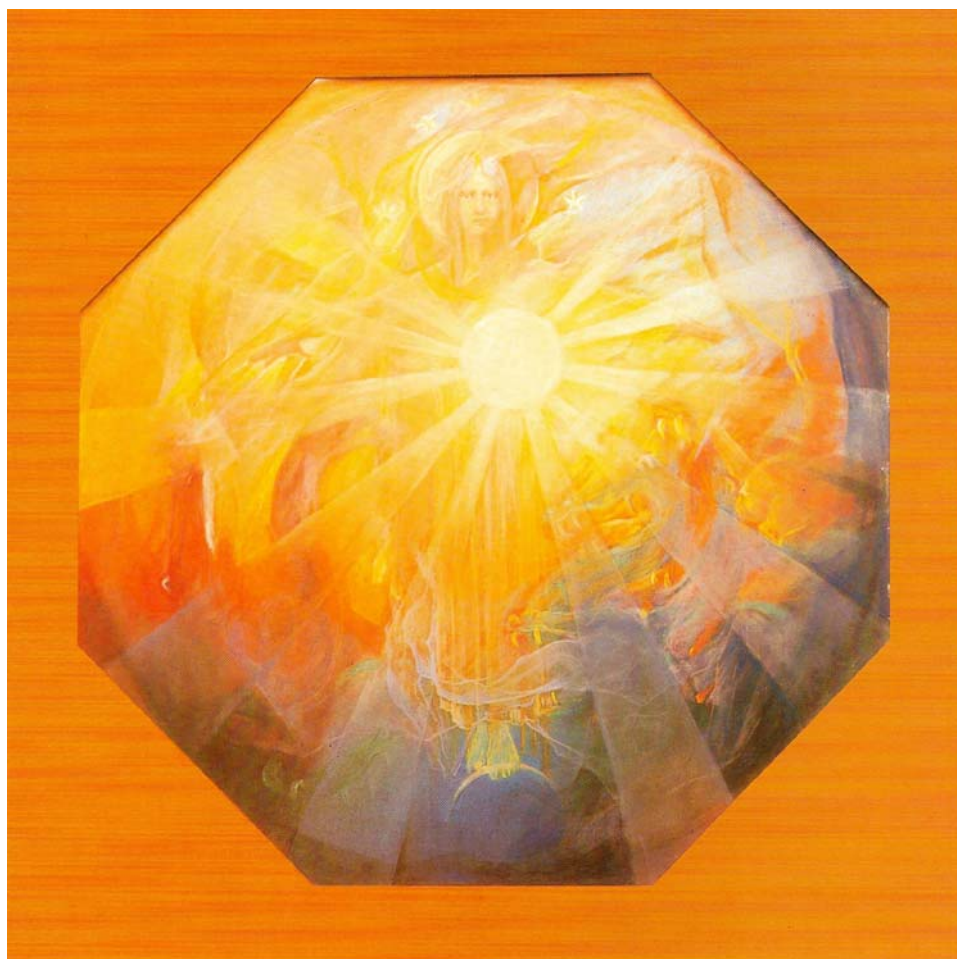


The Sophia Sun

Newsletter of the Anthroposophical Society in North Carolina

May 2008

Volume I, Number 2



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Dear Friends:

This issue of *The Sophia Sun* is dedicated to Natalie Slapo, our dear friend who crossed the Threshold at 5:39 AM on Saturday, April 19.

Around the time of the death of a Loved One, the veil separating the spiritual world and our own becomes thinner and we can hear the Dead if we know how to listen. Many of you have expressed sensing Natalie's presence. I have also been feeling her spiritual bliss in my heart. We are all saddened at the loss of her compassionate, generous, loving presence, but we must rejoice in the freedom from all that excruciating pain that she had for so long. The pain which she bore in this life will make for a much easier, more fulfilled life in the next, and this realization can give us much comfort.

For those who are not on our list-serve, you may not have heard about Natalie's passing and so perhaps a little background should be mentioned:

Natalie suffered for many years with a rare degenerative disease called osteopetrosis, which has no cure. It causes excruciating pains in the bones. On January 21, Peg Carmody and I went to Natalie's house intending to have a Festival Committee meeting, for we had not received Herb's message not to come. When we got there, Natalie was in agony and neither she nor Herb had gotten any sleep in over 24 hours. We insisted that 911 be called. An ambulance came and took Natalie away. She has been in the hospital and then a nursing home since then. During the time there she suffered a severe blood infection, several periods of atrial fibrillation and difficulty breathing. She could not walk at all for over two months. But just when we thought she would never walk again, Natalie began taking little steps around Easter time. Herb had spent the three days before her death cleaning the house thoroughly in anticipation of her "homecoming". (Little did he know the subconscious reason he was cleaning...she was indeed coming home, but not the way he expected!) I visited Natalie at Brookshire Nursing Home on April 18.

She seemed so optimistic and so forward-looking. She had walked the most steps yet that day, and her son had called earlier in the day and told her that he loved her and that he wanted to do something special for her 25th wedding anniversary (June 19th). It had made her day. She told me how terrible she felt that she couldn't do anything for me for my husband and my birthdays (April 19-20 respectively). Little did I know that I would be celebrating those days with her in a very spiritual way! That night she began having trouble breathing and around 5 AM the nursing home called an ambulance. By the time they arrived, Natalie was gone. Godspeed until we meet again, dear Natalie!
--Kathleen Wright

The Sophia Sun is the newsletter of the Anthroposophical Society in North Carolina (ASNC), a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. It is published nine times a year. The newsletter will not have issues during the months of July, August and December. In December, our illustrated magazine, *The Candle* will be issued instead. Members are encouraged to receive the newsletter electronically by contacting our website at www.anthroposophync.org. If this is not possible, you may receive a hard copy of the newsletter by mail by sending a check for \$30. per year to ASNC, P.O. Box 16024, Chapel Hill, NC 27516

Submitting articles, letters and ads

Please send all writing selections to kathleenwright51@peoplepc.com. All calendar items should be sent to lfolsom@nc.rr.com. Ads for our Community Classifieds are free to members. Nonmembers will need to pay \$1. per line and \$10 for a picture. It is hoped that members will give a donation to the ASNC if their advertised item is sold. If you have any questions, please contact: **Kathleen Wright, Editor** at 919-309-9622 or 919-672-0149.

Cover Artwork: Baron Arild Rosenkrantz: "Woman Clothed With the Sun"

ASNC and Initiatives, April 1 – May 10, 2008

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
For information about events, or to add events for upcoming months, please email: lfolsom@nc.rr.com , or phone Linda Folsom at (919) 493-8323, or mail to 3118 Dixon Rd, Durham, NC 27707. Events need to be sent by the 20th of the month prior to appear in the next month's newsletter.				1 8:30a-Adult Eurythmy	2	3 Nature and Rhythm as Healing Forces Workshop-8:30a
4 Apocalypse Group-3:30p Winston-Salem/Yadkin Valley Study Group-6p Greensboro Study Group-7p	5 Staying Connected to the Dead Study Group-3:30p	6 Light's Gift Study Group-10a Threshold Group-3:30p	7 Curative Care Group-7p Rose Cross Study Group-7:30p Wilmington Study Group-7:30p	8 8:30a-Adult Eurythmy	9 EWS-Talk by Douglas Gerwin	10
11 Meeting of the First Class-10:45a (Review-9:30a) Apocalypse Group-3:30p Winston-Salem/Yadkin Valley Study Group-6p Greensboro Study Group-7p	12 Staying Connected to the Dead Study Group-3:30p ASNC Festivals Committee Meeting-7:15p	13 Light's Gift Study Group-10a Threshold Group-3:30p EWS-Talk by Kathleen Morse-7p	14 Rose Cross Study Group-7:30p Wilmington Study Group-7:30p	15 8:30a-Adult Eurythmy	16 ASNC-John Alexandra Conference starts 7p	17 ASNC-John Alexandra Conference starts 9a Asheville Study Group-2p
18 Alexandra Conference starts 9:30a W/Salem/Yadkin Valley Study Group-6p Apocalypse Group-3:30p Greensboro Study Group-7p	19 Staying Connected to the Dead Study Group-3:30p	20 Light's Gift Study Group-10a Threshold Group-3:30p NDE Study Group-7p	21 ASNC Board Meeting-7:15p Rose Cross Study Group-7:30p Wilmington Study Group-7:30p	22 8:30a-Adult Eurythmy	23	24 Biodynamic Study Group Hands-On Gathering-9a
25 CC Lay Gathering-10:30a Apocalypse Group-3:30p W/S/Y Valley Study Group-6p Greensboro Study Group-7p	26 Staying Connected to the Dead Study Group-3:30p	27 Light's Gift Study Group-10a Threshold Group-3:30p	28 Rose Cross Study Group-7:30p Wilmington Study Group-7:30p	29 8:30a-Adult Eurythmy	30	31
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Calendar Details: May 1 – June 7, 2008

ASNC

May 11, 9:30a – **The School for Spiritual Science, Meeting of First Class.** Class 17 review lesson, 10:30 AM Class Lesson 18.

May 12, 7:15p – **ASNC Festivals Committee** meets at the home of Linda Folsom, 493-8323. Please join us if you are interested in continuing to bring the Festivals to our community.

May 16 – 18 – **“From the Ashes of 9/11: Called to a ‘New Birth of Freedom’**”, a workshop with John Alexandra. Please see this newsletter for more information, or call Kathleen Wright, 309-9622.

May 21, 7:15pm - **ASNC Board Meeting** – Meeting at the home of Peg Carmody. Contact one of the Board members for more details: Peg Carmody, (919) [768-7470](tel:768-7470) / mcarmody@nc.rr.com; Nancy Willson, (919) 493-1091/ bieneman@mindspring.com; and Kathleen Wright, 309-9622/krbarton51@peoplepc.com. To contact the ASNC: PS B0X 16024, Chapel Hill, NC 27516.

Christian Community

Christian Community Lay Gatherings – Margit Gratzl is hosting weekly lay gatherings in her home – they include reading and discussion of the Gospels. Everyone is welcome. Margit's address is 519 Wheeling Circle, Durham, 27713. Please call Margit if you have questions - (919) 484-2764. Margit will be out of town in early May, so gatherings will resume on May 25th.

EWS

May 9 - Douglas Gerwin, Ph.D, Director of the Center for Anthroposophy in Wilton, NH will speak about the relationship between the healthy unfolding of bodily senses in early childhood and the unfolding of cognitive capacities in the high school years. He will present a lecture, **"On Coming to Our Senses: An Evening with Douglas Gerwin, Ph."** The talk will be held in the Richards Room of the EWS. For more information, please see flyer in this newsletter or contact Lisa Damian or Laura Guinan

May 13, 7p – **Talk by Kathleen Morse**-see flyer in this newsletter for more details.

Other Activities of Interest

May 3, 8:30a – 4:30p. **“Nature and Rhythm as Healing Forces: Moving and Breathing into Health”**, a day of health-giving, harmonizing experiences seeking to affirm the wholeness of life. Please see flyer in this this newsletter. Held in the Durham Friends Meeting House, 404 Alexander Dr, Durham 27705. You may call Margareta Bornhorst for more information at 824-7337.

May 20, 7p - **NDE Study Group** - a once-a-month study group for near-death experiences (NDEs). the Raleigh/Durham Friends of IANDS group, part of the [International Association for Near-Death Studies](http://www.iafnd.org). This is part of our research work in the fields of consciousness studies, neuroscience and NDEs. We welcome all people who are interested in NDEs, especially those who have had an NDE are invited to share their experience with the others. At the home of Robert and Suzanne Mays, 5622 Brisbane Dr, a few miles north of Chapel Hill, just north of I-40, off Mount Sinai Road. See this [Google map](#) for directions. For more information, please call us at 919-929-1073 or mays@ieee.org.

Please note: Calendar events need to be sent in by the 20th of the month prior, i.e. May 20th for June 1, each month. Please send calendar items to Linda Folsom at lfolsom@nc.rr.com or call 493-8323. Send articles and flyers directly to Kathleen Wright at kathleenwright51@peoplepc.com by the same date.

Study Groups:

The Apocalypse Study Group – Sundays, from 3:30p – 5p. Please note new location and time – at the home of Martha Kelder, 120 Kenan Street, Chapel Hill. Phone: 942-4795. Please park as far down the driveway as you can go. No parking is allowed on the street. We hope that everyone will feel welcome to join us and continue in this study. We know that Natalie Slapo will be there with us in spirit.

Asheville Study Group – meeting the third Saturday on most months, at 2pm, at the home of Lucille and Peter Clemm, (828) 658-1423. Please call the Clemms prior to attending for confirmation of time and place.

Biodynamic Study Group – The Biodynamic Study Group is meeting once-a-month for Saturday work mornings (suspending the Thursday evenings for now). Usually the work mornings will be at our homes, but sometimes they can be a community outreach. It's important to get as many folks educated re: biodynamics and preps sprayed around as possible. For more information and meeting locations contact Sandy Demeree, 341-8934

Child's Needs Study Group - monthly, on a selected Saturday morning, from 10a – 12n. Location varies between Chapel Hill and Durham. Currently reading: *Learning to Experience the Etheric World: Empathy, the After-Image, and a New Social Ethic*. Also doing movement, speech, and storytelling. Please call Lauren Mills with any questions – 968-7721, or mills.lauren@gmail.com.

Curative Care Group - Meeting on the first Wednesday of the month, from 7 – 8p, at the Emerson Waldorf School -- Eurythmy Room, New Jericho Road, Chapel Hill 27514. Call 967-9452 (Mark Eisen's office), or 967-1858 (EWS) for instructions or visit Mapquest.com for directions. The group is open to parents, teachers and professionals.

Greensboro Study Group - Sunday nights, 7 pm. Contact Sandy LaGrega (336) 292-7947 and Judy Boyd (336) 454-2451.

Light's Gift Study Group - Call Carol Brick for schedule or information (336-694-5493).

Rose Cross Study Group – Wednesdays, 7:30p, at the home of Judy Granberry, 95133 Vance Knoll, Chapel Hill, NC 27517, phone 967-4671. Newcomers are welcome! Please call Judy with any questions.

Staying Connected to the Dead - study group meets on most Mondays from 3:30-5:30pm at the home of Sandy LaGrega or Jo Leeds in Greensboro. Please call Sandy at (363) 292-7947 or Jo at (336) 299-4361 for latest information about meeting place.

Threshold Group – Tuesdays, 3:30pm – contact Elaine Upton, (919) 928-8422. Reading *The Michael Mystery*, by Rudolf Steiner. We read to the so-called dead.

Wilmington Study Group – each Wednesday, 7:30pm. Contact Anna Bowman, (910) 792-0959, for more information.

Winston-Salem/Yadkin Valley Study Group – An anthroposophical study group for people in Winston-Salem and surrounding areas. Located in Davie County, at the home of Sarah Putnam, the study group brings together people from a wide area ranging from Winston-Salem to Statesville. The group meets Sunday evenings from 6-8 p.m. Call Sarah Putnam at 336-940-6004 for information and directions.

In Loving Memory



Natalie Tasman Slapo
September 13, 1941-April 19, 2008

The Full Moon is a time of completion, a perfect time for endings. And so, from the Cosmic viewpoint, Natalie incarnated at a most auspicious time. It was the day before the Full Moon. It is also very significant that Natalie was just 66 years old, which is 33×2 , for the number 33 signifies a life rhythm in connection with Christ's life. According to the Eastern Orthodox Church, April 19 this year was also "Lazarus Saturday" and how apropos, when one considers Natalie's devotion to Lazarus/John and her founding of the Apocalypse Study group! It was also Earth Day this year, as well as the eve of Passover, the Spring

Festival of Judaism, the religion into which she was born. This Full Moon also occurred when the Sun was in Taurus, the traditional day for the Wesak Festival of the Buddha. And so it was in a truly ecumenical, cosmopolitan way (as was her lifelong nature), that Natalie crossed the threshold on April 19, as though she wished to participate in these Full Moon celebrations in the Heavens

Our community held a three-day long vigil at her home in accordance with the tradition of the Christian Community, to which Natalie belonged. Twenty-five persons attended her Memorial service Monday evening, and many more packed the New Hope

Presbyterian Church for her funeral, where Natalie's dear friend Rev. Richard Dancey held
(Natalie at age 3)



the service and gave an excellent overview of Natalie's life. That night there were meteor showers! Heaven was truly overjoyed to receive Natalie back!

Natalie's Biography

Natalie Karen Tasman was born in Binghamton, NY in September of 1941, the second of two daughters. Shortly afterwards, her family moved to Manhattan, as her father, Herman Paul Tasman, who had been working for IBM since 1933, was transferred to Manhattan. During her life, New York was an integral part of Natalie's cultural upbringing. She was a New Yorker through and through, with her love of culture,

art, fine cuisine and elegant fashion.

Although her family was Jewish in origin, Natalie once told me that they were not practicing Jews, because they feared anti-Semitism. Her Father went by his middle name, Paul, because it was more Christian-sounding. This fear was very realistic at that time, e.g. The Country Club to which they belonged did not allow Jews. Because Judaism was not emphasized in her home, Natalie was deprived of the beautiful traditions, but on the other hand, it made her more open and curious about other spiritual paths. She readily embraced the ideas of Anthroposophy when she first heard about it in her later life.

During the 1950's, IBM assigned Natalie's father to work with the Vatican in Rome to create a special machine called a concordance to help translate the Dead Sea Scrolls, along with a Jesuit Priest, who was the Pope's right hand man, named Father Roberto Busa. Natalie was very proud of her Father's work with the Dead Sea Scrolls, and often asked him questions about it. From this, began Natalie's lifelong love of Italy and a curiosity about Christianity. Her father developed a lifelong close friendship with the Jesuit, and after her Father's death, Natalie maintained a friendship with Father Busa. During one of

her visits to Italy, she asked him if he had ever heard of Rudolf Steiner. He opened a drawer and pulled out a book of Steiner's that he had been reading and assured her that the Vatican library had Steiner's books. He would not let her know his feelings, however (which is understandable, given that Steiner was not known for his fondness of Jesuits.). Natalie gave her Father's papers about the Dead Sea Scrolls to Fred Paddock when he was in charge of the Rudolf Steiner library in Harlemville, NY.

Natalie was a very bright and beautiful child. She finished college at the age of 20 because she had accelerated her course of studies in both high school and college. She had majored in foreign languages, with emphasis on Spanish and Italian.

While Natalie's outward life was beautiful in her younger days—fine clothes, rich friends (she even was an acquaintance of Jay Rockefeller's and went to visit his family compound), parties and trips to Europe, from early on, her life was full of pain of every kind. At the age of 14, she suffered an attack of appendicitis and needed emergency surgery. Then, in her late teens, two horrifying incidents, too personal to mention, occurred that were veritable crucifixions of body and soul. As Steiner has pointed out, when an innocent human being is brought

to such depths of pain and sorrow, it can lead them to an experience of the Christ, and such was the case with Natalie. She had some amazing spiritual and synchronicity experiences that eventually led to her encounter with Anthroposophy and healing of some of that earlier trauma.

Those excruciatingly painful events of her late teens caused Natalie to go through a period of depression, and to appease her Mother, who had been pressuring her to marry, Natalie agreed to a somewhat "arranged marriage". Out of that marriage, came her beloved son Michael, but the marriage itself was doomed to failure. While married, Natalie lived in Florida and worked as a Spanish teacher.



(Mrs. Tasman, Natalie and Michael)
After her divorce, Natalie moved to St. Louis, where she suffered the plight of a working single mother. It was also at that time that

she began developing severe migraine headaches. At first, she attributed them to stress, but upon medical investigation, it was found that something was seriously wrong. After years of testing, she was found to have a rare, genetic degenerative disease known as osteopetrosis.

Natalie's son went through the usual teen rebellion and left her to live with his Father. This made Natalie feel like a total failure in life. She then decided to head back to her roots—New York and try to rebuild her life.

(With Her Soulmate at the Beach)



While living in Queens in 1983, Natalie rode the bus to work and a man named Lennie who rode the same bus, began a conversation

with her. He told her that he knew a man who would be a good match for her. Natalie agreed to meet this man, and it was good that she did, because that man was artist Herb Slapo, the man who was to become the love of her life. They were married just four months after meeting. Natalie was 42. Forty-two is a year of destiny and it was also that same year when she met the other great love of her life—Anthroposophy.

Natalie embraced Anthroposophy with a passion and sought to learn everything she could. She joined the Christian Community, attended Study Groups, visited the Steiner library. Then, for various reasons, she and Herb decided they needed to move. Natalie checked out a few big Anthroposophical communities including Kimberton and Spring Valley, but decided that Chapel Hill, NC was the best place for them. And how happy we are that they made this decision!

Natalie was instrumental in many initiatives in our community. She began the Holy Nights of Christmas, the Threshold group, which reads to the Dead, the Apocalypse Study Group, and the Holy Week before Easter observance. She was also one of a committee who brought the Christian Community to North Carolina. She did all these things in spite of agonizing bouts of pain. Many times we thought that this

illness would kill Natalie, but she rose again and again like a phoenix to do more for our community. Natalie was also a member of the Festivals Committee.

Natalie had a warm charm that made everyone feel at home, or even that you were her best friend. She loved hosting events and always had a beautiful table of sweet delights for her guests. She gave generously of her time and money to the causes she loved and to people in need. Among the many she helped were a homeless woman in NY who was a former public school teacher and an African American man who had a kidney transplant. Everyone in our community has a story to tell of the kindness and good advice Natalie gave to us.

Her great compassion for others was born out of the great pain she suffered and her connection to Christ. She never found closeness and comfort from her immediate family, but found love, spiritual intimacy and a true family in the anthroposophical community and of course, from her dear beloved husband, Herb.



A svelte Natalie at the beach with her son Michael.

Herb shared an interesting story with us. The evening after Natalie passed away, he was driving home from the airport where he had picked up one of his daughters and there in the sky was a magnificent sunset. His daughter stopped the car and they got out to observe. There against the black and purple stormy sky was a beautiful sunset of pink, orange, gold and blue. And across from it they saw a huge, magnificent double rainbow. Now you may call it just coincidence, but consider this: Natalie knew that Herb's favorite thing in the world was clouds and how he loved to paint them. What greater gift or sign could she send him than this beautiful sunset and two rainbows? It seemed to be a sign that she was giving him a task to do—paint this most beautiful sunset of all. (Herb's daughter took digital pictures of the sky for him.) It might be worth mentioning the unusual weather on day of her death and the three subsequent days. They were like a metaphor of her life—each day had very dark clouds, but also moments of beautiful bright light and blue skies.

I know Natalie was very pleased with the great turnout of people who came out to show their love for her at her vigil and funeral. She would also like special thanks to be given to all those who visited her in the hospital, especially to Margaretta and Linda, who volunteered as her private nurses, to Margaret, who did Hearthmath with her and helped Herb with all the arrangements he had to make; and to Suzanne who played heavenly music on her lyre for Natalie. Natalie is also especially grateful to Rev. Dancey for all his phone calls and visits.

-Kathleen Wright



REMINISCENCES OF NATALIE SLAPO:

(Editor's note: most of the following are from notes that I took at the Memorial Service for Natalie on April 21. The first two however, are emails received from people who were unable to attend the Memorial.)

Deborah Pearson-Moyers: I am still in Florida and in shock.

Natalie and Herb moved to Chapel Hill about the same time that Peter and I did. We offered our home for a Palm Sunday children's festival in those early days that included bread roosters on sticks with ribbons and a march through the house and around the yard. I was either pregnant or nursing at that time and feeling pretty out of it. Natalie and Herb came over to see if I needed any help preparing the house. I couldn't think, I was so tired. Natalie just picked up a sponge and started cleaning my kitchen cupboards in her beautiful clothes and earrings. I couldn't stop her and she did them all! Generosity is the word that always comes to mind when thinking back on all my Natalie experiences.

Peter and I liked to include Herb and Natalie in our holiday festivities whenever possible. This was not out of any obligation but we always had more fun when they came. Natalie had the greatest laugh and a slap for Herb's knee and of course, Herb with his dry New York humor left us all in stitches.

This last November when I was helping organize a benefit auction for Melanie Maupin's medical expenses, Natalie asked if she could offer some of her jewelry to the auction. Melanie and I went to Herb and Natalie's house for what we thought was a quick stop. Herb offered not one but three of his pastels! Natalie kept returning to her bedroom and bringing out many pieces of jewelry. Melanie and I thought we were to choose one piece for the auction. "Oh no, please take them all" replied Natalie. "I can't get out and wear these things any more and I'd like to see them go to a good cause."

Melanie and I left in awe of Natalie's kindness and open spirit. We will truly miss a great lady!

Elaine Upton : Natalie gave me joy, even when she was in pain. She gave me joy and unconditional love. At the Threshold Group meetings at her house, she sat very queenly in her pink chair, and even when in pain always greeted and welcomed us all so warmly, and held the group deep in her heart. Because I knew she was the kind of person to hold this Branch deeply in her heart, often when she was not able to move about, I felt that she was one I could phone to ask a special favor. This past Christmas, the first Holy Night reading was scheduled for my apartment, and I knew Natalie could not climb up to the third floor where my apartment is. I also did not know if anyone would show up because it was Christmas night, the 25th, when people are busy with family, and so, when it was near time and it seemed that no one would show up, I phoned Natalie and asked if she would sit at home and read with me, while I sat at home and read, so that both of us would at the same time be reading Steiner's lecture in the Gospel of St. Matthew series. Natalie's immediate reply was "Of course!" For her and for me this was about discovering the reality of "Where two or three are gathered in my name, there I AM in the midst." It turned out that people did show up at my apartment later that evening, and we had a good time. Natalie was there, too, I felt, in her heart. She is with us now!

Linda Folsom told how she first met Natalie at a conference with Christian Community priest Erk Ludwig. Natalie stood out because of her fine clothes and silk scarf. Natalie phoned Linda afterwards and said that she felt they had a lot in common. Together and with others they helped bring the Christian Community to Chapel Hill. Linda also spoke of Natalie's devotion to the First Class and how important it was for her to go to it, even when she wasn't feeling well, she would get up so early and put on her bandages and make-up so that she could be there. She spoke of Natalie's great ability to network and bring people together. Linda said "Natalie's message was love...Watch out for each other!" She also joked that Natalie was "Communication Central" for the community. She had everyone's phone number and if you needed to know something, Natalie was the one to call. "She really was the center of our community."

Margaretta Bornhorst recalled that when Natalie and Herb first moved down here, they lived very close to her. She fondly recalls their times at the café at Fearington Village. When Margaretta's daughter became ill, Natalie told her about an organization for rare diseases, which has been very helpful for her daughter.

Sandy Bisdee was impressed with Natalie's knowledge and beauty. She experienced Natalie as a very "serious" person. Sandy is thankful that Natalie brought the Christian Community here. She also recalled how Natalie hired Sandy's son Cedar to give her lessons on how to use the computer. She appreciated Natalie's punctuality.

Mindy Kash noted how Natalie loved to network and matchmake, how she loved to feed people—beautiful tables with fresh fruit, chocolates, how she had "three birthday cakes for Herb!" Mindy joked that for Natalie, threefold meant, "thinking feeling and eating!..." "She also loved to feed people spiritually". Mindy told how Natalie used her pain as fuel to change. She also mentioned Natalie's love for shopping.

Melanie Maupin recalled how generous Natalie and Herb were to her when she was trying to raise money for her cancer bills at an auction. Natalie gave several pieces of jewelry and Herb donated a few paintings for the cause.

Margaret Heath reminisced how she often went to breakfast with Natalie and Herb. She also recalled how much her autistic friend Eve adored Natalie, how she giggled when Natalie held her. Margaret passed around a picture of Eve smiling at Natalie.

Gena Biggins told how she and Natalie would talk on the phone for hours. They would talk about serious things, even have “philosophical debates”, but also they laughed hysterically. Natalie had a “great sense of humor”. Gena said that Natalie felt guilty about everything, never felt that she could do enough for anyone. “Natalie was a ‘Beacon of Light’, yet she was humble about it.”

Jim Biggins remembered that he first met Natalie at a Conference about America with Steve Burman. She invited him and Gena to join the Karma Study group, which he did, and for the last few years he has been a part of her Apocalypse Study Group.

Judy Frey noted that Natalie had a gift for making friends so easily, how she had friends all over the world and she kept them for life.

Robert Mays spoke of how Natalie acted like she knew him the very first time they met. She had this uncanny ability to make everyone feel at ease.

Mark Eisen affectionately called the Slapo home “Bubberle Central” or “New York Central” and how the Slapos and he had an ongoing “shtick” where he would call up Natalie for advice and she would give it, calling him “Bubberle” (“little boy” in German and Yiddish). Mark recalled how Natalie wanted to make everything “perfect” or she couldn’t rest, and how she loved cheese cake, chocolate, fat and carbohydrates. He spoke of her loyalty to friends and her long-suffering.

Jo Forkish sent an email about how wonderful Natalie was, how she was a “prayer force” in the community and how she felt that it was Natalie’s prayers that helped heal her husband of cancer this second time.

MEMORIAL DONATIONS

If you care to make a donation in Natalie’s memory, these were her favorite organizations:

The National Christian Community
c/o Rev. Richard Dancey
135 West Wilson Ave.
Chicago, IL 60625

The local Christian Community
c/o Margit Gratzl
519 Wheeling Circle
Durham, NC 27713

The Anthroposophical Society in
America
1923 Geddes Ave.
Ann Arbor, MI 48104-1797

The local Anthroposophical Society
ASNC
PO Box 16024
Chapel Hill, NC 27516

Cards of condolence may be sent to;
Herb Slapo
3101 Drew Hill Lane

Chapel Hill, NC 27514

ASCENSION: AN EVOLUTIONARY JOURNEY FROM EARTH TO THE COSMOS

By Margareta Bornhorst

Those who were brought up Roman Catholic remember being taught about and celebrating Ascension; 40 days (there's that number again!) following Easter, Christ "was lifted up before their eyes, a cloud received him and they saw him no longer." (Acts 1:9) "and a cloud took him out of their sight." (Madsen rendition) This is quite a mental picture.

But what does this mean? Did the Christ being just hop on a cloud and rise up with it into Heaven? (Today, some people take the Bible literally and actually believe this.) How do we, as students of Rudolf Steiner, begin to understand Ascension? To begin with, Ascension belongs to the time of Easter.

Let's take a brief look at clouds. What do they really have to do with Ascension?

Water in the air is experienced as a haze, a mist, sometimes takes several forms as it expresses as shapes that resemble those in nature in the plant world and in the animal world (not as our imaginations of dragons or elephants, however). The water from the ponds, lakes, streams and the sea must change as it rises up into the atmosphere: it may become droplets, ice crystals, or even take a gaseous state (dissolved), depending on its altitude, temperature, pressure, and the movement of air.

Air is needed in the form of wind. Air actually breathes through expansion and contraction. It can be put under pressure: compression and expansion—a sort of breathing. From gentle breezes to gusts to hurricane-force winds, the air moves over the earth, weaving through areas, pockets, of warmth and coolness as it blows over the earth. Under compression, the air can "breathe in". We hear much of this in our meteorological weather reports: "highs", "low pressure areas", etc.

Warmth exists to varying and changing degrees over the earth, too. The warmer the air, the more water it can carry. In the presence of warmth the water in the atmosphere changes from liquid to a gas. Pressure and warmth work together to set the breathing rhythm of the air in motion.

Even the **earth** is involved in cloud formation, not only as the place from which water "evaporates" into the air, but dust particles, minute and microscopic, invisible to the human eye, in the air become the 'center' of the droplets of water or ice crystals which make up the clouds which we see.

The **four elements** are involved and interact and interweave in the creation of clouds. The clouds, then, become a **symbol of the elements**. The clouds become a picture of a kind of intermediate realm, a sort of bridge, between Earth and the Heavens, between earth and fire (spirit), between body and spirit. They hold a balance in the middle. Clouds give us a picture to the human being of the possibility to move upward—to ascend—to the warmth of spirit, to the heavens, through the warmth of the forces of the heart from the solid materialistic physicality as expressed by the body of the earth and the body of the human being.

And so we hear the description of Christ as **Lord of the Elements**. The realm of the elements appeared to take him away from sight. This is one of the secrets of the Ascension.

The disciples lived with the Christ Being for 40 days from the Resurrection, to the Ascension. During this time they walked and talked with Him, they **saw** Him. They were able to perceive on deeper levels the teaching of Christ. They understood the birth and death of Christ Jesus. After the Christ being left the body of Jesus of Nazareth, He remained in a spiritual form with the disciples and continued to teach them. But eventually, however, the disciples lost the ability to receive His teachings when He only appeared to them in a spirit-body. They could no longer "see" Him. They had lost the awareness of His presence. He was again lost to them—this was

the second time. The first time was His death on the cross at Golgotha. The second time was as He “disappeared” in a cloud. It was as if their vision was “clouded”, and they lost sight of Him. Rudolf Steiner said, “.....a record of the fact of consciousness, that the sublime Spirit of the Sun, who had wandered upon Earth in the human being Jesus of Nazareth, had vanished again from before the disciples.” In the following 10 days, until Whitsun, they experienced intense grief, anguish and tremendous pain at the (second) loss of the sight of Christ.

Since the Mystery of Golgotha the coming of spring again has meaning: the burgeoning green of trees, grasses, and meadows shows that the Earth comes to new life again after the apparent death of winter. The appearance of the blossoms on the cherry and pear trees and shrubs, the many colors of the flowers that appear following the spring greening, is an answer from the cosmos to the beginning outbreathing and uprising of the Earth as it begins to breathe out into the heavens. The cosmos answers by ‘coming down’ in an external expression through the blossoms. This, too, represents the middle realm, the intermediate realm where Christ is (will become) apparent to human beings. The constantly changing conditions of nature in spring express forms in movement—the waves and currents of water on earth, moving again in spring and showing re-newed life, the spiral-like movement of water and air expressed in thunderstorms, cyclones/tornadoes, and hurricanes as seen from the air, all indicate the middle realm of etheric and astral forces which have been spiritualized since Christ’s deed on Golgotha. We can see these and other signs as external evidence of Resurrection. Christ, who conquered Death by becoming one with it, then becoming the spirit-body of the Earth, now brings new forces, the forces of Resurrection, to Earth—and then **ascends** back to the Heavens from whence He came. In this way, Christ truly became Human, imbued matter with the Sun-spirit forces, blessed Earth with His Being (physical and spirit), and again joined the realm of the Heavens, returning to the world of the gods, who had watched him “disappear” into the darkness of Earth before the Mystery of Golgotha. He then shared with them a new knowledge, that of human birth, death and then Resurrection. Human souls feel re-newed as they experience the re-birth of spring in the blossoms (the gift from the heavens), and warmth of the physical/spirit Sun. What an amazing exchange! The summer forces of nature uplifts the human being to the spiritual world as the four kingdoms of nature uplift the soul of the earth to the cosmos. We experience the “A” (ah) of the Eurythmy gesture—“awe”—as a feeling of gratitude for this uplifting in nature and the human being. Another mystery of the Ascension.

The souls of the disciples were unable to follow, to see, Christ any longer. Inner growth in humankind is necessary for us to begin to see Him again. Our inner forces must grow and we must develop new inner spiritual organs of sight and perception. We rise up to the sphere of cosmic-cloud-astral/etheric elements for Christ to meet us there, just as the Earth’s soul rises up to the cosmos in the greening of the spring (new life) to be met by the blossoms of the cosmos/heavens coming to meet earth.

The warmth of summer for the Earth is mirrored in the warmth of the heart in the human being. Death and Resurrection become knowledge for the hierarchies as well for humanity. As He returns to the spiritual worlds, Christ gives as a gift to the gods, the angels of the hierarchies, the spiritualized being of humanity, and in so doing He unites the two worlds. The evolution of humanity has been given a thrust forward—a lift upward.

But what really happened when Christ ascended on a cloud into the heavens? His Being, His consciousness, expanded into the cosmos—much as water reacts with air, warmth, and earth to become the expansive world of the clouds, including all four elements of Nature—in the world of the etheric forces of fluids (droplets, ice crystals, haze, mist, gaseous) the astral expansion of air, warmth from the Sun, interacting with Earth (dust particles). The resurrected life forces weaving round the earth are part of the earth now. The Earth is a living being. But the disciples were not prepared to see Him in the world of the etheric. We see these forces most clearly when we see the formation of clouds. We become more aware of the consciousness of Christ as we become more sensitive, more awake to the forces of life around us, whether in plants, animals, and of course in other people. We can “see” the Christ being, be aware of His forces at work, as we grow in sensitivity and awareness, creating our new “organs”.

We refer to this as the return of Christ in the etheric. Only one appearance is needed in the physical—Death has been met, experienced, and overcome by the Christ in the body of Jesus.

Christ has returned to the Heavens, but remaining with us are the spiritualized forces He brought to the Earth and to humanity.

This year Ascension is May 1, Thursday. Let's look to Nature on Thursday, and observe the forms of the clouds, the movement of the air, the warmth of the Sun. Feel the Earth under our feet. If it rains, know that water droplets and ice crystals exist in the atmosphere and surround the minute particles of the Earth, as the warmth and air currents create and re-create ever changing forms in the clouds. Feel the uprising of the forces of Earth as we "see" the etheric forces around us. Here lives the Christ being. Feel your soul ascending to the realm of the Heavens to meet the Christ, as the Earth breathes around us, rising to the cosmos to meet the forces of the spiritual worlds. New worlds await us. A new consciousness awaits us.

Whitsun awaits us.!

Whitsuntide

Where outer senses' knowledge ends,
There and there only is the gateway
That leads to the realities of life.
The soul of Man himself forges the key
When he grows strong in the battle
Which cosmic powers with human powers wage
Upon the soul's deep ground,
And by his own free will dispels the sleep
Which at the senses' frontiers
Plunges in spiritual night
His faculties of knowledge.

Rudolf Steiner

WHITSUN- INCLUDING AN EYEWITNESS ACCOUNT FROM JUDITH VON HALLE

By Kathleen Wright

This year Whitsun or Pentecost as it is also known, falls on May 11. Members of the First Class will commemorate this very special Festival with a short reading following the Class Lesson. The word Whitsun means simply "white Sunday" and it is generally believed that the reason for this is that Whitsun has been the favorite day for Baptism since the days of the early Church. Those who were to be baptized dressed in white. It

is therefore customary for those observing Whitsun to wear white. One could also wear a bit of red to remind one of the "tongues of fire" which appeared above the Apostles and Disciples on that fateful day. Please try to wear white if you can if you are planning to attend the School of Spiritual Science on May 11.

The word "Pentecost" means "fiftieth day". It refers to the 50th

day after Easter. However, the seventh Sunday after Easter is in actuality, the 49th day. Why the discrepancy? Judith von Halle clears this up for us by stating that it was in reality on Whit Monday that the Holy Spirit descended upon those first Christians. It is probably for convenience that the Feast is celebrated on the Sunday, since that is the Sabbath of Christians.

The following quotations are taken from the chapter “The Whitsun Event at the Time of Christ and its Connection with Anthroposophy” from von Halles’ book *And If He Has Not Been Raised*.

“Whitsun is the birth of the conscious and free fourfold human being, is the birth of the free human being not only in the way it has given the fullness of grace of the Easter event to each human being, regardless of how he stands in relation to Christ, but is also the birth of the free human being in his astral body, and in his individual self, in his soul and in his spirit...it is also clear that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit is not only intended for the disciples at the time of Christ, but can be for every person who is presently in the world.’ (p.147)

“Only someone who permeates himself with the Easter event, who sows the seed on this Easter day, can receive the harvest at Whitsun seven weeks later.” (p. 150)

“The mission of Christ, the plan of the Gods, encompassed the festivals of Christmas, Easter and Whitsun.” (p. 152.) Judith then illustrates how the Rosicrucian saying “Ex Deo nascimur (In God we are born)” relates to Christmas; “In Christo morimur (In Christ we die)” to Easter; and “Per Spiritum Sanctum reviviscimus (in the Holy Spirit we are reborn)” to Whitsun.

“The tongues of flame which were bestowed on each one of them are also a symbol for the seed of the phantom body. In these ten days [between Ascension and Pentecost] the first Resurrection Body replicated itself and on the tenth day it was possible, for the first time in the entire evolution of the Earth, for a human being to put on this seed of the phantom body...(160-161)

“Seen esoterically, this mighty rushing sound, of which the Acts of the Apostles speaks, means that the souls of the disciples were raised to a higher level of vision.

As the fire of the spirit came over them, they had a vision of the future evolution of humanity, namely that they would carry this

fire impulse into their next incarnation...”(162)

“This cloud of light and fire sank down, penetrating even the ceiling of the room in which the disciples and the women were staying. It was first of all, like the Spirit which descended at the Baptism, only many times more powerful, immense and roaring. This living cloud hung for a while over the city district of Zion, over the house, over the room, over the disciples. Then it was as if the cloud broke—as if the one decisive moment had come when the decision was made for it to fragment. It sent out rays of light and fire from itself which poured over those present and penetrated into every single one of them. Visible at the center and simultaneously around this cloud of fire was again a rainbow whose ends were touching, closing together as though forming a circle in space... Those present perceived, felt this in the exalted state of an incipient new initiation, and it was as though they thirsted after this light of fire...the spirit entered individually into each one in the same intensity and quality as their thirst...It is like the Grail feast where everyone receives the food he desires. The meal was individually “tailor-made” or each person.” (162-163)

Judith von Halle tells us that this experience caused the disciples to feel “I and the other person are individuals, but we are both united with one another and with the other fire-bearers; we are perfectly at one through the immense unifying power of the Sun, which is now to be found on the Earth. Everything in us strives towards the One and this unites us in truth, It is no longer the blood which welds us together, but this source of the Spirit, the universal, divine and single source of human selfhood.” (163)

“The human being celebrates Whitsun when he is ready to relate to the Mystery of Golgotha in the spirit of Christ. He *himself* must be active for Whitsun to happen....By means of Whitsun, the human being therefore comes on the one hand, to an understanding of the most sublime selfhood. But at the same time he gives himself freely and selflessly—in other words, in selfhood, not in egoism—to the brotherhood of man; he strives in freedom towards a community of all souls...The Holy Spirit from Whitsun enables all individuals to understand one another. This is the reason for the image of the disciples speaking in all the languages of the Earth.....The most prominent aspect of Whitsun, however, is its connection to the present and to the future. From the

very first feast of Whitsun, the Christ impulse was no longer proclaimed by Christ Himself, but by the Spirit, by the hearts and

From the Board....

mouths of men. And this is the case for today and for the future.”(169-170))

What a busy month! Easter, the first *Sophia Sun*, the Membership Drive, an evening lecture by Andrew Linnell about Anthroposophy and the Knights Templars, more preparations for May 16-18 conference “From the Ashes of 9/11: Called To a “New Birth of Freedom”, getting the records from past board members, learning the computer program for the Treasurer’s responsibility, a branch meeting- plus a job, friends and family commitments, eating and sleeping. AND perhaps most of all...the passing of our dear friend, Natalie Slapo...

We could be exhausted. The large turnout for the Linnell talk and the response from you to the membership drive, positive comments about the first *Sophia Sun* have encouraged us and we have kept our energy high. The words of Rev. Dancey and the memories of Natalie’s strong relationship to our community and anthroposophy comfort us in our loss and inspire us to keep doing our best to carry on the work of serving our community. Thank you!

(Now, if you would only join us for monthly board meetings.....!)

May looks to be almost as busy. We will continue getting responses back from the membership drive. We will continue learning and conducting the Board activities and responsibilities. Whitsun on May 11. Kathleen Morse, a member of the Youth Section at the Goetheanum, will meet with interested community members the week of May 12. The conference May 16-18 promises to be a stimulating, enlightening event that can help us direct our efforts to meet the needs of the time in meaningful ways. And we hope the community continues to have recent conversations like at our gatherings and on the list-serve that show respect for each other, interest in the word around us and suggestions from each other about what we can do to improve things.

Please contact us with any suggestions or concerns (e-mail us at mcarmody@nc.rr.com or kathleenwright51@peoplepc.com or call, Kathleen at 919-309-9622, myself at 919-768-7470). Our next Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 21. The next Branch meeting will be on June 7. Hope to see you soon!

Warmly,
Peg Carmody

SIX MEMBERS ATTEND FIRST BRANCH MEETING

Roger Schultz, Renate Wend, Peg Carmody, Nathaniel Williams, Robert and Susanne Mays met on April 25 to envision future branch meetings. After a delicious pasta dinner, Peg shared that a small group who met in the fall had suggested monthly branch meetings to strengthen our community's connection to each other and to anthroposophy. They had pictured these monthly meetings be different from a study group in that a text would not be read. Discussions, presentations, activities all could be considered.

At our first meeting, we shared our experiences with branch meetings in other places, our understandings of the mission of branch meetings and two suggestions of how to structure future meetings. We also thought our numbers were small because we met on a Friday night, so we decided to try different times for awhile until we see what works best for our area.

Nathaniel and the Mays had attended branch meetings elsewhere. One was a study group discussion of Steiner's Leading

Thoughts, and the other was a presentation from one of the members.

We felt our community would benefit from a monthly get together in which we could see how each other is doing and how we can use our study of anthroposophy in our lives.

Peg brought an article by Beth Wieting and Virginia Sease that she will share on the list-serve (call her at 768-7470 if you would like a hard copy sent to you). She read the section about "reversed cultus" as a purpose of branch meetings.

Nathaniel shared his memory that Steiner had encouraged branch meetings to be open and tolerant, demonstrating interest in what other members wished to share. Steiner suggested that sometimes these meetings would focus on study and discussion of basic anthroposophical subjects and sometimes be presentations by members on subjects that interested them. This is found in *The Life, Nature and Cultivation of Anthroposophy*.
(continued on next page)

(continued from page 20)

One suggestion of how we could structure future meetings was to have a discussion of contemporary issues in light of our own anthroposophical understandings and perhaps guided by articles in the American Society's *News for Members*. The subject will be known beforehand and prepared by someone who can guide the discussion. The second suggestion was that we do some biography work that revolved around a theme or seven-year cycle. Roger is considering a biography study group in the fall, so we decided to go with the first suggestion for our next meeting.

We set **Saturday, June 7 at 10 a.m.**, at Roger's home (5624 Earl Rd., Durham, 27712) for our next meeting. We suggest that people who attend read the last *News for Members* if they have it. Suzanne Mays will prepare a summary of an article, notify other members by list-serve and next month's newsletter which article, and we will discuss what perspectives we have on the subject matter. We will then continue the discussion of how to structure future meetings so others may have some input. Hope to see you then!

-Peg Carmody

ST. JOHN'S CELEBRATION TO BE HELD SUNDAY, JUNE 22 AT INFINITY FARM

St. John's Day, June 24, has become an annual celebration that many in our community look forward to since we began having gatherings at Infinity Farm three years ago. This year June 24 falls on a Tuesday. Since a weekday evening would be difficult for many to celebrate, we have decided to have this year's **St. John's Celebration on Sunday, June 22.**

Boat making activities as families arrive at 6:00 p.m., pot luck dinner at 6:30 and a program beginning at 7:30 ending with a bonfire at dusk are set. The formal part of the program is still being worked out. The Festivals Committee is meeting at 7:15 p.m., Tuesday, May 6 at Linda Folsom's house, 3118 Dixon Rd., 919-493-8323 to plan things. We are delighted to have volunteers come forward with new ideas and activities for the program! Please call Peg Carmody at 919-768-7470 with questions or suggestions.

We thank Jon Lyerly and Bob & Joy Kwapien for hosting the event again **at Infinity Farm, 1600 McDade Store Rd, Cedar Grove.**

**YOUTH SECTION LEADER KATHLEEN MORSE
TO ADDRESS EWS COMMUNITY ON MAY 13
At 7 PM IN THE RICHARDS' ROOM IN THE HIGH SCHOOL**

by Nathaniel Williams

Rudolf Steiner presented a very thought provoking image of education once by focusing in on the relationship between the teacher and the child. He describes the child as a portal through which the spiritual world is sending us a sacrament. Humans bring their offerings to the spirit in prayer, meditation, or upon the altar, sending the gifts toward the heavens on the rising smoke of holy incense. The spiritual world sends its offerings through each young child. A teacher who cannot conceive of the inherent value in their students is plagued by the feeling that they cannot educate any student to transcend their own (the teacher's) abilities and qualities. This can be depressing indeed! If we can only give our students a quality, an ability which we possess, and only to the degree that we possess it, our greatest achievements would be clone like. When the teacher sees in the child sleeping strengths and qualities and retains an openness for what the child is to become, trying only in their activity as teachers to clear away the obstacles which would hinder what is inherent in the child, then the teacher's heart is lightened and filled with the wonder of the child coming into class each day.

I cannot help but see a similar relationship between generations in the anthroposophic movement. Within the Youth Section, one can meet young people full of potential and new impulses. The question which the other sections of the School of Spiritual

Science and older anthroposophists must ask themselves the same question the teacher must ask himself across from the developing child. When this takes place, the older generation supports and aids the younger by looking into them and trying to discover what they harbor in their soul. When contact and exchange between the generations unfolds in this mood, the experience and wisdom which the older generation has to offer the younger finds its most productive effect on the younger generation and the older generation can come to have an experience similar to that of receiving a sacrament.

Kathleen Morse is an active member of the section for the Spiritual Striving of the Youth (Youth Section). She is currently active in Dornach Switzerland and has been engaged in many different countries besides her homeland of the US. She will be visiting Chapel Hill during the week of May 12th-16th, where she will be working with the High School students of Emerson Waldorf School. She will be discussing the meaning of service and free initiative and sharing some of the paths which High School graduates can take other than direct enrollment in college. She will also be giving a talk about her work and current activities and developments in the Youth Section, which will be open to the public and will take place on the evening of May 13th in the High School building of EWS. The start time will be 7 pm.

John Alexandra Workshop
“From the Ashes of 9/11:
Called to a New Birth of Freedom”
May 16-18

There is still time to sign up for the John Alexandra Workshop, but please do it ASAP! The workshop includes lectures, discussion groups, Eurythmy, Speech, a delicious organic lunch on Saturday, as well as snacks

If you don't have time to do the entire workshop, you are welcome to attend any part of it.

For more details, please see our previous issue online at: www.anthroposophync.org or call Kathleen Wright at 919-309-9622 for a detailed brochure. Below are the schedule and an application form.

Friday, May 16, 2008

6:15-7:00	Registration, Refreshments, Getting Acquainted
7:00-9:00	Lecture / discussion forum / artistic work* Lincoln, King and 9/11

Saturday, May 17

9:00-12:30	Lecture / discussion forum / artistic work* 1776-1865: Seeds for a New Society Lunch break
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2:30-4:30	Lecture / discussion forum / artistic work* 1917: A New World is Born: Steiner's Challenge to the Nation State
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Dinner break

7:00-9:30	Lecture / discussion forum / artistic work* Threefolding as Sense-Organ for Social Reality
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Sunday, May 18

9:00	Tea/coffee
9:30-12:30	Lecture/discussion forum / artistic work* 9/11: Renewing the 60's Challenge to Social Transformation

Each session will include lecture, discussion forum, artistic activity and snack break.

“From the Ashes of 9/11”
REGISTRATION FORM

Name_____

Street
Address_____

City, State,
Zip_____

Email_____

COSTS--please check all that
apply:

FULL CONFERENCE, \$65
\$_____ (fee includes lunch)

PARTIAL CONFERENCE
Lectures only, lunch is extra
_____ Fri. evening \$10

_____ Sat. morning \$15

_____ Sat. afternoon \$15

_____ Sat. evening \$15

_____ Sun. morning \$15

(Please note: it is strongly
advised to attend the entire

conference or as many lectures
as possible for continuity.)

Saturday organic buffet LUNCH
(Catered by Chatham
Marketplace) \$10 _____ (do not
add this if you are attending the
entire conference as it is included)

**Total
Due**_____

**Please make checks payable to:
The Anthroposophical Society
and mail to:
Kathleen Wright
4615 Greenglen Dr.
Durham NC 27705**

The Conference will be held in
the Richards Room
At the Emerson Waldorf
High School
6211 New Jericho Rd.
Chapel Hill, NC 27516

Douglas Gerwin, Master Teacher, visiting in May!

Mark your calendars! Friday, May 9th Douglas Gerwin Ph.D, Director of the Center for Anthroposophy in Wilton, NH will speak about the relationship between the healthy unfolding of bodily senses in early childhood and the unfolding of cognitive capacities in the high school years.

"Recent research confirms what Rudolf Steiner indicated many years ago: human beings can perceive spiritual realities with an array of senses going well beyond the commonly known physical sense organs. In surveying some of this new research, Dr Gerwin will outline how exercising the so-called bodily senses - - such as touch, balance, and the kinesthetic sense -- during early childhood sets the stage for the healthy unfolding of more cognitive senses having to do with language and thought in the high school years and beyond."

We are thrilled to welcome Douglas Gerwin, who was instrumental in the launch of our high school. As Founder and Chair of the Center for Anthroposophy's Waldorf High School Teacher Education Program, Douglas is a key figure in the American Waldorf high school movement supporting the start of many new high schools in the past 20+ years. He has taught history, literature, German, music and Life Science at the Waldorf HS level since 1983. Presently, he divides his time between adult education and teaching. We are extremely fortunate to be working with him.

Dr. Gerwin's visit is part of the ongoing Foundation Studies program held here at EWS and he will be spending 2 days working with the HS, College and Board to support the healthy growth and development of our high school.

Friday night's lecture "**On Coming to Our Senses: An Evening with Douglas Gerwin, Ph..D.**" is a public event and parents (N - HS) are encouraged to attend. Time and place to be announced. Check the *Emersonian*, or be looking for an email from our ASNC list-serve as the date approaches.

STEINER LIBRARY IN PASADENA OFFERS SURPLUS BOOKS TO BRANCHES

The ASNC was delighted to receive a letter from Philip Mees of the Steiner Library and Bookshop in Pasadena , California offering us a choice of 500 surplus books they wished to donate to any Anthroposophical branches willing to receive them. We contacted the library as soon as we got the message and requested 100 books for our library. Thirty-five books were just received. The remaining books we ordered had already been requested by other branches. In addition to postage, we gave a donation in gratitude to the library for this generous offer. Currently, our branch library is housed at Judy Frey's. She is compiling a list of the books and we will publish it as soon as we get it.

Kathleen Wright

OF MEN AND MACHINES: MY THERAPEUTIC WORK WITH THE LYRE

By Suzanne Mays

My therapeutic work with the lyre takes me to the UNC Hospital twice a week. This past week was quite a contrast between the human element and man-made technology. The hospital switched over to electronic medical record keeping. When I came into the Medicine Intensive Care Unit on a Thursday there were extra people on the floor and an air of anxiousness. This was the first day all the nurses and medical personnel were learning how to use the portable computers that will serve from now on to create e-medical records. The hand-written medical records in three-ring notebooks are a thing of the past. Instead keyboards and screens are the instruments for storing information about a patient's care in the hospital. The stands for the computers are one more thing to navigate around by my cart that carries my lyre, bench, music stand and repertoire. When things change, as invariably there are with interruptions, distractions, and other unpredictable situations in a clinical setting, a music practitioner learns to be flexible so I tried not to let this increased mechanization get in the way of delivering live healing tones from the lyre.

The following week on a Tuesday I entered the UNC Hospital Burn Center not expecting to see the same scene as I had in MICU the Thursday before. My first glance down the hall into the unit made me feel like something had dealt a painful blow to the center of my being. Lined up in front of each patient's room were new computers on rolling carts. They look like modern day dinosaurs. That is how a chaplain described them to me. The laptops sit on a cart called a Levitator that expands or contracts for a person to work at either sitting or standing. I could not believe the extent to which the medical profession has been taken over by something that feels so alien and unnatural. What with the Burn Center void of color, natural light, anything beautiful, I felt it even more cold and deadening. Whatever I was feeling, I had to get over before starting my work with the lyre.

I began a lyre session for a burn patient. My usual place is right inside the door and not further into the room because the rooms are very small and crowded. About ten minutes into the session, a nurse sitting right outside the door where she was learning to use the computer leaned over to me to say how much she liked harp music. I politely informed her that my instrument was not a harp but a lyre. She exclaimed, "My daughter is learning to play the lyre at a Waldorf School!" I asked, "You mean the Emerson Waldorf School?" She answered, "Yes, but how do you know about it?" I answered, "I assist the music teacher in the lyre program there and my husband and I are part of the founding group of the school." This nurse then told me her daughter's name and grade and I told her that I knew her child from teaching the lyre to her class.

After the lyre session was done, I recorded the patient's blood pressure and then showed the nurse the lowered BP numbers. She said she believed the lyre improved her patient's BP because she felt her BP had also lowered from hearing the lyre! Then she began to open up about how, after her husband, whom she had supported all the way through medical school, had left her, she wanted to move out of the state but did not know where to go for a good Waldorf school for her two small children. Susan Starr was her daughter's kindergarten teacher in San Diego. She helped her daughter survive the trauma of her dad leaving the family and it was Susan who had suggested she visit the Waldorf School in Chapel Hill.

Susan Starr is a member of the Lyre Association of North America and has attended conferences sponsored by LANA where I have met her. I proceeded to play for a second patient of this nurse. When the session was done, the nurse asked me to look at the computer to see how that patient's BP had also improved during the music. My response was, "Please tell your daughter that the lyre is played not just in a Waldorf school, but that it works in the world and has its place even in a great big hospital."

The mood I felt at the start of the morning lifted. The personal exchange between the nurse and myself was a human heart to heart meeting. Even though I had felt another sickening intrusion of computerization I had also felt the wonder of human connections and the joy that spirit is creating a better future through Waldorf education and even by means of the lyre!

KNIGHTS TEMPLAR TALK DRAWS AUDIENCE OF 40

Andrew Linnell gave a Power Point presentation on the Knights Templar on April 16, 2008 in the Eurythmy Room. Forty people, including members of the ASNC community, work colleagues of Linnell and members of the local Rosicrucian Order (AMORC) were present. This was the largest-attended event we have had this year, with the exception of Natalie Slapo's funeral.

Linnell remarked on the increasing popularity of the Templars and intimated it is due to more than just Dan Brown's book (*The Da Vinci Code*). This past year marked the 700th anniversary of the arrest of the Templars on October 13, 1307. Linnell gave a history of the Order and told much about their esoteric spiritual beliefs. He also spoke about Florentine paintings that had spiritual hidden messages connected with the Templars. You may request copies of the paintings by emailing Andrew at: jandrewlinnell@yahoo.com



Knights Templars and the Mission of Group/Branch Work

Whitsun Festival 2008

The Corps de Michael cordially invites you to join us in Hershey as we seek at Whitsuntide to experience the mission of Group and Branch work.

The festival opens with multi-lingual Gospel readings in Latin, Greek, French, Spanish, Shona, German, and English describing the moving events of the first Whitsunday. Gathered together in a house, the flames of spirit-knowledge descend on the twelve disciples to bring inner esoteric understanding of the Mystery of Golgotha--the mystery of death and resurrection.

A keynote by David Lenker, "Knights Templars, Rosicrucians, and Anthroposophy--*The Call of Michael Then and Now*," will connect Whitsun's "first group meeting" with the new spiritual impulse heralded by the Knights Templars at the dawn of modern consciousness. On Friday, the 13th of October 1307, innovative Templar initiatives in the fields of architecture, agriculture, medicine, and banking were impeded by a jealous king, who arrested scores of Templar Knights without cause. By 1312 the Order founded near the Temple of Solomon was dissolved. Leading knights and the Grand Master were condemned by King Philippe Le Bel to burn at the stake. How does the Templars' Sacrifice reveal a destiny of courage? How did their Rosicrucian successors go 'underground' to win 'inner armor' and a more reliable form of spiritual experience? How can today's collaborative striving for spirit knowledge comprise the social fabric of a higher form of community? How does community life counter the activity of evil and help forge individual capacities capable of meeting everyday challenges?

Additionally, we will trace the thread leading from Whitsunday's "first group meeting" to the Knights Templars and their successors, the Brothers of the Rosy Cross. From the vantage point of collaborative spirit striving within Rosicrucian groups of seven we can discern the Michaelic mission of today's anthroposophical groups: a modern fulfillment of the Templar Impulse--the building of the Temple of the Universally Human as a new and transformed Temple of Solomon. David is chairman and co-founder of The Corps de Michael and a Class Holder of the School of Spiritual Science. At age 16 he met Anthroposophy, the awareness of one's humanity, through a psychology course at The Harrisburg Academy (Founded 1784). He completed anthroposophical studies at Emerson College (England) and was a founding teacher of the Susquehanna Waldorf School. In 2007 he was a coordinator and keynote speaker for the Knights Templars International Conference (Camphill Soltane, near Philadelphia).

The festivities will include music, the sharing of 'Crown Templar and Rosicrucian Jewels,' and a community potluck. This open event is sponsored by the Susquehanna Corps de Michael--*Anthroposophical Society in Hershey*. For more information please call: John Charlton at 717-526-4146, write corpsdemichael@comcast.net or visit our website: www.corpsdemichael.org

ANN ARBOR WOMAN WISHES TO START CAMPHILL-STYLE VILLAGE IN NC

During the week of April 6, we had visitors from Ann Arbor, Michigan: Kerry Wiesner and her sons Patrick and Kevin. They were on a mission: to find land suitable to be transformed into a Camphill-style village and good people who would support their mission in various ways. Kerry's son Kevin is severely handicapped and has a trust fund which will be used to purchase the land.

While here, Kerry met with various members of our community, such as Joy Kwapien who has long had a dream of starting a community here, Dr. Mark Eisen, Margaret Heath and Kathleen Wright, who all have a special interest in autism, as well as our Board President, Peg Carmody. She also met with public leaders who are involved in starting a private school for people on the autistic spectrum, as well as a farm community for autistic people.

There currently is a farm community for autistic individuals in Chatham County and it has a waiting list of 200 people, so Kerry sure did come to the right place. North Carolina is a haven for people with autism because of the work of TEACCH, which is located at UNC-Chapel Hill. Our state offers more services than most other states for autistic persons, although sadly, the services have decreased dramatically in the past several years due to budget cuts in the government.

Kerry also spent a great deal of time scouting out suitable land, and she determined for many reasons that the best land for this purpose was the 25 acres adjacent to Joy Kwapien's Infinity Farm! Kerry's hope is to move here in four years, when her eldest son Patrick is finished with high school. After she returned home, Kerry sent us this email:

"Thank You! It was great meeting everyone, your encouragement and support was wonderful. Below is a summary of where things stand for now:

My husband and I do want to have Kevin Wiesner's Trust purchase the 25 acres of land that borders Joy's farm - Infinity. I have contacted the current owner and will be working on an offer for the land. I hope to own the land by the Fall of 2009. Between now and then, I will be starting a not-for-profit organization called Bunny Hill Community. BHC will build and run the homes; Kevin's trust will own the land. After we own the land, then fundraising and planning can start for the community, hopefully opening the first home by the beginning of 2013. I am in need of local contacts:

Accountant who would be willing to volunteer on the board of BHC.

A lawyer in North Carolina for non-profit corporation papers.

Someone who knows and understands NC/OC welfare support system.

Builder who specializes in "Green" buildings

Architect who does craftsman style bungalows, familiar with green building a plus.

Someone who has had experience designing solar power collectors.

Again thank you for all your help, I will keep you updated on developments. Please share my information with anyone you think may be interested in this vision.

Take care,

Kerry

PS- it was SNOWING Sunday when I got home to Michigan!"

NATURE AND RHYTHM AS HEALING FORCES:

MOVING AND BREATHING INTO HEALTH

Join us for the day as we share health-giving, harmonizing experiences, ranging from movement to music, artistic activities to practical home nursing wraps and compresses, medicinal infusions (teas!), and breathing into rhythm. Together we will seek and affirm the wholeness of life. We will be exploring a few of the initiatives arising out of the impulses of Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925), the highly respected and well-published Austrian scientific, literary, and philosophical scholar. Some of these include innovative holistic approaches to medicine, nursing, science, education (worldwide Waldorf school movement), curative education, religion (The Christian Community), agriculture (Bio-dynamic agriculture), architecture, drama, artistic therapy, Rhythmical Massage, economics and social renewal, and the new art of Eurythmy (performance, educational, and therapeutic Eurythmy).

Saturday, May 3, 2008

8:30 am – 4:30 pm

Durham Friends Meeting House

404 Alexander Dr.

Durham, NC 27705

(on the Duke campus, across the parking lot from Ronald McDonald House)

Things to Bring:

1. a **bag lunch** to eat on site
2. Soft-soled shoes, or socks; wear comfortable clothes
3. An onion, a lemon, and a piece of ginger root

Registration: \$45 for the day if pre-registered before April 25; \$55 at the door or after 4/25*

*We ask that you pre-register, so that we have enough supplies on hand for the activities planned. If you are not pre-registered, you are still welcome, and we will try to accommodate you.

Please send registration fee (check or money order) with your **name, address, and phone number** to:

Margaretta Bornhorst, 5800 Prioress Dr., Durham NC 27712

(for questions, please call Margaretta at 824-7337)

Parking: Please park on the street or in the parking lot to the left of the Durham Friends Meeting campus. Park only in the half of the lot facing the Friends Meeting; the side facing Ronald McDonald House is parking for their facility. There are two handicapped spaces in the front just off the street. There are several additional spaces just past the handicapped parking, in front of the pre-school. We will be meeting in the large, newer building to the rear of the campus (there are three buildings on campus).

Eurythmy: Experiencing Rhythmic Movement ~ Breathing Between the Polarities

The eurythmyst finds a way into ‘the workings of visible nature, seeing in every form a movement come to rest, and converts that form once more into movement.’ Expansion

and contraction, inspiration and expiration, systole and diastole—these are some of the polarities which we will explore in the graceful and therapeutic forms of eurythmy. Rhythmical movements can be described as rather like dancing, as in these words, part of “The Dance of Liberation” by Augustine: “I praise the dance...Dance is transformation of space, of time, of man, who is forever threatening to fall apart, becoming all brain, will or feeling...Dance demands a free, freely moving human being with all his strengths in balance. I praise the dance. Learn to dance, then, or the angels won’t know what to do with you in heaven”

Home Health for Everyone: Rhythms in the Kitchen, Rhythms from Nature

We will learn how wraps and compresses draw upon the qualities of healing substances from the kitchen, from the garden!, bringing to the human being a picture of the healing process as it is expressed in the observable qualities of the plant. The four kingdoms of nature ~ earth, water, air, and warmth ~ can guide us to find healing forces in plants and herbal preparations which we can be used for common ailments, such as sore throat, earache, sinus congestion, fever and flu-like symptoms, bronchitis and even pneumonia. We will practice several of these compresses on each other, using lemon, onion, ginger, and chamomile. (Margaretta Bornhorst R.N. is a holistic nurse in private practice. She has offered (anthroposophical) nursing services and Rhythmical Massage as indicated by Rudolf Steiner and Ita Wegman MD for over 20 years, and provides Aquatic Therapy and Ai Chi to her patients.)

Observing and Drawing the Plant: How Plants Reveal their Healing Nature

Plants such as chamomile, mint, mustard, and arnica all express qualities from which the human being perceives an impulse for healing. Rhythms are seen in many natural phenomena--changing seasons, day and night, tides, and planetary orbits. Changes in the growth cycles of plants, such as from seed to sprout to plant to flower to seed, growth to withering to death, are one way in which rhythm works in the world of nature. We will observe the plant and its relationship between the forces of earth and sun, and experience through drawing how these forces express in the form of the plant. (Note: you need know **nothing** about drawing to enjoy this exercise!) (Carol Brick has been a teacher, a Waldorf school class teacher, and a student of anthroposophy for over 30 years. She is currently an artist working with Rudolf Steiner’s indications and with Goethe’s theory of colors.)

The Healing Heart: Understanding How the Rhythm of the Heart Affects and Contributes to our Overall Health

Rudolf Steiner: “We see Spirit in an eternal circulation.”

William Blake: “We are put on earth a little space to bear the beams of Love.”

The rhythmical interplay between the heart and the lungs forms not only the central point in physical bodily terms, but also the central point of the rhythmic polarities of contraction and relaxation, systole and diastole; the heart brings into rhythm and harmonizes. The heart is also representative of strength and courage. It is the center from which our feelings seem to spring, and it is an organ which in our times is highly stressed and experiencing pain and illness, especially illness with a hardening component. We will learn ways to bring balance, harmony and rhythm back to the central position between the polarities of the nerve-sense activity and the metabolic activity involved in the life processes. (Margaret Heath is a massage therapist and a HeartMath® provider. She has been a student of anthroposophy for 30 years.)

Rhythm in Music, Rhythm in Life

Music has been used for healing for thousands of years. At various times during the day we will experience the healing music of the therapeutic lyre, as Suzanne plays for us. (Suzanne Mays is a certified music practitioner. Her instrument is the therapeutic lyre, which she plays weekly at the bedside for patients in the Jaycee Burn Center and the Medicine Intensive Care Unit at UNC Hospitals. Suzanne has been a student of anthroposophy for over 30 years.)

