



## Welsh Spring School Standing Aside or Standing Together?



*Jan Fussell is crowned as the school bard*

ON REACHING Carmarthen, a most welcoming and reassuring sight was the yellow “Bahá’í Conf” signs that directed us towards Trinity College, the venue for the Welsh Spring School.

The theme of the school, “Standing Aside or Standing Together” focused on the empowering of the individual and releasing our potential. The committee’s aim was to “...provide Bahá’ís and their friends with the tools to help

develop the skills to overcome self-imposed limitations, to gain confidence, to become positive and to achieve results.” And what tools there were!

Each day began with creative and powerful images, audio-visual programmes, prayers and readings lovingly put together by Edwina and Arjang Agahi and Carol Spencer. We were invited to reflect and meditate on the reasons behind personal struggles and test and the sacrifices made by the Faith’s martyrs.

A wonderful selection of speakers, Rita and Viv Bartlett, Dr Habib Behi and Dr Isatou Hyde-Foster, spoke on various subjects that illustrated that we were capable, individually and as a community, of overcoming our fears. Presentations by Members of the Auxiliary Board, Azar Melville and Dr Shirin Fozdar- Foroughi focused on personal initiative and being in learning mode, based on the January 9 letter from the Universal House of Justice.

Dr Wendi Momen gave a brief overview of the work of the Bahá’í Office for Social and Economic Development (BOSED). We were also blessed with the presence of Carolyn Wade from the Holy Land, who spoke movingly on the Institutions in Haifa and how everyone working there needed our prayers.

We were spoiled by the choice of workshops which covered 15 subjects: these included, “Skills in Public Speaking”, “Effective Parenting”, “Empowering Ourselves to Teach” and many others. There was a moving theatrical presentation entitled “Chains” which portrayed events in the Siyáh-Chál and a musical drama workshop. For anyone who needed a





*Carolyn Wade from the World Centre*

change of direction, “Fitness for the Physically Flagging” fitted the bill. Throughout we had the gentle encouragement of the hard-working and inspiring facilitators. Quieter moments could be found in the Tranquillity Zone and bookshop.

Meanwhile the children and youth programme of day trips and activities was in full swing. The younger children learnt that everyone is unique and that by lighting the candle of love in their own hearts they can change the world. The older children looked at service and practised putting word into action by making items to sell for the Tierra Santa orphanage which raised £80.

The junior youth learnt that what will inspire them is to live the Bahá’í life and teach the Faith. Finally the youth increased their knowledge of the Five Year Plan by using the arts in the form of interviewing and filming the participants. All activities in the school were attended by trainee teachers from Bath who were studying comparative religion. Their tutor recommended the Bahá’í Welsh spring school.

There was a wide and varied programme of entertainment including poetry reading, singing and music. Jan Fussel was crowned the “School Bard” during the Eisteddfod.

All too soon the last day arrived. Beatrice Kent arranged a presentation in memory of Philip Hainsworth, the school’s letter to the House of Justice was read and then it was time to say our farewells.



*Fun and games at the Celtic evening*

So to the organisers of the spring school I say a heartfelt “thank you” for the love and dedication that went into every aspect of the programme. We discovered unknown skills and enhanced the ones we had, we overcame self-imposed limitations, gained confidence, became positive and achieved results, so that we were able to leave the school standing together to serve our beloved Faith.

Susan Cave

