

Newsletter

No. 45—St. John's 2016

LENKER'S LETTER

Our activities in the Priory, Kings Langley, came to an end on 8th May. Naturally, this is a hard thing for the group there. I am in conversation with them about how things can carry on. There is a desire to establish a regular meeting pattern so that the group continues, alongside any visits to the church in London.

Willem Boonstoppel has settled in well in Forest Row. He has also become the main priest for Canterbury, which has been taken back under the wings of the congregational angel in Forest Row.

Temple Lodge has undertaken thorough investigation of all the work that would be needed to raise the standard of the accommodation and improve the infrastructure of the house for the coming decades. We are glad that a portion of the proceeds from the sale of the church in Glenilla Road that was allocated to Temple Lodge will cover the most urgent repairs and maintenance, as well as allowing us to build three garden rooms on the strip of land to the right of the garden. This will in turn increase the turnover of our bed and breakfast operation, enabling further improvements to be undertaken over time. Due to lack of funds at this time the very necessary further refurbishments in the house will have to wait. The trustees and congregation see this future work as part of the whole project.

In Stroud we have realised the extent of what we can realistically expect from a fundraising campaign for now. This has led us to review the design radically and do everything we can to reduce the overall cost of the project to a level that we can meet. We are in discussion with the design team to discover how this could be achieved. Enthusiasm for the project is still strong and we are confident that despite having to constrain aspects of the design to reduce costs, we will be able to achieve a worthy outcome and meet the growing needs of our work in Stroud and the British region.

This year is the seventh year that we have run a children's camp from the Stroud congregation. It will be our fourth at the wonderful Camphill Oaklands Park venue. The dates are 23rd July–2nd Aug. Interest has spread to all parts of the UK and we regularly also have children and helpers from Germany, Italy and Spain. This year we expect to welcome around 60 children and 25 helpers. Most heart-warming are the teens who return as helpers year after year and offer part of their precious summer holidays for the next generation of young ones. More information is available on the camp web-site:

www.cc-camps.org

Two candidates from Britain have been invited to Berlin for conversations with the Circle of Seven about joining the Preparation Semester in the Autumn.

This means that we could be receiving two new colleagues next year. We hope that one of them could join Aaron and Carmel in Stroud. The placement of the other one is less clear.

The Orientation Course that has taken place in Forest Row over the last few

months was a success. It will be continued as a proseminar, in which we will work with two candidates from Forest Row with a view to preparing them for full time study and possibly reducing the length of residential training that they might need.

Tom Ravetz

MARGOT LAMBE (FORMERLY COOMBES)

2 JUNE 1946–15 JANUARY 2016

Margot was born fifth of six children and grew up in Dundalk in the Republic of Ireland. Her schooling began at a Montessori school where she learned to read at the age of 3, and was completed by 18 at St Vincent's, having been made head girl. During this formative time, when she was 15, her father died suddenly. She left Dundalk to train at Mater Hospital in Belfast, winning the Gold Medal for Surgery while qualifying as a State Registered Nurse. She then trained as a midwife. Margot sought a broader understanding of the human condition, which led her to read Social Studies at Trinity in Dublin, where she became lifelong friends with Collette and Gillian.

Margot moved to Northern Ireland in 1971 to give live-in support to Gillian's family during and after her mother's terminal illness. Having walked past the Glencraig gift shop many times and not seeing it open, she knocked on the door of one of the community's houses to ask



why this was. She began to read many books on Anthroposophy, learning of the philosophy underpinning life there and becoming dear friends with Faith Brosse, a houseparent there at the time. She then decided to become a co-worker, with the many and varied responsibilities this involved, al-

though remained open to the possibility that she would obtain a Green Card to nurse in the U.S.

In 1972, on her birthday, Margot met David Coombes, who was in Glencraig for a six-month placement as a U.N. volunteer. By the end of his stay they had fallen in love and so in November they moved to London. They took a tiny attic room in Paddington, where they somehow managed to host any co-workers from Glencraig who were passing through! They married in April 1973. David studied while Margot worked as a district nurse, riding her bike through the busy streets of the West End. They moved back to Glencraig in February

1974 to become houseparents, with Margot also working in the laundry. After the birth of their first child John Henry in July 1975, she began the seminar of Curative Education. Their daughter Helen was born in November 1978. In 1984, when their third child Lucy was nine months old, Margot and David responded to a call for houseparents to pioneer a new community on the estate at Clanabogan, Co. Tyrone bought from three sisters, one of whom had a son in Camphill. The Coombes, Linde and Ingram families moved to Clanabogan in 1984. In September 1985 Emily, Margot and David's fourth child, was born. Margot working tirelessly to establish the new community as a housemother, nurse, cook, friend and of course a busy mother of four.

In 1989 the family moved to England, soon settling in. Margot found a new community through the social life of Michael House School and a wonderful group of fellow parents, many of whom then remained dear friends. Margot quickly became very active within the congregation at The Christian Community in nearby Ilkeston. She worked as a server, made the communion bread and formed many lasting friendships. She cared for two friends, Georgina and Mary, during the last months of their lives. In the years that followed she cared for several other friends with terminal cancer, including Faith. Margot continued to have close contact with friends in Camphill worldwide. She provided holiday cover for houseparents in Glencraig and Botton Village and greatly enjoyed helping run The Christian Community Childrens Summer Camp in Botton. Her involvement with Anthro-

posophy during this decade came in other forms also; Margot co-ran the Rudolf Steiner Press after it moved to premises at Michael House School and became a founding member of the Anthroposophical Nursing Association (A.N.A.), establishing firm friendships with the other members. She gave lectures across Europe, contributed to many publications and also to the provision of training sessions to student nurses at the University of Derby. She worked as a consultant for Weleda, helping them develop a first aid kit. From 1997, in addition to working in local nursing homes, Margot nursed part time at Park Attwood Clinic. Although she found the commute demanding, the work and collaboration with colleagues was deeply satisfying.

Although Margot and David's marriage ended in 2005, shared parenting and family holidays over the coming years led to a deep and lasting friendship. She moved to Smalley in Derbyshire overlooking Shipley Country Park soon before her 60th birthday. She was happy there over the next years, hosting family meals, spending peaceful time alone watching birds, reading widely and making preserves with fruit and vegetables gathered from the local hedgerows and family allotments. She brought about a communal garden, which became a focal point for the social and cultural life of the block. She enjoyed days out, especially to open gardens, traveling with friends all over the country to visit them. She went on regular holidays with friends, particularly to the Greek islands with her friends Faith and Jean. She enjoyed celebrating the festivals with family and friends and volunteered for her housing association scrutiny panel. Her

retirement, though peaceful, was very active and fulfilled.

From Easter 2015 onwards, she supported an ex-Camphill family who were coping with an imminent loss through terminal illness. While she did not have the stamina she once did, there was somehow always the strength needed to reach out to those in need of practical support as well as comfort. Indeed, up until she returned from a holiday to Menorca in October 2015, Margot was as active as ever, gardening regularly, often with David. Together they helped Lucy win Wildlife Allotment of the Year. By the end of October however, she had become increasingly unwell. Emily moved back from Spain to join the rest of the family for what would be the remaining short months of Margot's life. Margot was aware and accepting of her illness, enabling her to prepare for what was to come. She spent a quiet Christmas with her family as she loved to do, and in the days ahead noted with pleasure the signs of new life and growth that preceded the coming spring. She spoke of the coming year and the gardening chores that lay ahead. Erhard Keller, the Christian Community priest covering the Ilkeston congregation, visited her several times and travelled from Stourbridge to give Margot communion and the last anointing on the afternoon of 14th January. On the afternoon of 15th we asked Anne, a close friend of Margot's, to read her an Irish blessing called The Guardian Angel and to explain that we would be there shortly to say goodnight. It was in the minutes afterwards that Margot died. She had felt both physically and spiritually ready for the onward journey and

so even as we began to grieve her loss we were also thankful.

Margot's wish was to bequeath her body to medical science, specifically to enable future doctors to learn anatomy. Following her death, Nottingham University's Medical School confirmed that they were able to accept her donation. On 30th January we were joined by relatives and many friends both old and new in a celebration of her life held at Smalley Village Hall. Together with her siblings and in-laws we will attend her cremation along with medical students and teaching staff when the time comes, and find a way to mark the day in our own way.

The names of those who touched Margot's life in significant ways and of those whose lives she touched in return are too numerous to include here, but we hope that this can be seen as a testament to both the quantity and quality of her relationships with others, born out of her deep sense of what it is to be part of a community; her connectedness spoke of her remarkable capacity for love and compassion. There were many who extended their care, love and support to Margot and to us as a family during her illness and following her death, both in person and from afar. In this, we have felt 'held' not just by the global Camphill family but also the wider community in which Margot lived and found meaning. This has been more comforting than words can express, so from the bottom of our hearts, thank you.

*The Coombes Family –
David, John Henry, Helen,
Lucy and Emily
(adapted)*

**JOAN MARCUS
13 MAY 1918–15 MARCH 15**

She was my Mum. The richness of Joan's life was rooted in her family upbringing. Jack Bucknal, her father, was a Church of England priest, trained at Mirfield College of the Resurrection, well known for its very strong social traditions. With her sister Morwena she went to St Monica's Church of England School, in Warminster, where they were both bullied by the head master who disapproved of their father's campaigns on behalf of the working classes. They lived in Thaxted during the time of Conrad Noel, a very socially radical priest, where "The battle of the Flags" took place, involving flying a red flag in church, representing "The Blood of all Nations" and mistaken for the communist flag.

She first met anthroposophy at 17. She wanted to go to a lecture and asked her father for his opinion, "I was reading Steiner before you were born!". Determined to be a Steiner school teacher after visiting the Streatham school, she travelled to Germany to learn German with William Mann. After being an au pair she returned to England in 1938, unaware of trouble brewing; helped feed people in the London East end shelters, and completed her Waldorf Teacher training at the Michael Hall School that had moved to Minehead. Back in London she studied music at Trinity College. A teaching post followed at the Edinburgh Steiner School. In 1952, with her husband Rudi, and 2 year old Christopher, she started a new life in Stourbridge where, in the same house, she lived for the rest of her life.

I was born shortly after they moved in. Twin boys, Michael and Paul, arrived in 1956. We led a very rich and varied family life, all of us going to Elmfield School where my father, Rudi Marcus (20 Jan 1918–21 Mar 1984) taught and later where Mum saw classes through their early years, before running the Kindergarten. She was a devoted mother and wife. Despite my father leaving the family home when we were in our teens, she never said a bad word about him. Regina Strass, one of the first au pair girls and life-long friend of the family, said of Mum that she would not have been the person she was without the great bond, love and devotion she had for my father.

She had an amazing memory, almost everything had a person and a story attached to it from the long distant past to the present day. It is as if the house and garden had in essence all these memories and all her giving and forgiving character embedded there.

Joan had a remarkably strong respect and a loving spirit towards all of nature, which showed in the abundance of plant life not only in the garden but on practically every window sill in the house. She poured out nurture in her garden and received back an abundance of growth and strength of spirit. She gave out joyously to people in every possible way she could and listened intently to everyone's lives, loves, joys and hurts. This seemed to nourish her as well as worry her at times. When her thinking failed prayer was her silent resolve and retreat. She was masterful at keeping in touch with people

through letter writing and remembering birthdays.

Mum was sometimes kind to a fault, always considerate towards others. She found it difficult to say what she really felt or needed which made looking after her in her older years sometimes very difficult indeed, and a great deal of understanding and interpretation was required. For instance when the paramedics arrived when she, having fallen in the bathroom and broken her hip, was more concerned about providing the paramedic with a cup of tea than the comfort of herself!

Mary Rawson ne Marcus

I only knew Joan in her retirement. I first met her in 1989 when she was still playing the piano for Eurythmy lessons, and she kindly invited me, a trainee-teacher, around for a cup of tea.

She had the rare gift of truly listening, so that one felt heard and understood. She would often console me with wise words about teaching based upon her own experiences, and cheer me with a funny anecdote that put in perspective the perennial trials and joys of working with children.

I came to understand what a rich life she had led. She had experienced Nazi Germany before the war, and was present at the closing of the first Waldorf School at Stuttgart; she helped run soup kitchens in London during the Blitz. The baby who had been pushed in the pram by Gustav Holst was later to be the same person to have Robert Plant from the rock band Led Zep-
lin, call round at her door to discuss the Kindergarten for one of his children. She nurtured and treasured a rich

store of memories of so many people who had become friends and acquaintances. She had known so many of the founding figures of Waldorf education, in Edinbrough, Stuttgart and at Michael Hall, but was also equally full of appreciation of her neighbours in the street.

To the end of her life she liked to keep abreast of the news; she sought out stories of people who were striving to do good in difficult circumstances, would think deeply of them, and frequently supported them financially too. She was always ready to help, even with a place to stay, for people needing a temporary sanctuary at some hiatus in their lives. She wasn't blind to people's failings, but wouldn't flinch from helping them sort out their problems. She looked with eyes of compassion, and always calmly sought out the positive in every situation.

Although she was certainly strong-minded, highly-principled and steadfast in her anthroposophical convictions with a strong Christian faith and commitment to The Christian Community, she was not above strong statements of her preferences and prejudices, she was also remarkably open-minded, tolerant and understanding. She had that genuine humility that made her think more of the people that came to her than to dwell on what qualities it was in her that attracted them. Knowing you were in her thoughts made you strive to live up to her estimation! I always went home after my Friday cup of tea feeling refreshed and restored, She helped me feel a better person: I feel honoured to have been known by Joan.

Martin Gulbis

From Inside Out Inner Transformation – Social Innovation

**Summer Conference for Members and Friends of
the Anthroposophical Society in Great Britain**

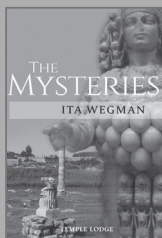
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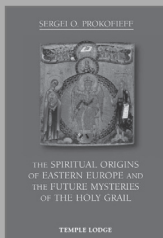
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Tho trained as a eurythmist and worked for many years as a social therapist in Camphill. He is now programme director at the Gross National Happiness Centre in Bhutan and has been engaged in active dialogue with many organisations and individuals—within and beyond the anthroposophical movement—that try to bring innovation and healing to the cultural, social, ecological and economic life.

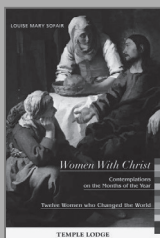
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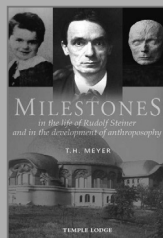
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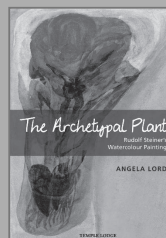
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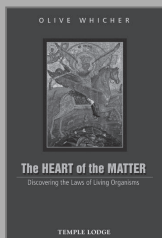
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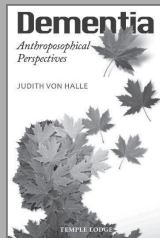
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THE GRAIL AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF CONSCIENCE

St Paul and Parsifal

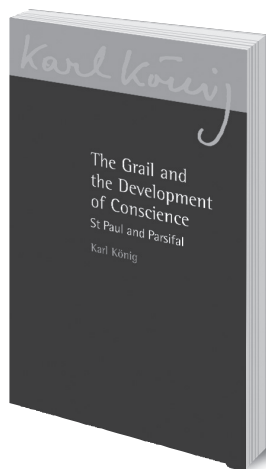
KARL KÖNIG

König often gave lectures based around Christian festivals, and the selection in this book were first presented at Easter time. The central theme here is the development of conscience and memory.

König also discusses subjects close to his heart including the search for the Grail, Parsifal and St Paul, bringing them together in surprising and challenging ways.

Karl König (1902-66) was well-known as a physician, author and lecturer. In 1940 he founded the Camphill Movement, based on the educational ideas of Rudolf Steiner.

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