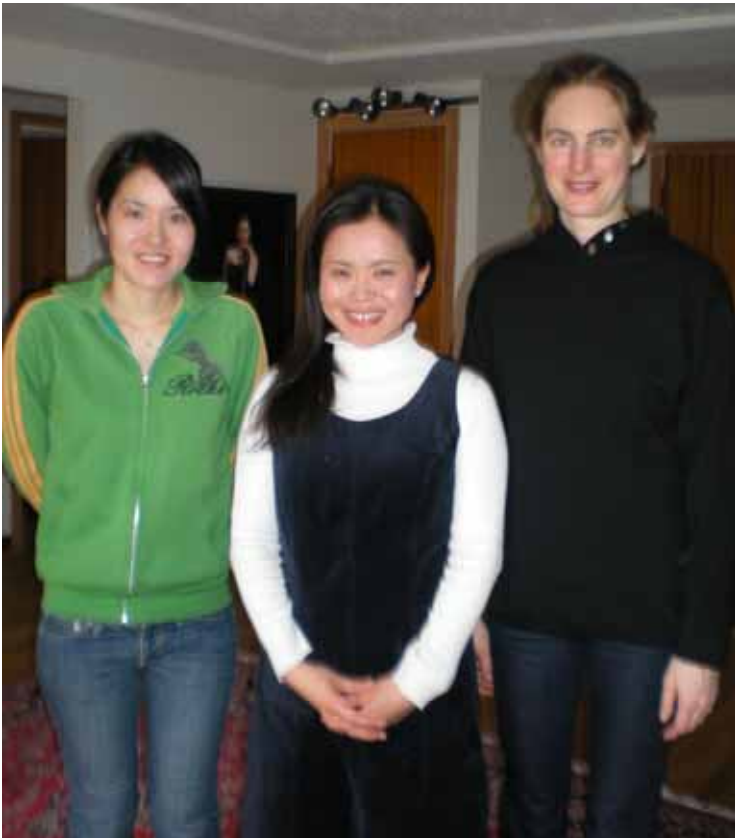


Yumiko Abe and the Japanese Anthroposophical Society

By Diane Ramage, Portland, Oregon

I was asked if I would interview a Japanese friend of Siegward Elsas who was coming to town, and who also belongs to the Japanese Anthroposophical Society. As I speak perhaps four words of Japanese, I asked my daughter-in-law, Sayuri Ramage, who is Japanese, if she would mind translating. The morning of the interview, Chrystal Godleske, who has spent some time in Japan and speaks Japanese well, asked if she could join us. The more the merrier! So, while Siegward was away at work, the four of us had a tea party around his dining room table.



Yumiko Abe greeted us with a calm presence, a warm smile, and paper towels for my damp shoes. While we sipped tea, I asked the questions, and my translators sat on each side, like stereo, and carried on the conversation with her. Each of my questions, which could have been answered with a sentence or two, evoked animated, lengthy, heart-felt response from Yumiko. Her hands

often moved from her heart reaching outwards, as if bearing a nurturing cup of life elixir. My two translators were often so moved, that it took them a while to translate. What I can convey here is but a drop of the ocean that was shared.

She came across Anthroposophy in a Tokyo public library about 7 years ago. She read the book *How to Attain Knowledge of the Higher Worlds*. She had studied religion, psychology and philosophy, but this felt like she was coming home. Before, while seeking knowledge, she had felt sad, as if her lover had died. Now she felt that her loved one had come back to life again.

She says that many books have been translated into Japanese, and also many original Anthroposophical books have been written by Japanese. There were many books in the public library, and they had the address of the Japanese Anthroposophical Society in the back. She immediately looked up the Society, and attended a lecture on karma.

She joined the Society right away, and she joined First Class about three years later. She experienced great relief in realizing that others have the same questions and come together in the Society. Anthroposophy is enormous, and one can enter from many different interests, and still reach the heart and root of Anthroposophy.

Yuji Agematsu is the Head of the Japanese Society. He has been her teacher, and he translates lectures when lecturers come from abroad. He invites many from the Goetheanum and elsewhere. Yuji's wife teaches at the Eurythmy School there.

Waldorf Teacher Training, a 3 year course there, has been ongoing for about 14 years, and the 5th class is graduating this year. There are many Waldorf kindergartens, and some Waldorf schools.

Yumiko attended the three year Teacher Training Course, took part in eurythmy, and study groups on the *Philosophy of Freedom* and the festivals.

There are two small biodynamic farms in Japan, in Hokkaido and Kyushu, but they are on the far ends of

Japan, and Tokyo is in the middle, so they don't get any produce from them. Foreign teachers come to help the farms.

There is no Camphill in Japan.

There is a course for training Anthroposophical Medical doctors. These are doctors who are now in their 5th year of further education in anthroposophical medicine. Dr Michaela Gloeckler has visited there, and the Japanese doctors are now visiting the Goetheanum this year. Yumiko will help facilitate that course at the Goetheanum. They want to open an Anthroposophical Hospital in Japan, that would contain eurythmy and art therapy. However, anthroposophical medicine is facing big challenges in Japan, because it is not yet accepted by insurance companies and the government. Japanese

doctors are hoping that with education and time it will be accepted.

Many Japanese go to study abroad at the Japanese Program at Rudolf Steiner College in Fair Oaks, California, and to Emerson College in England, but return home to work in Japan.

Yumiko first saw the Goetheanum two years ago. She could not believe that anything so modern looking was built over 80 years ago. She returned to Dornach, Switzerland in July, 2007 to attend Wagner's painting school. She had only done watercolor in grade school as part of her public education. She had a secret dream to become an artist. There are so many choices to pursue in Anthroposophy, so she decided that hers would be to develop her soul through color. Many of her teachers at the Wagner school are art therapists. She is not necessarily focused at the moment on being an art therapist, but on spending a year healing herself, and experiencing the spirit world through color. She is not looking for the product, but wants to experience the process. Light and dark--we experience both in art and in our souls.

Still, there is a focus that seems to emanate from our discussion. She has a deep-seated passion and compassion for those who have become mentally disturbed through abuse. In Japan, material needs are satisfied for most people, but spiritual understanding is missing and many people do not know how to treat children well. A Japanese family is private, so thus abuse is hard to discover. There are foster homes in Japan, but not with as much therapy as here. She feels each child needs something specific, but individualized care is lacking. Karma happens, but people can take initiative and make choices to stop the chain of abuse.

In Dornach, she feels good energy from the earth, which surprises me, because many feel pulled down by the limestone. There are several Japanese students she can converse with in the eurythmy school. She feels bad sometimes, and is not thrilled with her living conditions. She was a business woman in Tokyo and is able to live on her savings. Both her parents are deceased. She has a brother, very into Christianity, and a sister who loves being a mother to her children, but neither are into Anthroposophy. She doesn't speak English that well, but she takes part in the English Course from 8 - 9 a.m. each morning, and now she is studying *How to Attain Knowledge of the Higher Worlds* in English. She then attends the painting course from 9 - noon. Then she paints alone. She calls Carolyn Chanter

If you are interested to learn more about the Portland Branch of the Anthroposophical Society, please call Diane Rumage at (360) 241-7854.

The Portland Branch Thanks the following Members and Friends for their Generous Donations in 2008!

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The *Portland Anthroposophic Times* is published twelve times a year by the Portland Branch of the Anthroposophical Society in America to serve members and friends in the wider anthroposophical community. Printed copies of the newsletter are available at the Steiner Storehouse, Portland Waldorf School, Cedarwood Waldorf School, Shining Star and Swallowtail School. The newsletter and calendar are also posted on the Portland Branch website at www.portlandbranch.com.

Questions, suggestions and submissions may be sent by e-mail to anthroposophy@earthlink.net. Items selected for publication in the Portland Anthroposophic Times may be edited for style, content and length. The deadline for submissions to the *Portland Anthroposophic Times* is the first day of each month for publication in that month's edition. Submit calendar items to branchcalendar@mindspring.com no later than the first of each month for publication in the next edition.

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not just a teacher of color, but a colorful teacher, with eyes at the back of her head. Chrystal says Carolyn taught here at the Michael Institute briefly. Often visiting students come and study at the Wagner school for a few months. Every Sunday First Class is given, alternating each week in English and German. She attends many conferences at the Goetheanum, making use of the headphones for English translation from the German.

This past December, at the Christmas Conference in Dornach, it so happened that Siegwand and his mother were staying at a place right next to where she lived. They met walking towards the Goetheanum. Yumiko and Siegwand talked about the Apocalypse, the topic of the Christmas Conference, and Siegwand explained that many Europeans have grown up exposed to the Bible and the Apocalypse, which was not the case for most Japanese. She told him "My light and your light (pointing to her heart) are the same." She thought that was the last she'd see of him. But they kept meeting again and again. She has had many opportunities to visit America, but she never desired to. Meeting Siegwand finally convinced her to come for her first visit this Spring. Even though they come from different language backgrounds, they want to spend more time together. Among the coincidences, Siegwand's father used to teach at the Wagner school. As she put it "life is a miracle."

She expressed a wish that someone would write about the Portland Anthroposophical Branch and work, and submit it to the Japanese newsletter as an exchange. Any interested writers please contact me!

I had invited her to join us for lunch, but we had talked far longer than planned, and she had an easel set up with the first few stages of a watercolor. She wanted to have it ready to mail to Siegwand's mother's for her birthday the following week.

Her visit was only for one month. Hopefully she will return. I would have liked to experience the conversation more fully, as I do not understand Japanese myself. She was obviously painting her responses with her soul, and she was very brave to share that with three strangers and the Portland Branch newsletter readers. Good fortune to you, Yumiko.

Portland Branch Library

Dear Friends & Branch Members: Are you aware that the Branch has responsibility for over 1,000 volumes of books and periodicals related to Anthroposophy?

The library is currently stored at Ruth & Tom Klein's home, upstairs in a lovely room. New and anticipated contributions have created a demand for a new Book Catalog and improved Library awareness among Portland Branch members. Would working on the new Book Catalog appeal to you?

We are seeking a few individuals to gather once in a while to create a new catalog and to care for our Branch library. With an updated catalog, resources will be visible and therefore, more accessible. Please call me if you can spend a few hours helping to foster use of this wonderful resource. The first plan is to spend some hours on a few Saturdays to update the existing catalog. Call Marsha Johnson at 503 309 4223 or e-mail her at Oregon7@aol.com if you would like to help.

News from the Portland Branch Council

By Betty Baldwin, Portland, Oregon

Our monthly council meetings are split between a lively study of the theme of the year, "Practices Leading to a Culture of the Heart", and a business meeting. Both the study and the business meetings are open, and we warmly invite you to attend. Our next meeting will take place at Ruth and Tom Klein's home on May 28.

During the business portion of the April meeting, we reviewed events which we had recently sponsored; the visits of Glen Williamson and Nancy Poer. We also decided to update cataloging our Anthroposophical library, which is located at Ruth and Tom Klein's home. We have the possibility of adding books donated by the Los Angeles Branch library to our collection. We ended our meeting by scheduling two festival celebrations, Whitsun at Betty Baldwin's home and Saint John's at Pamela Guettler's. Details about the festivals can be found in our calendar.

Newsletter Submittal Dates

Submit your articles and calendar information to the Portland Branch Newsletter by the last day of each month for the next month's newsletter, which is published on the 15th of each month.

Living into Dying

By James Lee, Portland, OR

Quite a few community members attended the April lecture and workshop with Nancy Poer and Jannebeth Röell that was sponsored by the Portland Branch. The event was complemented by perfect, sunny and mild spring days where the theme could unfold and develop with doors and windows wide open.

The workshop included hands on demonstrations, sharing and a home movie chronicling the dying of Nancy's brother. The spectacle of spring coming to expression in the garden and lively banter among the participants at lunch made for quite a contrast with the theme; or did it?



Quite a few participants decided to continue working with the theme, to learn more about Oregon laws pertaining to death care, and to perhaps cultivate a core group capable of responding and providing support in the community when a death event occurs. Interested participants have decided to meet in May to investigate local laws pertaining to death and dying and to seek solutions for dying at home. Call Jannebeth Röell at (503) 249-3807 for information or e-mail her at jannebeth@mindspring.com.

I was taken by the poetry of a Waldorf student concerning the death of a loved one. **For you, Papa** is from Kirsten Bergh's book of poetry *She Would Draw Flowers*. Waldorf education gave her a holistic view of the world while encouraging self-expression. At age 16 Kirsten faced the death of her father and other personal life challenges. Poetry was her way of penetrating through her grief and loss to confirm that love is the

strongest thread in the fabric of life. Kirsten was 17 when she died suddenly in a car accident.

For You, Papa

I thought I heard your footsteps
running toward me,
Disturbing the stones.
But when I opened my eyes,
I saw it was only the waves,
pulling and swirling like hands.

I thought I felt your smile,
Warm and loving upon my face.
But when I opened my eyes,
I saw it was only the sun,
Beaming at me from across the water.

I thought I heard you
Whisper my name.
But when I opened my eyes
I realized it was only the wind
Playing in my hair.

I thought I felt you
Softly kiss my cheek.
But when I opened my eyes,
I saw it was only a leaf
Caressing me with gentle strokes.

And then I felt your love
In and all around me.
Powerful yet gentle like the waves,
Warm and shining like the sun,
Soft yet strong like the wind,
Tender and alive like the leaves.
And I didn't even have
To open my eyes.
I knew you were there.

Summer Accommodation required: The Michael Institute needs rooms in houses for out of town participants in the Summer Conferences at Portland Waldorf School. These conferences are Early Childhood June 16th thru 27th; Class Teachers June 5th thru 10th; Christof Wiechert Conference June 10th thru 12th; and Class Teachers June 14th thru 19th. If you are willing to let a room in your house please specify room with bath, room with shared bath or shared room with bath, and whether or not your household has smoking or pets. E-mail johncmiles@usa.net or call 503 774-4946 for rates of compensation.

Portland Anthroposophical Society Calendar - May 2008

Ongoing Events and Study Groups

African Drumming

Every Thursday evening from 7-8 pm in the high school building of Portland Waldorf School (2300 SE Harrison Street, Milwaukie). \$40 for 5 lessons, \$10 drop-in. Drums provided. No experience necessary. Marion Van Namen (503) 956-4046.

Anthroposophical Medicine Study Group

Once a month Monday (after the second Sunday) at the Takacs Clinic 7-8:30 PM. John Takacs at johntakacsdo@hotmail.com or Kevin Kane at drkev@involved.com.

Curative Education

Second and fourth Friday 7:30 PM – 9PM study of Rudolf Steiner's *Education for Special Needs*. Call Betty Baldwin for information 503-747-6367.

Deepening Our Experience with the Six Basic Exercises

Saturday 9:00-10:00 AM once a month. Beginning and advanced students welcome. 2525 NE 13th Ave, Portland, OR 97212. For information call Twila at (503) 281-9349 or write her by e-mail at Twila@spiritone.com

Eurythmy

Training offered by Portland Eurythmy on weekends and evenings. Please contact Natasha Moss at 503 233-0663.

Karmic Relationships

Working through Rudolf Steiner's Karmic Relationships Cycle of lectures. Call James Lee for information 503 249-3804 or e-mail him at anthroposophy@earthlink.net.

Mystery Dramas, with Speech-Formation Exercises

Two Wednesdays a month, 7:30 - 9:00 PM in Portland. Currently working with Rudolf Steiner's *Portal of Initiation* and the *Genesis* lectures. No acting experience necessary, just a love of the Word. Call Diane Ramage at 360 241-7854 for information.

Mystery Knowledge and Mystery Centers

Meeting once a month on the fourth Thursday at 7 PM at Bothmer Hall. Contact Joan Takacs by e-mail at joantakacs@yahoo.com.

Occult Science

Meeting weekly on Tuesdays from 7:30 - 9:00 pm at 3046 NE 33rd Avenue, Portland, OR 97212. Contact Diane Ramage 360 241-7854 for information.

Portland Waldorf School Community Choir

Every Friday morning from 8:45 - 10:00 am (at the Portland Waldorf School, 2300 SE Harrison Street, Milwaukie) in the music room of the high school building, whenever school is in session. Anyone in- and outside the PWS community who enjoys singing songs through the seasons, across the centuries and around the world is very welcome, including drop ins. This event is free and a community builder. More information: Marion Van Namen (503) 956-4046.

Portland Youth Discussion Group

The Portland Youth Discussion Group, a group of people youthful in mind, body and spirit, gathers to discuss questions of how Anthroposophy compares and relates to other ideas in the realms of philosophy, spirituality, religion, economics, social activism, individual and social development, and relationships. We welcome new people who are open to exploring Spiritual Science and conducting their own research to join us. For more information, please contact Leslie Loy at (503) 819-3399 or leslielal@yahoo.com.

Spinning and Spiritual Science

Gathering on the first Saturday of each month, 3 PM to 5PM, to study *Art as Spiritual Activity*, lectures by Rudolf Steiner 1888-1923. We work with the fiber arts and spinning wheels. Call Marsha Johnson 503- 309- 4223 to sign up.

Waldorf Education and Teacher Training

Lectures and courses conducted throughout the year by the Micha-el Institute. Contact John Miles at 503/774-4946. johncmiles@usa.net

CALENDAR ENTRIES

Submit your calendar entries early for best effect. Send them by e-mail to the Portland Branch Newsletter at branchcalendar@mindspring.com

Upcoming Events

Sunday, MAY 11

First Class of the School of Spiritual Science

Bothmer Hall, Blue card required – Discussion on Lesson 7 at 8:30 AM, class at 9:30 AM sharp. Lesson 8. Please contact Jannebeth Röell (503) 249-3807 or Diane Rumage at (360) 241-7854.

MAY 24 - 25

Facing Karma in Life and Rudolf Steiner's Mystery Dramas

Those who are young at heart are warmly invited to attend an anthroposophical youth conference on the weekend of May 24-25, 2008 (Memorial weekend) at Heartbeat Lifesharing in Hardwick, Vermont. For further information and the suggested list for pre-reading, please contact Rachel Schwartz at raugustina@hotmail.com or 802-472-9573.

Wednesday MAY 28

Portland Branch Council Meeting

7 PM – 8PM study of the theme of the year followed by a business meeting at the home of Ruth and Tom Klein, 3609 SE Center, Portland OR 97202, phone: 503-777-3176. All Branch members are welcome to attend.

MAY 29 – JUNE 1

Senior Play: The Three Penny Opera

Portland Waldorf School seniors have chosen the 1928 Berthold Brecht/ Kurt Weill musical *The Threepenny Opera* for their end-of-year production. Raucous, bawdy, and satiric, the play features the well-known song, "Mack the Knife." Because of its nature, the play is only appropriate for high school students and adults. It will be performed at Warner Pacific College, 2219 SE 68th Ave just off SE Division St., May 29, 30, 31 at 7 PM, June 1 at 5 pm. Tickets will be \$13 for adults, \$8 for students.

Thursday, MAY 29

Renewal of Religion

Lecture by Sanford Miller, a priest from the Christian Community visiting Portland. 7PM at Bothmer Hall, 5909 SE Division St. Contact Lucia Mello 503- 892- 5296 or luciamello@earthlink.net . Donations welcome.

Friday, MAY 30

Why Rituals?

Lecture by Sanford Miller, a priest from the Christian Community visiting Portland 7PM at Bothmer Hall, 5909 SE Division St. Contact Lucia Mello 503- 892- 5296 or luciamello@earthlink.net Donations welcome.

Saturday, MAY 31

Confirmation and Baptism

Conversation with Sanford Miller, a priest from the Christian Community about confirmation for youths 14 to 16 years old at 10:30 AM; Conversation about baptism at 2:30 PM, both events at Bothmer Hall, 5909 SE Division St. Contact Lucia Mello 503- 892- 5296 or luciamello@earthlink.net . Donations welcome.

Sunday, JUNE 1

Religious Services

For complete schedule contact Lucia Mello 503- 892- 5296 or luciamello@earthlink.net . Donations welcome.

Sunday, JUNE 8

First Class of the School of Spiritual Science

Bothmer Hall, Blue card required – Discussion on Lesson 8 at 8:30 AM, class at 9:30 AM sharp. Lesson 9. Please contact Jannebeth Röell 503/249-3807 or Diane Rumage at (360) 241-7854.

JUNE 16 – 27

Early Childhood Intensive Conference—"Cosmic and Earthly Rhythms"

See brochure for details, held at Portland Waldorf School, 2300 SE Harrison, Milwaukie. If you are willing to let a room in your house please e-mail johncmiles@usa.net or call 503 774-4946 for rates of compensation.

JUNE 24

Celebrating Saint John's Day

The celebration will take place at Pam Guettler's home, 19265 SE Heuke Road, Boring OR 97009. For directions call 503-658-8197 or e-mail pguettler@attbi.com.

JUNE 28

Micha-el Institute Graduation

11AM held in the Music Room at Portland Waldorf School, 2300 SE Harrison, Milwaukie. Contact 503 774-4946 or email johncmiles@usa.net.

JULY 5 - 10

Micha-el Institute – Class Teacher Deepening Conferences Grades 5, 6, 7 or 8

Speakers will include Christof Wiechert [Leader of the Pedagogical Section] See brochure for details, held at Portland Waldorf School, 2300 SE Harrison, Milwaukie. If you are willing to let a room in your house please e-mail johncmiles@usa.net or call 503 774-4946 for rates of compensation.

JULY 10 - 12**Micha-el Institute – “Harmonizing and Enlivening the Waldorf Community”**

A workshop with Christof Wiechert for teachers, parents, board members and administrative staff. See brochure for details, held at Portland Waldorf School, 2300 SE Harrison, Milwaukie. If you are willing to let a room in your house please e-mail johncmiles@usa.net or call 503-774-4946 for rates of compensation.

JULY 14- 19**Micha-el Institute – Class Teacher Deepening Conferences Grades 1, 2, 3 or 4**

See brochure for details, held at Portland Waldorf School, 2300 SE Harrison, Milwaukie. If you are willing to let a room in your house please e-mail johncmiles@usa.net or call 503- 774-4946 for rates of compensation.

JULY 17-20**Young Economist Course**

The course is intended for students who study economics and (young) people who are active in business but everybody with a strong interest in economics is welcome to attend. The course will be held at the Goetheanum, Switzerland, in the English language. Contact: Els Woutersen, [Els Woutersen@yahoo.com](mailto:Els.Woutersen@yahoo.com).

AUGUST 12-16**Mystery Drama Conference**

The Threefold Mystery Drama Group in Spring Valley, NY, under the direction of Barbara Renold, is planning a conference on the theme of the connection between Goethe's fairy tale, *The Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily*, and Rudolf Steiner's first mystery drama, "The Portal of Initiation". Contact Barbara Renold at barbararenold@yahoo.com or by telephone at 845-356-0674.

AUGUST 18 - 21**Micha-el Institute – Home Schooling Workshop “The Power of Imagination”**

See brochure for details, at Shining Star School, 4317 NE Emerson, Portland OR 97218. Contact 503 774-4946 or email johncmiles@usa.net.

AUGUST 22- 26**Micha-el Institute – Foundation Conference**

See brochure for details, at Shining Star School, 4317 NE Emerson, Portland OR 97218. Contact 503 774-4946 or email johncmiles@usa.net.

Friday, OCTOBER 24**An Anthroposophical Publisher's Private Conversations with Saul Bellow on Spirituality**

A lecture given by Stephen Usher. This lecture tells the story of how Saul Bellow came to write the foreword to Rudolf Steiner's *Boundaries Of Natural Science*. In the process of obtaining the foreword publisher Stephen Usher came to know Bellow and had a number of interesting talks with him about Steiner's spiritual scientific discoveries including those described in *Work of the Angel in Man's Astral Body*. The talk will explore the conversations and Bellow's attitude to Steiner and Anthroposophy. It will also discuss what Bellow had to say about Steiner in *HUMBOLDT'S GIFT*, a book for which Bellow received the Pulitzer prize. 8PM Location TBA, admission \$15.00.

Saturday, OCTOBER 25**Anthroposophist Rudolf Steiner & the Three-Folding of Society**

A lecture by Stephen Usher. The lecture will explore the history of the threefold idea, the idea, and its opponents. Going back to 1917 Stephen Usher will point to the moment when Steiner first postulated the idea in a conversation with Otto Lerchenfeld in response to Lerchenfeld's heartfelt question about how to bring some sanity into the madness of the First World War. The basic threefold idea will then be outlined along with Steiner's idea of the Fundamental Social Law and the Law of True Price. From there the lecture will look at the opponents of the Threefold idea both historical and current. 8PM Location TBA, admission \$15.00

Sunday, OCTOBER 26**The Christmas Foundation Conference and the Foundation Stone**

In this presentation Stephen Usher explores the central event of the Christmas Foundation Conference of the Anthroposophical Society (Dec. 1923-Jan 1924) with particular emphasis on the events of December 25, 1923. In particular the talk will explore the distinction between the Christmas Foundation Verse and the Foundation Stone itself. Members with Pink cards only, 4 PM Location TBA, admission \$15.00

AUGUST 1-8, 2009**Encircling Light-Expectant Silence**

Anthroposophical Society in Canada hosts this conference on the North in White Horse, Yukon. Full details about all aspects of the Conference will be available on our website, www.encirclinglight.ca, which will be in operation early in 2008. The flyer can be viewed online at PortlandBranch.com.

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