



# Many to Many



**1931 - 2020**

**A recording of Gita's funeral service can be found at the following link – use Live Stream button top right - [www.clevelandfunerals.co.nz](http://www.clevelandfunerals.co.nz)**

**Kate Smith PTU Co-worker 48 Parsons Street, Whanganui, 4501, NZ**

**Website: [www.peacethroughunity.info](http://www.peacethroughunity.info)**

**Email [optuwhanganui@gmail.com](mailto:optuwhanganui@gmail.com)**

**ORDER THE EMAIL EDITION OF MANY TO MANY BY SENDING AN EMAIL TO: [optusteve@earthlink.net](mailto:optusteve@earthlink.net) with 'Many to Many subscribe' in the subject line.**

## Contents

A time for change?.....	3
The history of Many to Many.....	4
Neighbours, far and near.....	6
MEETING GITA.....	7
From the heart to many.....	9
In Memory of Gita Brooke 1931 – 2020.....	10
Gita Connected Through the Heart.....	11
~ HONORING GITA BROOKE’S LEGACY ~.....	12
Remembering Gita.....	14
A Crucial Networker moves on; the challenges remain.....	16
An outburst of Joy and Gratitude.....	16
Joy of the Journey with Gita Brooke.....	18
MY TRIBUTE - WORDS OF LOVE & ADMIRATION – FOR GITA !.....	19
*Archives -- Towards Peace Through Unity, 1975.....	21
.....	21
The Opportunity for Peace in the Times of COVID-19.....	24
Some Uplifting News:.....	26
Brazilian Female Artisan Organization.....	28
The Impact of the Virus on the Climate.....	28
THE GREAT INVOCATION.....	30

## **A time for change?**

A change in our world and the way we live has been expected: a break down of the existing order being necessary first to be replaced by something different. But it is hard to have predicted just what would precipitate such a change. The existing political and economic structures although showing obvious signs of pressure, were limping on as usual. The environment has been under severe pressure with only odd pockets of recognition of the urgent need to change. Challenges to the health of the planet and all of its inhabitants were being recognised even if they were not being tackled or solved. There have even been outbreaks of deadly viruses which have spread widely and affected different parts of the world.

So what makes Covid-19 so different from the others? Where did it come from? And why now? Could it be that we had been deaf to previous warning signs and been so complacent and arrogant to assume that we could overcome anything by using our advanced technology, money and 'superior' thinking? Has this attitude been compounded more recently by the retreat from a global vision of co-operation to an earlier emphasis on national self-interest? There seem to have been many King Canute-like attempts at forcefully telling Covid-19 to go away! They have not been any more successful than keeping the tides at bay.

The effects of the attempts to control the spread of the virus and to deal with its casualties are being felt by everyone, no matter where they are in the world. And these effects are not equally shared – there are definitely those better placed to withstand the measures applied such as the 'haves' with a second home in safe areas, while the 'have-nots' suffer greatly by already living in poverty or as refugees and displaced persons. Some have houses with gardens; others live in condominiums with a balcony; others again have no shelter. But all will suffer hardship to some degree from the need to restrict physical distance between each other in an attempt to stop the virus spreading.

We must look forward to something better resulting from the apparent current chaos. The time of metamorphosis is coming when we will all begin a new life – a new way of living, when released from our 'cocoons'. We are being given the opportunity to make fundamental changes to our lifestyle – to move away from the mindset of individual greed and materialism, to a spiritual ethos of peaceful sharing and co-operation, where all living beings will share the planet's remaining resources as precious gifts from the Universe.

## The history of *Many to Many*

*“Many to Many” is a quarterly publication under the aegis of Peace Through Unity as a communicating link between “we, the peoples” of all nations, races, creeds and ideologies offering in the spirit of the preamble of the United Nations Charter an instrument for the furthering of better relationships based on deepening mutual understanding and the aspiration to promote unity and cooperation beyond all differences.’*

*Many to Many* began as a ‘modest networker’ to connect peace workers. Spanning nearly 40 years and 144 issues to date, it forms an impressive record of individual and collective efforts for a culture of peace and shares a strong vision for a better future.

The first issue was published by Peace Through Unity (PTU) in 1982. Soon after it began, Gita Brooke, co-founder of PTU, was mailing a quarterly issue to people in over 50 countries spread across 4 continents. In 2006, distribution changed to an email list managed by Steve Nation, PTU co-worker, with over 100 subscribers. However, as the name encourages, *Many to Many* has probably reached many more hands.

### The four phases of *Many to Many*

I analyzed *Many to Many* as research for my Master’s thesis on PTU. While the vision of PTU remained constant, *Many to Many* has evolved over the years in form and content, which I grouped into four phases:

1. **1982-1989:** *Many to Many* is comprised of letters from people around the world sharing creative and imaginative visions of peace and how to achieve it on a personal and/or societal level. Gita told me these spontaneous declarations felt like quite a new phenomenon at the time. The letters were simply photocopied and attached to a contents page and opening letter from Gita and Anthony Brooke. However, it was difficult soliciting and receiving letters in a timely way when the Brookes were constantly travelling with no fixed address.
2. **1990-1997:** *Many to Many* still features letters from individuals but there are more from organizations on specific campaigns. Gita and Anthony include regular updates on the Antarctic Peace Park campaign and the state of the rainforests in Sarawak which they were involved with heavily during this time. Gita did more editorial work in selecting and writing articles which she was able to do more easily from their new home in Whanganui.
3. **1997-2006:** After PTU became an accredited non-governmental organisation with the United Nations Department of Public Information (UNDPI), Gita consciously included more UN related content. She felt it was their duty as an accredited NGO to network information about UN activities and agencies. *Many to Many* is online from 1997.
4. **2006-2019:** This is the form most of us are familiar with. *Many to Many* contains articles on salient UN events, themes and decisions related to a culture of peace with contributions from local and international co-workers. Each issue begins with an editorial and finishes with *The Great Invocation*.

The form of *Many to Many* has changed a lot from Phase 1 to 4, from mostly handwritten posted letters to articles distributed online. This change reflects the

Brookes lifestyle from constant travel to settling in Whanganui as well as changes in communication technology. However, throughout the phases, the main themes of the content of *Many to Many* have been consistent: education, transformation and responsibility.

### **The vision of Peace Through Unity for a world in crisis**

The themes of education, transformation and responsibility are integral to the vision of PTU for a culture of peace shaped by cooperative relationships based on mutual understanding. The beautiful and visionary editorials of *Many to Many* which open and frame each issue often muse on aspects of these themes.

Editorials on transformation explore the devastating impacts of climate change or economic collapse on people and the planet. While the crisis may be external, transformation starts internally with the emergence of a new mindset to meet these challenges. The formation of a new mindset based on deeper understanding links to the theme of education. Education for peace is connected to the great hope placed in young people to shape the future. We each have a responsibility for our mindsets and our resulting actions, to promote respectful and cooperative relationships leading to unity, rather than division and despair.

This vision is especially relevant in the face of the novel coronavirus pandemic (Covid-19). In New Zealand, the Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern has asked us to unite against Covid-19. We were in Alert Level 4 lockdown for over a month. Telling us to unite while physically separate may sound ironic. But it's about the cooperative mindset with which we face this challenge as a collective. We have united in our shared action of staying at home and our shared understanding that this will save lives. Eliminating the spread of the virus only works if we all play our part. This collective understanding has grown through effective and clear communication.

Our PM has repeatedly asked us to be kind. She has responded compassionately to the hardship and sacrifices lockdown has caused for many New Zealanders. Without doubt, our government values the health of its people above all else. The swift, collective response of NZ is a huge contrast to other countries where the pandemic has exacerbated division and conflict. While the circumstances are traumatic, our PM's crisis leadership has normalised the ideas of a culture of peace in the mainstream. I believe how we have responded as a nation to the pandemic will shape our responses to future crises with a greater understanding of the importance of peace through unity.

### **Where to find *Many to Many***

The early (phase 1) issues of *Many to Many* are held at Te Rangi, Whanganui and are in the process of being digitised. All issues from 1991 to the present are available at the National Library of New Zealand. You can find phase 3 and 4 issues online:

- Issues 62: Dec 1997 to 80: June 2002 at <http://www.isleofavalon.co.uk/GlastonburyArchive/manymany/mm-index.html>
- Issues 71: Mar 2000 to 94: Dec 2005 at <http://www.angelfire.com/journal/brooke2000/>
- Issues 95: Mar 2006 to the present at: [http://www.peacethroughunity.info/manytomany\\_archives1.html](http://www.peacethroughunity.info/manytomany_archives1.html) and [http://www.peacethroughunity.info/manytomany\\_archives.html](http://www.peacethroughunity.info/manytomany_archives.html)

**Meredith Paterson** completed her Master of International Relations from Victoria University of Wellington in 2016. Her thesis is called *Communicating a Culture of Peace in Aotearoa New Zealand: the vision of Peace Through Unity*. She works as a public servant and letterpress printer in Wellington, New Zealand. [meredithpt@gmail.com](mailto:meredithpt@gmail.com)

## Neighbours, far and near...

*Far neighbour, Basil:*

The journey began for me in December 1979 with Gita riding in to the Tauhara Centre in Taupo on Anthony Brooke's coat tails for a stay of several weeks. Apart from their sage guidance as I took up the management reins there, and the recognition of the depth of their inter-personal connection, a large and elegant floral arrangement left me with an indelible impression from that time. Despite there being abundant flowers in the Centre gardens, this beautiful floral arrangement was entirely from a roadside harvest—100% Gita and what was freely given.

Reports from their stateless years of constant travel in response to their inner promptings flowed in, revealing dimensions of life from all over the globe as they pursued the earth's opening to unity. That era was punctuated by return visits taking in the Tauhara Centre, giving opportunities to recharge and reflect on directions. Gita had climbed off the coat tails to fly alongside, by now. They had become a seamlessly complementary team.

By the time they settled above the great Whanganui River my base was back in Auckland, six hours drive away. During twice yearly visits with my pick and chainsaw I became a neighbour from afar amidst a community of more local neighbours, each drawn in individual ways by the clear notes that emanated. As the years flowed out and older age crept in, both leading and the load moved progressively onto Gita. Anthony loved their home and stayed on and on, calling out all Gita's incredible inner strength. After his passing, she shared: "Most of the time I manage to stay focused on what is on the plate to be done, but all of a sudden I run into a whirlpool of utter grief. A sock, or a towel I used to comfort him with; the straws he needed for drinking... I have to be stern with myself and remember how relieved Anthony looked in the very last moments; a sense of peaceful relief and release so overwhelmingly complete and authentic that, when I recall it, restores the sense of thankfulness that I continue to feel, most of the time."

The ship steadied again and *Many to Many* continued, always on time and with meticulously attuned lead articles reaching out around the world. The times would, inevitably, change. A new kind of US president was an aid in the collapse of old Piscean structures, needed in making way for the new. One thing remained for her to do. The deep work at the United Nations had given rise to a sister over 20 years, but they had never physically met. Then Iris Spellings arrived, they touched, and Gita was free to go.

*Near neighbour, Sue:*

The day she passed away I woke with the feeling that it could be Gita's last on this earth. The curtains were still drawn and the house locked, as I had left them on the previous evening. This was a sign.

I walked through her house and down the hallway, calling to her. She faintly responded. Gita was still in bed—something unheard of. She was waiting, perhaps, for both me and the inevitable.

Gita was calm and steady, as always.

On returning to her bedroom with a cuppa for us both, I found her in her bathroom and helped her back to bed. She still had that steely, but now awfully fragile, determination.

I moved a chair closer to her bed and sat holding her hand. I could tell that the pull to the other side had gained momentum.

As Gita lay there she asked for a hug. We always hugged, every time we met, as she and Anthony had always done with everybody they greeted. Our hug was fragile, gentle and prolonged. Gita whispered, “thank you for being my friend”, and, “I love you”. I responded with the same words. When our embrace ended, Gita was no longer there.

Her departure was very gentle and tranquil.

Gita had a strong connection with every living object, be it a flower, a bird or a person. Her life’s purpose was to walk gently on this planet and to serve humanity with her ultimate goal in mind—peace. She knew it was her time for a change of season—a time to move to another dimension—and she wholly embraced that move. This valiant soldier was now at rest.

How honoured and privileged am I to have had Gita as a friend, and to have been with her as she passed on to the next world. I’m a much better person for having had her in my life.

**Basil Avery** [basil@otm.co.nz](mailto:basil@otm.co.nz) and, **Sue O’Leary** [susieholeary@gmail.com](mailto:susieholeary@gmail.com)

## MEETING GITA....

Gita once said that the deeper and richer the experience, the more words are inadequate to express and describe the experience....So it was with meeting Gita.

We lived on opposite sides of the world—Gita in Whanganui, New Zealand and I in New York City. We shared reverse hours of morning and night, and despite all of this we worked in sync. We knew each other well ‘from the inside out’ long before meeting face to face—at least this life. Last February, the mutual dream of meeting finally became possible.

Our history together began when Gita asked Jan Nation if she knew someone in NYC who might be willing to represent PEACE THROUGH UNITY (PTU) at the United Nations (UN) and send regular information, which could be used for articles in *Many to Many (MtM)*. Jan and I had met at a conference several years earlier, and at Jan’s suggestion Gita and Anthony contacted me. 1998 was pre-computer, so we faxed a few letters back and forth—one of which included my birth time as requested by Anthony—and so commenced our relationship.

I had no idea what to expect. Prior skills as a professional artist appeared to fall short for what was ahead, yet I was curious, eager to learn and willing to help Jan's co-workers with the mailings. Little did I realize that this time would become a turning point for me.

My position with PTU has always been volunteer. Little was ever asked of me aside from attending UN meetings, sending materials and occasionally writing articles for *MtM*. A request from Gita was always in the form of a suggestion, and *never* mandatory. She trusted the rhythmic flow of life and also extended that trust and freedom to me, which allowed us to work freely to the best of our ability within the energies as they unfolded. What began as a little tributary in my life, over time, would become a mighty river.

The structureless organic ethos of PTU aligned perfectly with me. There were many other things we shared in common. One of which was thinking 'outside the box' and, therefore, an equal aversion to filling out forms. Over the years, there were plenty. Between us we managed. I would start by filling in facts, the data as I knew it, and then I'd send it on to Gita who would not only answer the question, yet honestly and completely answered it in a way that humanized it so that anyone reading it would realize this information is not just about facts. The 'answer' is beyond the question asked, beyond just filling in information—it's about what *makes* us human...it's about heart.

As February grew near, I was surprised to see that the excitement and anticipation of this meeting had spread to those nearest and dearest to me. Within the 22 years we worked together, we spoke on the phone less than 5 times, and never via Facetime, Zoom or the like. All of our correspondence was email, aside from a few cards and notes in the mail....*What would it be like meeting for the first time and being in each other's presence?*

Finally, on 17 February 2020, our eyes locked in magnetic connection revealing what our hearts already knew. It was a precious 'full on' week together; morning to night conversing over endless cups of Russian Caravan tea. In person I heard the softness in her voice; discovered that she is one of the most sensitive people I've known and certainly the deepest thinker. Her life was complex and she seemed to have endured more than her share of suffering over the years. Her soul, on the other hand, was the accumulation of lifetimes of experiences producing a woman who was a wise, strong, loving, liberated, free thinker...aligned on the side of the Good, the True and the Beautiful. Empathetic and compassionate beyond measure...a beloved friend to all...be they places, plants, animals or the two-legged variety.

She had a gift for language....or rather, the gift was actually bestowed upon the receiver, the listener, the reader. Her precisely chosen words brought light to new alternative ways of thinking and perspectives that will continue to broaden understanding and usher in a new way of life. Nowhere is it better illustrated than in the pamphlet "*Towards Peace Through Unity*", which was written (perhaps by both Gita and Anthony) and published in July 1975, immediately following the founding, in Sweden, of PEACE THROUGH UNITY. Its message is as significant today as it ever was, if not more so. \*(See Page 23)

[http://www.peacethroughunity.info/archives\\_1975pam.html](http://www.peacethroughunity.info/archives_1975pam.html))



Soon into our visit, it became clear that part of my purpose of being with Gita in her final days was to show her the freedom that she had shown me over all these years and finally let go. The day I left, her last word was “VAMOOSE!” as she stood by the door and waved us off.

The following morning, I received a call from Basil (Avery) that Gita had made her transition. Her physical life was complete. No doubt, our work together will continue.

**Iris Spellings** [optu.ny@gmail.com](mailto:optu.ny@gmail.com)

*PEACE THROUGH UNITY, UN NGO Representative to the Department of Global Communications*

### **From the heart to many**

When old friends meet after a long time, often hours will be spent to catch up on all the things, no matter how trivial that may be, with stories that bring back all the treasured memories and feelings that come from the time and experience spent and lived together. All those moments spent will once again become memories, until the next time we meet; kept in a very special place inside of us. But then one day, when the time comes that seeing in person becomes impossible, perhaps the best that one could do is to recall all the episodes and events, then put them into words to tell the history. The following is what I believe was the very beginning of my encounter with Operation Peace through Unity (OPTU). *[Ed note: Operation was added to PTU but more recently omitted: some will recognize both.]*

It was an unusual circumstance that led me initially into contact with Anthony and Gita, which happened during my first year studying in New Zealand, as an overseas student. I was approached by a senior fellow student who lived in the same boarding house, he was busy gathering signature support for the anti-whaling campaign to bring to the International Whaling Commission meeting that was to be held in Kyoto, Japan at the time. This appeal was indeed very intriguing to me, as never before that time had I the opportunity to come across any grassroot level social campaign. Apart from the “whale” at first sight, I was also introduced to the “Antarctica World Peace Park” Campaign, that appealed for a place that is free from exploitation of natural resources and sovereignty by any states. Thanks to these campaigns and the best intentions that came with them, I was put in contact with the work of OPTU.

I remember the first time I was invited to join a gathering at Te Rangi with fellow students in Wanganui. Anthony and Gita were sharing with us about the ongoing campaigns that they had been working on and how it is connected deep down within the heart of all humanities. That very first encounter opened up my horizon and made a positive impact in my upbringing. What inspired me the most was that I have learnt as an individual living on this planet, we have the responsibility to protect and nurture, as well as the power to make positive changes for generations to come. From that day on, I have been a co-worker of OPTU, and no matter where I have moved and resided ever since, there was nothing that could stop the purpose and the urge for peace yearning from inside of me.

Over the past 20 years, the one campaign that I have been working closely with OPTU and the other NGO that I work for in Hong Kong, is on a “Culture of Peace”. According to the definition adopted by the United Nations General Assembly

through the resolution 52/13 of 1998, a Culture of Peace consists “of values, attitudes and behaviours that reflect and inspire social interaction and sharing based on the principles of freedom, justice and democracy, all human rights, tolerance and solidarity, that reject violence and endeavour to prevent conflicts by tackling their root causes to solve problems through dialogue and negotiation and that guarantee the full exercise of all rights and the means to participate fully in the development process of their society”.

It was truly an amazing experience to witness the birth of The “Handspan” project at Wanganui dedicated to a Culture of Peace in 2002. A project that was initiated by OPTU and created jointly with a cross section of the local community in bringing this into life. Whenever I go back to visit Wanganui, I always stop by at this gigantic peace sculpture and feel its magic for what it represents. Also I am reminded that since my very own hand print is there, fixed on the upward spiral path that forms the Handspan, it is a commitment on my part I shall always join hands with others and continue this ongoing journey for bringing peace to all.

Looking back to the time that I have spent with Anthony and Gita as co-workers and friends, I feel deeply that the connection among us was built on the mutual understanding and respect for the greatness of humanity that binds us together, and I have no doubt that this connection is being spread and carried to others tirelessly by all the OPTU co-workers, from the heart to the many on this planet, which we have inherited to look after for our future generations.

**Eric H.Y.Wong** [ericwong729@gmail.com](mailto:ericwong729@gmail.com)

## **In Memory of Gita Brooke 1931 – 2020**

A Tribute by Ralph Wallace

For anyone who had the privilege of meeting Gita Brooke, they would not fail to be impressed by a woman of remarkable character. And one person who must have been truly struck by Gita’s strength of character was Anthony Brooke, the last Rajah of Sarawak. Meeting Anthony marked a watershed in Gita’s life, and as I reflect on that life (from the stories Gita shared with me), I feel sure Gita would agree with me.

Relationship is the cornerstone of any life, and for Gita, relationship was all important and what I appreciated most in my personal connection with Gita. Relationship provides the testing ground for our values, and for me, Gita would never hesitate to bring to bear her profound wisdom in gentle, sometimes not so gentle ways but always with tact and integrity, shining the true light of wisdom on what life experiences revealed to me and that I shared with her.

I first met Gita, and Anthony, early in the 1980’s. They had arrived in Paekakariki as part of their world travels as Peace workers, at that time promoting Antarctica as a World Peace Park. They brought with them a zeal for protecting the environment and promoting peace among nations. I was deeply inspired by their dedication and commitment. Later (in more recent years), Gita would often tell me of the enormous challenge this presented as she and Anthony lived out of a suitcase for more than ten years with no permanent place to call home, fulfilling Anthony’s irrepressible need to travel the world awakening humanity to the issues we need to address if we are to survive meaningfully into the future.

With my co-workers in the Triangle Centre, we supported Anthony and Gita as much as we could to advance their cause. Over the intervening years up to the present, we have continued that support. By the end of the 1980s (during which time Gita had become Godmother to our second daughter), Anthony and Gita had finally settled in Whanganui and it became a regular pilgrimage for us as a family to visit them and inevitably, given my practical skills and character, I took on the role of home maintenance man. In this capacity I would continue visiting them, though in recent years subsequent to Anthony's passing, it would be Gita I would naturally see, mutually supported by friends and neighbour. Gita gracefully maintained a support network of heart-filled folk with whom it became my pleasure to come to know.

Before Anthony died it was to me, a continual lesson in unconditional love and service as I observed Gita live out her total commitment to Anthony's wellbeing, to the point where in Anthony's last couple of years, it became apparent Gita's own life was bearing a load few other people (none that I know) could have sustained. Finally in 2011 at the ripe old age of 98, Anthony left this mortal coil, and Gita, emotionally bereft, was physically exhausted to the point where she was running on empty. The fact she was able to carry on can only be testament to the sustenance of an inner spirit imbuing her with a drive that enabled her right up to the last moments of her life to continue the work of Peace through Unity (PTU) characterised by this periodical – Many to Many, the work of UNA NZ and as an NGO with co-workers in Whanganui and New York at the United Nations, Handspan – an extraordinary peace sculpture in the heart of Whanganui, and her dream of leaving Rumah Brooke, her home, to world peace by establishing it as a Peace and Education Centre sustained by the PTU Trust. I pray for its success and will continue my small part in its service to the Whole as a living legacy to Gita and Anthony Brooke.

And finally, in a phrase oft repeated by both Gita and Anthony – Joy to the World!

**Ralph Wallace** [ralph.macquisten.wallace@gmail.com](mailto:ralph.macquisten.wallace@gmail.com)

## **Gita Connected Through the Heart**

I first 'met' Gita while living in Paekakariki in the latter half of the 1970s. My late wife and I and a small group of friends (including Alma Farrant and Ralph Wallace), formed a charity, the Triangle Centre, aiming to promote ideas of the interconnectedness of all life and the one humanity. We gradually built links with individuals and groups around the world, including Gita who at that time was living in Govik, Sweden. Later Alma visited Govik and began a deep friendship with Gita and Anthony ... which was one of the reasons why they eventually chose to settle in New Zealand. In the early 80's when my wife and I had moved to live in the UK we met Gita and Anthony regularly during their visits to London ... and so the friendship and the shared work developed.!

When I sit now and think of Gita, the thing that I am most touched by is the way in which she was able to bring heart and beauty into everything she did for the culture of peace, and for human unity and the United Nations. Whether through the pages of Many to Many, or in meetings with officials and goodwill servers in her adopted home of Whanganui, Gita connected through the heart. And from this connection she was able to speak and write about ideas that are changing the world in ways that inspired and uplifted people.

This to me is the great gift that Gita brought to her work in support of the United Nations. She saw the organization as an expression of the way in which ideas of unity, wholeness and peace are changing the peoples of the world. As the people of the world change, these changes are slowly finding expression in all the institutions we use to organize life and relationships. The changes that are happening are both outside, in the world, as well as inside in the human heart and mind. Gita communicated this message with simplicity and honesty – free of any intellectual artifice. She was deeply touched and moved by her researches into events in all the corners of the UN world – seeing a new vision finding expression. And her special gift was in communicating what she saw with a heart-felt intelligence ... and with joy.

In one of her last emails to me she wrote of her delight in receiving reports of gatherings at the UN from Peace through Unity representatives, Iris and Sharon, and her joy at being able to share *aspects of the UN overall service that may not be so widely known... showing that we, the people, are actively linked with and increasingly working alongside the unity of nations on so many levels....*

Gita, and Anthony, both, saw the evolution of a more unified and peaceful world as a Work proceeding at many levels, including the spiritual. And this was perhaps best captured in the final words of every issue of Many to Many from June 2002 onwards: The Great Invocation. As Meredith Paterson's fine research paper on Peace through Unity, submitted in 2016 as part of a Masters Degree in International Relations at Victoria University, noted: *The political content of MTM is framed in spiritual thoughtfulness by the editorials written by Brooke and the prayer The Great Invocation.*

Steve Nation      [snation@earthlink.net](mailto:snation@earthlink.net)

**~ HONORING GITA BROOKE'S LEGACY ~**  
**My "Culture of Peace - Ministry of Peace" Soul-Sister**  
**Ministry for a Culture of Peace**



I was blessed 10+ years ago switching my UN affiliation to Gita Brooke's heartfelt *Peace Through Unity* (PTU) NGO, thanks to the divine intervention of PTU Representative and dear UN Culture of Peace co-worker, Iris Spellings. Going through old PTU files upon Gita's passing, reflecting on our work together in a "virtual" NGO relationship, I am struck (again) by the gift of her wise, gentle UN mentoring. Rediscovering PTU's long-forgotten former brochure that had the above graphic on its cover, captured my attention. It made me see how Gita (whether she knew it or not) was my **UN Culture of Peace - Department of Peace Soul-Sister**. For the essence of my soul's work is about that pivotal relationship between "culture of peace" and "ministries & departments of peace" as depicted above. Since Gita

designed that poignant image linking them together on an ancient esoteric symbol, perhaps that unique peacebuilding combination was HER soul's work too? Which would make us Soul Sisters! (\* Please note that in UN parlance "ministries & departments of peace" are referred to as infrastructures for peace or "i4P")

The simplicity of the above graphic in denoting that important connection is informative. The three red dots enclosed in a larger circle symbol is known as the Roerich Banner of Peace, famous as part of the Roerich Pact, which in 1935 was a peace treaty signed by many countries (including U.S. President Roosevelt) protecting humanity's cultural creations from the destruction of war. Gita designed large PTU flags using the Roerich symbol, creatively adding the words encircling the circle which the Peace Laureates Manifesto 2000 had selected to best describe the Culture of Peace (*respect all life, reject violence, share with others, listen to understand, preserve the planet and rediscover solidarity*). The PTU brochure cites **Instruments for a Culture of Peace** saying: "*New instruments are in the planning for carrying out the guidelines contained in the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace: ministries or departments of peace will serve as meeting places for closer, more comprehensive and effective cooperation between peoples and governments...*"

Many i4P resources were listed in that brochure such as the **Global Alliance for Ministries and Infrastructures for Peace (GAMIP)** and the **U.S. Peace Alliance and New Zealand Campaigns for a Department of Peace**. Gita was one of only a rare few in our NGO community who chose to be actively involved in BOTH her country's Ministry of Peace campaign AND GAMIP from the onset of both movements, around 2004. Coincidentally, I too then was also involved in BOTH GAMIP and our **Peace Alliance campaign for a U.S. Department of Peace**, co-founded by world-renowned peacebuilder **Dot Maver**, who soon thereafter miraculously also co-founded GAMIP. Concurrently, from the time Iris and I first co-lead the former UN Culture of Peace Working Group of the NGO Committee on Spirituality, Values and Global Concerns, which evolved into the **Global Movement for the Culture of Peace (GMCOP)**, the topic of ministries and departments of peace has been on our agendas in various ways, even presented in forums.

A divinely inspired UN idea erupted after GAMIP's rousing 2006 second summit in Canada. It was the notion of passing a **UN General Assembly resolution urging i4P in all member states**. I was astonished when Iris later informed me (BEFORE I had joined PTU) that Gita was working on a similar UN i4P resolution *on the other side of the world!* Such synchronicity propelled the project forward. Through Iris's intercession, Gita became a major force behind crafting the draft resolution, which was a year's-long focus of the Culture of Peace Working Group and GAMIP. The resolution's current iteration progressed to the refined online **PeaceNow.com** draft resolution and petition that has civil society signatures of support from almost all countries. Recently the UN i4P project has been re-activated with exciting new collaborations that may finally bring it to completion. **I cannot think of a more fitting legacy to honor Gita's great spirit and love of the UN than for us to actively work now to make that UN i4P resolution happen – in her memory, to embed her spirit deep within the General Assembly chambers.**

Gita's intuitive heart knew how *governmental* departments and ministries of peace can powerfully facilitate implementation of our beloved **UN Declaration and Programme of Action on the Culture of Peace**. Her visionary spiritual-political astuteness enabled her to "see" the vital link between these two great and complex peace entities. The wisdom she gained from her many years traveling the world with husband Anthony seeking and pursuing peace -- that culminated in her advocacy for this mission we shared -- affirms that **her good UN i4P work MUST continue.**

With the onset of Covid-19 the world is at a great turning. Mass social, economic and political upheaval is the recipe for violent disaster to desperate people. Will humanity choose crisis or opportunity at this perilous time? As we enter a new life-changing post-pandemic period, to survive we must develop the attitudes and responses that this unchartered territory will demand. **Now more than ever we must make nonviolence a foundation upon which our "new normal" will be built.** As the pandemic breaks down dysfunctional old-paradigm structures, viable alternative peacebuilding structures exist that stand-by ready to be fully utilized. *Building a global architecture to institutionalize peacebuilding can accelerate breakthrough to a new world of **Peace Through Unity**.* When the pandemic is over and its many important existential lessons learned, the world no doubt will be searching for transformative solutions. Will we be ready to seize the moment to proclaim i4P as a life-saving remedy? What must we do now to prepare -- to turn the darkness into light? Gita and Anthony Brooke were convinced that the future lies in the hands of the people of the world.

**Anne Creter** – Riverton, NJ, U.S. [annecrets@aol.com](mailto:annecrets@aol.com) UN NGO "Peace Through Unity" Representative

## Remembering Gita

Gita! - I still remember our first meeting, on a sunny summer afternoon in 1976. Gita was visiting dear friends of our family in the East of the Netherlands. Her visit coincided with the publication of the Dutch translation of her book *Let Life Live*, a little jewel to which I will come back below. When I arrived, I found her sitting with our hosts on the terrace of the old mansion "Huis Molecaten", with a beautiful view on the small lake next to the mansion. I was immediately struck by the depth of her being, and taken by the fine traits of her lovely face, her soft warm voice, her distinction and elegance. I do not recall our conversation, but our meeting left an unforgettable impression. So much so, that when, several months later, I went through an emotionally difficult period in my life, I could see only one way out: to visit her in Gövik, Särö, Sweden. So I wrote her from The Hague, where I had begun my professional life as a young lawyer, and prompt came the response: you are warmly welcome, Hans!

When I arrived at the Gövik villa in the summer of 1977, the door was opened by a smiling man, who, although we met for the first time, welcomed me as if I were a dear old friend – characteristic, as I would soon learn, for Anthony's exceptional openness of mind and generosity. I spent three weeks at Gövik, and, while trying to make myself a bit useful by doing some painting work on the wooden outside of the house (in the spare moments when it did not rain that summer), I got very much inspired by their full dedication to the cause of spiritual growth of humankind. Through them I learned a lot about sources, books and spiritual centres that were new to me. During my stay, we had a visit from Peter Caddy, co-founder of the Findhorn community, which also encouraged me to visit Findhorn in Scotland a year later. Above all, my stay with Gita and Anthony strengthened my inner being, and opened new inspiring perspectives.

Ever since, Gita, Anthony and my family and I have stayed in touch. When our first child was born, Gita and Anthony visited us in The Hague. Before driving them to the airport on the day of their departure, we visited the Mauritshuis Museum. I remember how Gita beyond the aesthetic experience, felt a deep inner connection with the great soul of Rembrandt, some of whose self-portraits are displayed at the museum. I probably had underestimated the time it would take us to get from there to the airport, but while Anthony got nervous (and I with him!) when I drove them

to Schiphol, Gita stayed fully calm, knowing inside herself that we would be in time. And so we were, of course!

We continued to write each other after Gita and Anthony had moved to Santa Fe, New Mexico, and in 2003, on a mission to New Zealand I visited them in Wanganui where they had finally settled. And so did, more recently, our son and his wife, travelling across the country. All those years, I was grateful to receive *Many* to *Many*, every issue of which brought positive energy, with unwavering faith in “We the People...”. Sharing that vision, though working in the more dense field of international law, I was happy at Gita’s invitation to contribute a few times a small piece to this unique global networking tool.

While writing these lines, I am picking up again *Let Life Live*, which has been in our library ever since my visit to Sweden in 1977. It was written, as Anthony put it in his Introduction, “*in the stillness of Gita’s heart and mind, in response to questions posed by her [then] husband, Douglas [Keiller]*”. More than forty years later, this little book – smaller than a pocket book – is still amazing by its spiritual depth and its freshness – as if it were published just today. It offers, in the words Gita heard inside, “*a suggestion to another way of looking at the educational journey on earth from birth to what you call death, which is also a kind of birth*”. “*If you would really try to penetrate what it means for an incarnating soul to go down into a foetus, in the form of a baby... then you would have a new view about the baby, and this... would help you to help this little being in quite another way*”.

It goes on stressing the importance of accompanying a child in such a way that s(h)e is able to “*take its kingdom in hand*” (We the People...!), to “*be a co-creator of God’s Kingdom*”. Listening to “*one’s own higher self, which again is in contact with the One*”, enables us to make a loving “*contact... with other parts of the wholeness on the physical plane, in a way that creates the greatest possibility for the development of all*”.

In a few sentences light is shed upon how “*oneness*” (Peace through Unity!) relates to “*equality*”: “*you are all equal in the right to be a uniquely different expression of ... eternal life under continuous development*”. By connecting – gradually – with “*your innermost being*”, you “*begin to build a new world just where you are*”. “*If you have a will to love, you must be love*”. And the same goes for the experience of peace, harmony and joy.

In the final part, on the “*sense of imprisonment*” that many people feel, there is a great passage on human misery and suffering:

*“When you really feel ‘we’, your true compassion will go out to both those who suffer and those who cause the suffering. Your love will include the whole picture of suffering because, as you know in your heart, both parties suffer. It is not a question of not being aware of injustice and misery and suffering. It is a question of never through negative energy giving nourishment to further suffering and injustice.”*

*“When you see clear and bright inside you that you are all part of the same Totality, then your actions. will always be filled with so much care and respect for the other parts of Totality’s free expression that you will ... ‘forget’ to build barriers between people, between races, between different ages, between those who scrub floors and those who speak from hill tops”.*

The English text, published in 1975, is out of print. The little book, with its gentle tone, but fundamental insights, may still appeal to *Many*. Perhaps a way can be found to re-publish it. To me, it remains one of Gita’s precious gifts. Having met and known Gita has been one of the blessings my life.

**Hans van Loon**     [hans.vanloon@ppl.nl](mailto:hans.vanloon@ppl.nl)

## **A Crucial Networker moves on; the challenges remain.**

Gita Brooke whose spirit has moved to another dimension was a crucial networker with her Many to Many efforts. On the one side the many are the government representatives: 195 States related to the United Nations and at least 5 more, often called "The Phantom Republics" like Kosovo born of the breakup of Yugoslavia, the Soviet Union and the disintegration of Somalia. However, States have a fairly common form with addresses of the Mission to the UN in New York and Geneva as well as to some of the UN Specialized Agencies such as UNESCO in Paris. The other Many are a host of groups - some registered non-governmental organizations, others more informal. The leadership often changes, especially when new issues are taken up. For Gita's Many, there was a spiritual dimension which was the link, but spiritual did not necessarily mean a religious label.

An important function of the Many to Many network was to remind political leaders of their broader role for the welfare of all humanity. Thus, to President Trump, one had to say "No, not America first, but the Planet first". However President Trump has an information service which pays some people to work full time to promote his ideas - a possibility which informal spiritual networks rarely have. Nevertheless the challenges which face us to network and bring relevant ideas to the fore remain and new networking will have to be put in place.

My experience with Gita was probably typical of many. It takes a well-balanced personality to come gracefully out of the shadows of a husband. I was interested in meeting and knowing Antony Brooke, the representative of the "White Rajahs of Sarawak" When the original James Brooke set up his kingdom, he set off a race among others who said "Why not me?" There were a number of similar efforts in East Africa before the area was divided among European States. As a specialist on Africa, I knew of these efforts in Africa. Anthony was working on the Brooke family papers which were housed at Oxford University. I wondered if there had been any direct contact between the Brookes and the African efforts.

Also Antony had been an officer in a World Citizen organization active in the 1950s and early 1960s. The organization had largely stopped its efforts and was more or less integrated into the Association of World Citizens which I represented at the U.N. in Geneva.

We met a number of times in Geneva for fruitful discussions, and I came to appreciate Gita in her own terms and not just as Antony's wife. Antony and Gita shared many common concerns: peace, the protection of biodiversity and cooperation among those working for a more harmonious world. They served as lights for many of us in times of tensions and darkness. Such light must continue!

**Rene Wadlow.** [rene.wadlow@gmail.com](mailto:rene.wadlow@gmail.com)

## **An outburst of Joy and Gratitude**

As we enter the unprecedented time of a great shift between Ages, human awareness is expanding under the enormity and scope of events. A larger picture is emerging and we see and value ever more greatly the work of those beloved co-



workers who opened the way to where we are serving today. If it were not for their dedication, mentoring and nurturing we would not be able to serve effectively in such challenging times. What comes to mind is that oft quoted phrase “standing on the shoulders of giants” and, despite her diminutive physique, such a “giant” was Gita Brooke.

We can recall the many times when Gita and Antony would visit us in Australia, sometimes in a conference and sometimes in a small home gathering, bringing our deep subjective links into outer presence. It was always a meeting of hearts and of co-workers serving the divine Plan through our time – old friends, from who knows how many incarnations, touching base and sharing the joys and challenges of serving the coming new era together.

Most recently Gita responded to one of a series of articles about the Global Silent Minute published by Sydney Goodwill throughout 2019 in the lead up to the event on 21 December 2019 at 9pm GMT. She wrote of her recollection of the original Silent Minute instigated by Wellesley Tudor Pole in WWII. We asked her if she would share her response in the Global Silent Minute Facebook group as we felt it would touch the hearts and minds of others. Gita graciously agreed to let us post what she described as her “outburst of joy and gratitude”.

To give context Gita wrote of the background of Peace Through Unity (PTU) which she said:

Came into being when I met Antony Brooke (in Sweden). Together we laid the foundation for the creation of peace through unity. PTU has no membership but it is a “legal entity” which helped us to go through Iron and Bamboo “curtains” during the cold “war” and reach people at Government levels, who allowed us to meet people within the educational, medical, governmental systems, visiting schools, hospitals, religious denominations, settlements, and to hug people who had survived some form of “cultural cleansing” here and there....

The Facebook post read:

“Gita Brooke, co-founder of **Peace Through Unity** has been inspired to tell her story in relation to the original Big Ben Silent Minute:

"The ‘Minute of Silence’ united people throughout the world during the 2nd world war.

It brought me back to Denmark during the German occupation.

I remember clearly sitting with my father, our ears pressed against the radio to catch the BBC news (more often than not impossible to hear because of the deliberate noise provided by the NAZI occupying forces, to prevent Danish people hearing it). But I heard and kept in my heart the reassuring message of the Big Ben uniting people in a minute of silence invoking peace and goodwill. I cannot quite express how wonderful it is to know that this initiative is re-emerging. Thank you – thank you.

Living in a small village on the Island of Bornholm (not too far from Sweden) our family were able to help hide people (fleeing from Germany) until possible passage to Sweden.

But of course at some point it became our turn to hide....

I learnt so much .....especially that judging is useless and can, more often than not, blur the truth – and that continuously, from a ‘quiet place’, seeking fuller understanding will teach one how to respond evermore correctly.....step by step...

Forever sending love.

I will join in the Global Silent Minute on 21 December 2019 at 9pm GMT."

We forever remain united with Gita, hearts across distance, across the veil.

**Judy Norman and Wendy J. Thompson**

on behalf of Sydney Goodwill      [goodwill@sydneygoodwill.org.au](mailto:goodwill@sydneygoodwill.org.au)

### **Joy of the Journey with Gita Brooke**

On Life's journey we are blessed at times to cross paths with another who influences our life in a positive way. So it was for many with Gita Brooke. In 1989, three of us from the Seven Ray Institute (myself, Michael Robbins, Mary Ann Casalino) traveled to New Zealand to share with co-workers and we met Gita and Antony. Upon meeting Gita, two things were immediately clear. Gita exuded unwavering purpose, and her presence in life had the capacity to educate and inform the thinking and actions of others. Thank you Gita, as this has been our journey and my experience.

Throughout the years, with each unfolding initiative or event, Gita quietly supported and would offer her strength of purpose, accompanied by suggestions, letters, or perhaps something to be read into a meeting. Often, those sharings would help shape conversations and outcomes. These ranged from UN presentations to support of the Global Alliance for Transforming Education, to Share the Spirit of Peace Summits in seven cities around the world, The Peace Alliance, Global Alliance for Ministries and Infrastructures for Peace, the National Peace Academy USA, Push4Peace, Birth 2012, the International Day of Peace, Global Silent Minute and more. She was always willing to hear and comment about the adventures in peacebuilding, education, politics and grassroots community organizing, and offered strong subjective support as well.

For example, in 2017, following a few years of working with Anne Creter, Iris Spellings, Ambassador Chowdhury and others on a UN Resolution supported by the Global Movement for the Culture of Peace, the Global Alliance for Ministries and Infrastructures for Peace, and PeaceNow, Gita wrote this in response to the final draft: *"Peace Through Unity will gladly be supporting this Resolution. Peace Through Unity has since 1975 been working on grassroots level for a culture of unity and peace. The dream of peace, carried in the heart of humanity, is awakening - not even a breath away. Its realisation in our hands."*

Gita was a natural peacebuilder and it was just after the turn of the century when I found myself in the backyard of Merle and Sid Stubbs in Sydney, Australia, with members of Sydney Goodwill, in response to an invitation from Gita to press our hands into molds to be included on the beautiful peace sculpture at Wanganui, New Zealand. In the words of Ambassador Chowdhury, former Under-Secretary-General and High Representative of the UN, *"It was Gita's passionate initiative and committed activism which made it possible for a peace sculpture called 'Handspan' to be dedicated to the culture of peace and non-violence for the children of the world by the New Zealand Governor-General at a ceremony on 21 September 2002 [the first fixed International Day of Peace as*

*decided by the UN General Assembly] on the historic hill at the heart of Wanganui City where the sculpture is located."*

Gita's life of dedicated service was a demonstration of the very definition of peace: living in right relationship with self, others and all life. Thank you Gita for your fiery service, and for helping so many to deepen their understanding and clarify their thinking in an area that is still developing for humanity: Peacebuilding. Your life continues to inspire and enfire us and now we are blessed to cooperate across the veil.

And in your own words dearest Gita: *"Yes, let Heart teach, guide and prepare the ground for the emergence of the new civilisation."* All best wishes as the journey continues!

Dot Maver [dot@nationalpeaceacademy.us](mailto:dot@nationalpeaceacademy.us)

## **MY TRIBUTE - WORDS OF LOVE & ADMIRATION – FOR GITA !**

**By Ambassador Anwarul K. Chowdhury**

At the very early hours of 23 February, I woke up by the alert ring in my phone announcing the receipt of an email. A message from Gita's and my common friend Iris (Spellings) who was in New Zealand at that time conveyed the heart-breaking news that "Gita made her transition this morning. Art (*Iris' husband*) and I left Whanganui for Wellington yesterday knowing it would be soon.... It was all in divine timing....in her own elegant way.... (*Gita*) was lying on her bed when she took a few big remaining breaths."

It is with a heavy heart and a deep sense of loss that I read the formal Press Statement which announced that "We are sad to announce that Gita Brooke, wife of Rajah Muda Anthony Brooke of Sarawak, Malaysia and Trustee of the Brooke Trust, passed away 23 February 2020 at her home of Rumah Brooke in New Zealand. She was 88 years old."

She was well known home and abroad as a lifelong peace campaigner. The UN-accredited civil society organization, Peace Through Unity (PTU), erstwhile Operation Peace Through Unity (OPTU) was co-founded by her with Anthony in 1975 in Sweden and is now based in New Zealand. As the Founder of the Global Movement for The Culture of Peace (GMCoP), I am proud to say that Peace Through Unity is one of the original GMCoP partner organizations. It interacts at the UN through its well-known representative in New York, our dear co-activist Iris who has been working with OPTU/PTU for 22 years.

Gita took her activism for peace to a wider outreach in 1982 when she initiated publishing regularly a quarterly newsletter called "Many to Many". One is amazed by the intensity of the determined mission of the newsletter as expressed on its website underscoring that it "*...is a communicating link between 'we, the peoples' of all nations, races, creeds and ideologies offering in the spirit of the preamble of the United Nations Charter an instrument for the furthering of better relationships based on deepening mutual understanding and the aspiration to promote unity and cooperation beyond all differences.*"

It was Gita's passionate initiative and committed activism which made it possible for a peace sculpture called "Handspan" to be dedicated to the culture of peace and non-violence for the children of the world by the New Zealand Governor-General at a ceremony on 21 September 2002. On that date, as decided by the UN General Assembly, the International Day of Peace was observed on a fixed date for the first time. This dedication was done on the historic hill at the heart of Wanganui City where the sculpture is located.

I had the pleasure and privilege of meeting Gita in 2007 at Wanganui and visiting the "Handspan" when she presented me with a coffee-table-book titled "Wanganui Culture of Peace – 2002" which was published as a memento and public record, describing in pictures and text the process of building the peace sculpture, the thoughts behind it and the people involved.

I vividly recall Gita's unending, high-spirited enthusiasm for the culture of peace and for realization of the objectives of the UN Programme of Action on Culture of Peace adopted unanimously on 13 September 1999. I had the honour of presenting that document to the UN General Assembly on behalf of all the Member States.

Gita's dignified, compassionate and spiritual persona is still fresh in my mind. She will be missed by all of us. I have lost a friend and well-wisher in the true sense.

On behalf of GMCoP, I am honored to pay rich tribute to the life and contribution of our dear beloved Gita to the culture of peace and for the good of humanity.

Let us continue to celebrate her life!

**Ambassador Anwarul K. Chowdhury** [anwarulc@hotmail.com](mailto:anwarulc@hotmail.com)

*Former UN Under-Secretary-General and High Representative; Founder, Global Movement for The Culture of Peace*

*PTU Pamphlet 'Towards Peace Through Unity' reprinted below:*

## \*Archives -- Towards Peace Through Unity, 1975



*This pamphlet "Towards Peace Through Unity" was written and published in July 1975, immediately following the founding, in Sweden, of PEACE THROUGH UNITY.*

### **TOWARDS PEACE THROUGH UNITY**

It is a truism to say that we live in a time of unprecedented change and transformation. Yet it is only by keeping this fact continually in the forefront of our minds that we can avoid the trap of imagining that we can be exempted from active personal participation in and co-responsibility for the immense changes which must affect radically the lives of every one of us.

Although fear, suspicion, mutual mistrust, selfishness, and exploitative tendencies still bedevil our human relationships, the most encouraging sign of our times is the awakening and growing determination on the part of citizens of good will in all countries to become ever more deeply involved in their search for ways to make their contribution to the establishing of right human relationships and to the cause of peace and justice on our suffering planet.

What we are here concerned with is not so much the "struggle for peace" - which is meaningless without relating it to freedom and true social justice - at the level of United Nations and inter-governmental activities of a political, cultural, social and economic character designed to contribute to this end. We feel that the time has come when greater recognition and encouragement needs to be given by national governments to the indispensable contribution to a just and peaceful world that can potentially be made by the "common man" - the ordinary citizen of goodwill in every country - who, as he becomes educated in a true sense of world citizenship and responsibility, earnestly seeks ways to play his part from a standpoint of identification with and loyalty to his highest vision of what it means to be human and to serve the well-being of all planetary life.

Such individuals may well at present constitute a relatively small minority. But their influence can nevertheless be significant. And their activity, provided that their motivation is to be unitive and not separative, should be viewed as vitally complementary to the activity of those holding official positions and fully identifying themselves with the governmental or ideological stance where matters of political or social injustice are in question. Such activity need in no sense take the form of disloyalty to government or country but should be viewed as essentially of a complementary character as we move towards an increasingly global vision.

In the world today there is a growing movement in the heart and spirit of peace-loving peoples in all countries, which is beginning to take form as what might best be described as an invisible fellowship. Like a seed having its own natural and

spontaneous growth, this rapidly spreading international communion consists of individuals who, when they meet - and most of them will never physically do so - recognize one another through their compassionate and inclusive outlook, their demonstration of a selfless personal quality of living and through their commitment to true social and humanitarian world service. They share a concern to live and work in a way that serves to widen, deepen and intensify areas of mutual understanding. While giving due recognition to differences which should be both acknowledged and respected, they are not concerned to give their energies to being argumentative over these differences, but are concerned rather to keep their vision and their energies steadily focused upon unitive possibilities in all their relationships. It is evident that we are not here referring to any organized activity but to an organic and, let us hope, irreversible evolution in the body of the family of man, which is resulting in a transformation towards holistic tendencies in an increasing number of the world's peoples. Even if these at present constitute only a relatively small minority, there is, especially among the youth of today, a perceptible trend away from narrow self-interest and self-centredness, with all their attendant miseries for the individual and for the community at large, towards a concern to think and act in the interests of the whole human family and the other life streams sustained and nourished by the planet.

Apart from any other encouraging factor in our human situation, this in itself is one of the most hopeful signs in our crisis-ridden time. This trend, and the work being done by these individuals, who so often act anonymously behind the scenes, is providing a not insignificant service as we face the tensions brought about by the need to move, in all areas of human relationships, from confrontation to co-operation and finally to a form of union and world governance which must essentially be based upon true democratic principles, which are globally acceptable.

As we prepare to move towards a unified planetary civilization, it is well to bear in mind that earth mankind is not the sole nor the highest intelligence in the universe. We live in a universal organism in which higher intelligent cosmic forces and laws continually operate with creative effect in and through its every part and particle, therefore including our planet and all life upon it. It would be unwise to ignore the fact that the universe consists of intelligent energies which interpenetrate and interact with our own. Some of our foremost scientists are not only realizing the basic oneness of all life - the reducibility of all matter to energy - but are believing it to be probable that all energy is living intelligent energy on its own level. While we can to some extent shut ourselves off from the influence of these higher intelligent energies - just as we can to some degree ignore the impact of our interrelationships and interaction with one another - we can equally be open, if we so choose, to co-operate with this higher intelligence and thus with a larger overall purpose for universal evolution, embracing the evolutionary development of our own planet.

While it may initially be humbling to admit that our human level intelligence and wisdom has not always been of the very highest calibre - as is evident enough from the course of human history on earth - we may perhaps now have sufficient wisdom to realize that it might seem a little foolish to refuse to let our minds, with true discrimination, be infused by the energies of higher levels of wisdom and intelligence. To think that this would be shirking the responsibility to solve the problems we have created as a human family would be no more valid than to claim that an individual human being should in no circumstances, however grave, ask or be given any assistance from his neighbours. We exist on earth to care for and to give and receive service to and from one another. It is simply a matter of opening our eyes to an understanding of the fact that we live in a wider network of interrelationships than many of us may hitherto have suspected and that our planet is not a closed system, an

isolated unit any more than are our nations, our families or our individual selves.

When there is a sincere aspiration to open up to and co-operate with the various levels of higher and wiser intelligences, there can be insights, which will always be for the good of the whole, into the solution of individual and collective problems. A growing number of people in all countries bear witness to this experience, including many agnostics who are known to be giving recognition to the existence of this higher unifying intelligent power. It is of no consequence whether we call this process attunement, telepathy or some other form of extra sensory perception.

In the foregoing we have suggested that the complex problems human beings have created for themselves in the long course of human history are unlikely to be solved by the same level and quality of intelligence and consciousness that has been responsible for bringing them about; but that as we now move towards the emergence of a global civilization discoveries are being made in regard to our relationship with the living energies of the universe, which, taking into account the burgeoning spirit of goodwill arising among a growing number of citizens of every land, introduces quite new factors into problem solving which are now to play an increasingly significant part in the overall human situation. In the task of seeking out areas of mutual understanding and co-operation, a movement towards a resolution of conflict situations can often be furthered from a basis of mutual agreement where this is found possible at a level transcending areas of specific disagreement, and common meeting points become more readily possible when an agreed mutual stance can first be taken at this deeper level of communication.

To exemplify what we mean, we would like to offer the following seven points, as representing basic truths in which an atmosphere of mutual agreement can be rooted and which may often serve as a joint springboard and reference point for working towards the solution of specific conflict situations:

1. There is an invisible, harmonizing energy - an intelligent, wise and loving energy - at work throughout the universe, which can affect our decision-making in the highest interest of all, if we freely decide to attune to it with the will to think and act in the interests of the whole;
2. It is therefore desirable to identify our own power of will with this unifying power and to be open to whatever disciplines or teachings may assist us and others in achieving and maintaining this identification;
3. This invisible creative energy embodies what might humanly be interpreted as a purpose for the infinite unfoldment and evolution of all life;
4. There exists within every individual the capacity to evolve in and towards perfection;
5. The disunity, conflict and general distress of so many human beings on earth and the pollution of our planetary environment result from a choice by man of a course of evolution and development which has tended to deviate from the recognition of and attunement to the higher qualities of life and the loving, wiser and unifying energies which we are ever free to unite with and express;
6. It is open to us, and is desirable, to deepen a sense of our invisible unity in spirit with all created life, and with the source of that life, and so to draw to us an ever greater capacity to serve in co-operation with our fellow human beings to establish right human relationships and right relationships with the animal, plant and mineral kingdoms and with the laws and forces of nature;
7. In the establishing of these right relationships we shall be laying the foundations for a true brotherhood of life and peace on earth.

---

## **The Opportunity for Peace in the Times of COVID-19**

In a virtual press conference held on March 23rd, the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called for *“an immediate global ceasefire in all corners of the world”*, declaring that *“our world faces a common enemy: COVID-19”* and that the efforts to fight it must start *“by stopping the fighting everywhere. Now”*. Days following the UN Secretary-General’s appeal, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has declared a two week cease-fire on its nearly five year conflict with Yemen starting April 9th. The unilateral cease-fire will last 14 days and include all of Saudi’s *“ground, maritime and air operations in Yemen”*.

The conflict started in 2014, when Houthi rebels launched an attack to capture Yemen’s capital city Sanaa in an attempt to wrestle control of the country from President Hadi, Yemen’s president at the time. Saudi Arabia led the Arab Coalition, a coalition of eight other Arab states that receives support from the United States, UK and France, in conducting an air campaign against Houthi rebels with the goal of supporting President Hadi. Six years later, the conflict still continues though it is largely characterized as a stalemate.

These current circumstances present a unique window of opportunity to extend this temporary ceasefire permanently, thus ending the conflict between the Houthi rebels and the Arab Coalition. Ending the conflict in Yemen is imperative, particularly in



this critical time. As a result of the instability, Yemen, is already in dire straits. It is one of the world's poorest countries, and is suffering from an extremely high rate of civilian casualties and an already extreme shortage of fuel, healthcare and food. It is currently experiencing the worst humanitarian crisis in the world; a reported 80% of the population depends on aid relief. The conflict, coupled with a global pandemic, would devastate a country already deeply suffering.

UN Special Envoy for Yemen Martin Griffiths, who has had a large role mediating between the two parties, noted that, *"Yemen cannot face two fronts at the same time: a war and a pandemic. And the new battle that Yemen faces in confronting the virus will be all-consuming"* and implored that *"We can do no less than stop this war and turn all our attention to this new threat"*.

The Arab Coalition, led by Saudi Arabia, has signalled interest in permanently ending its actions in Yemen. In October 2019, the UAE decided to withdraw most of its troops from Yemen's port city of Aden, effectively leaving the port city in the control of Saudi and Yemeni forces and reducing its direct military involvement in Yemen. Saudi Arabia has signalled further interest by inviting the Houthi rebels to peace talks in Riyadh in late March of 2020 succeeded by the Arab Coalition's announcement of the temporary ceasefire. Following this announcement, a spokesperson for the Arab Coalition indicated that they would be willing to extend the temporary ceasefire to further discuss the UN envoy's *"proposals on steps and mechanisms to implement a permanent ceasefire in Yemen"* and *"a comprehensive political solution in Yemen"*.

The UN Special Envoy has been in "constant negotiations" with both parties to negotiate a permanent, nation-wide ceasefire and agreements on humanitarian and economic measures that will bring tangible relief to the Yemeni people. He stated that, *"there cannot be a more timely moment for the two parties to commit to silencing the guns and ending the conflict through a peaceful, political solution"*.

Yemen is not the only country that is highly vulnerable due to ongoing conflicts. Syria is another country that has been devastated by the conflict that has been ongoing for the past nine years. Syria is particularly at risk from the virus given that its public health system and healthcare infrastructure has been decimated after enduring years of active conflict. It has been characterized as *"'high risk' of being unable to contain the COVID-19 pandemic"*.

The Secretary General's Special Envoy for Syria, Geir Pedersen, has made a similar appeal to that of his Yemeni counterpart, calling on all parties involved to participate in a *"complete and immediate ceasefire throughout Syria"*, which would enable Syria to be able to focus directly on the challenge of tackling COVID-19 and minimize the further suffering of the Syrian people. Another deep concern is the epic challenge that refugee camps and informal settlements present in Syria and in Lebanon, Turkey and Jordan--neighboring countries that currently host millions of Syrian refugees. In such living situations such as these, refugees often live in close, overcrowded conditions with no possibility of social distancing or adequate sanitation facilities. Eutur Nafra works as a teacher in the humanitarian industry lives and works in Abnaa Minh, a camp of internally displaced people in northern Idleb Syria, where she helps to raise awareness and spread information about health issues and proper sanitation practices. She reported that the conditions in Abnaa Mihn are *"tragic, medical services are limited as are hygiene and sanitation...social isolation and separation are simply not possible"*.

Refugee camps create the optimal conditions for the global pandemic to spread like wildfire. Emergency Relief Coordinator Mark Lowcock cautions of the damage that COVID-19 can wreak on Syria warning that *“tragedy beckons”*. Mr. Pedersen reiterates that *“there is no military solution to the Syria crisis”* and that *“We must act on our common humanity, help build trust and confidence...to move towards a political settlement that can meet the legitimate aspirations of the Syrian people”*. Despite these challenging times, may all actors involved step up to this newest challenge and may the world be a step closer to achieving world peace.

Sources:

UN Secretary General’s Original statement calling for the cease-fire:

<https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2020-03-23/secretary-generals-appeal-for-global-ceasefire>

Further information on Saudi coalition ceasefire:

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/04/1061422>

**Ananda Young**     PTU Co-worker     [anandayoung154@gmail.com](mailto:anandayoung154@gmail.com)

### Some Uplifting News:

Good news can often be overshadowed by the bad and, in this critical time, we are inundated with a seemingly endless stream of disheartening news. However, as UN Secretary General António Guterres declared, the virus is *“above all, a human crisis that calls for solidarity”*. Millions of people around the world have answered his call. During these difficult times, millions of people have stepped up and taken ordinary and extraordinary acts of kindness to help their neighbors and wider communities. Highlighted here are some of the positive actions that have emerged all over the world in the midst of this unprecedented situation.

#### **Mashrou3i:**

In many countries all over the world, personal protective equipment is in short supply for those who need it the most, people like healthcare professionals who face the daily risk of exposure through their jobs. In Tunisia, in response to the scarcity of equipment, a whole cast of volunteers from the public and private sector, as well as civil society, have sprung into action all over the country and have launched a variety of initiatives to address this need. Their efforts have created the production of over 5,000 medical face shields, the manufacturing of medical visors through 3D printing, the production of thousands of face masks, the production of thermometers, the development of affordable antibacterial gel, the invention of a gel dispenser that is automatically activated by an infrared sensor. Some of these efforts were aided by Mashrou3i, a project that is aimed at fostering entrepreneurship among young women and men thus supporting the creation of more jobs and the growth of smaller businesses and enterprises. Mashrou3i is a joint project developed by UNIDO, USAID, AICS and the HP Foundation.

Sources:

Original story: <https://www.unido.org/stories/tunisi-as-entrepreneurs-swing-action-against-covid-19>

For more information on Mashrou3i: <https://mashrou3i.tn/en/>

All around the world, refugees have joined the efforts against the COVID19 in their new countries utilizing their unique talents.

- **London, United Kingdom:** Hassan Akkad, a refugee who fled to the United Kingdom to escape the war in Syria, joined his local hospital to work as a cleaner, disinfecting Covid wards. He stated that he was *“Honoured to join”* and that *“London has been my home since leaving Syria, and the least I can do is making sure my neighbours and the amazing NHS staff are safe and sound”*.
- **New York, United States:** Salem, a refugee from Afghanistan, is sewing masks at home for healthcare providers.
- **France:** Mohammed, a doctor from Libya who came to France following the violence that erupted in Libya, immediately signed up for an emergency roster to support medical staff in hospitals. He is *“prepared to go wherever he is needed”* and says that he is *“ready to do anything to help”*.
- **Dorset, United Kingdom:** A group of Syrian families in Dorset have volunteered to help the most vulnerable residents of local communities by helping them with extra support including shopping, picking up prescriptions and walking the dog. Walid, a Syrian refugee settled in Dorset, who delivers essential items like food to vulnerable residents in his area on his bike, saying that, *“My family and I took refuge in this beautiful country. That is why I want to offer my services to help the community...I strongly believe in the responsibility of citizens to help each other in crises”*.

Sources:

- <https://www.dorsetecho.co.uk/news/18348454.coronavirus-syrian-refugees-dorset-help-vulnerable/>
- <https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/news/stories/2020/4/5e9460f74/refugees-offer-medical-experience-help-tackle-coronavirus-crisis-france.html>
- 

Ananda Young

PTU Co-worker

[anandayoung154@gmail.com](mailto:anandayoung154@gmail.com)

## **Brazilian Female Artisan Organization Start Producing PPE for Their Community**

In Ipiranga, a district located in Northeastern Brazil, a well-known and well-respected organization of artisan women, decided to stop their normal production of handicrafts and instead started to manufacture protective equipment, producing masks, hairnets and gowns. At first they made a couple of pieces and donated them to vulnerable people from their community like the elderly but soon they began to make them for their local hospital and health center. They currently make over 500 pieces of personal protective equipment per day but still cannot fulfill all the requests that they get. They have plans to scale up their production and will be joined by two other associations. Despite this impressive effort, Iolita Ramos, one of the cofounders of the association, said in an interview that *"we are working on producing the masks but we would like to help more."*

Source: <https://www.ifad.org/en/web/latest/story/asset/41861569>

**Ananda Young**     PTU Co-worker     [anandayoung154@gmail.com](mailto:anandayoung154@gmail.com)

## **The Impact of the Virus on the Climate**

With much of the world's population homebound as a key measure to prevent the spread of COVID-19, it has caused an unintended benefit to the environment. Many factories have temporarily paused their production and many construction sites have closed or suspended work. As people are expected to work from home where possible, in person events, shows and other group gatherings cancelled and local travel restrictions are in place, vehicular traffic in even the biggest metropolis' have been cut down to almost 0. In most countries, international travel has been banned or strongly discouraged causing a significant decline in air traffic. According to the TSA, there has been a drop of about 87% of people traveling in the air compared to the same time last year while over 117 airlines have grounded at least 90% of their capacity.

The effects of this reduced movement have created a reduction in air pollution and greenhouse emissions. In February, when China was experiencing the peak of its COVID-19 outbreak, greenhouse emissions dropped by 25%. Estimates from the U.S. Energy Information Administration estimates that emissions from gas and energy use could decrease by more than 7% in the US. Worldwide, it is estimated that global emissions will decline by around 4%. Lauri Myllyvirta, a lead analyst at the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air, was quoted in an NPR interview saying that, *"it is an unprecedentedly dramatic drop in emissions"*.

These decreases have created a tangible improvement in air quality and the difference has been noticed by local residents all over the world. In Delhi, India's capital city, where the air quality is usually one of the poorest in the world, residents are posting pictures of clear blue skies, in contrast to the smoggy haze that they are accustomed to. In Jalandhar, a state in the Northwest of India, for the first time in decades, residents can spot the peaks of the Himalayan mountains that lie nearly 100 miles away as the pollution levels drop to the lowest level that they have been at in a decade. In China, residents in Shanghai are in similar awe at their own crystal clear

views. Air pollution in China has reduced so much that the difference can be seen in space through satellite readings in the troposphere, the lower layer of the atmosphere. In urban cities in the US such as Los Angeles, New York and Washington, DC are reporting cleaner air quality though the exact statistics have yet to be released. In Venice, Italy, as there is significantly less boat traffic, the water has cleared so much that delighted residents have reported seeing schools of fish darting through the cities' canals.

While a decrease in global emissions by 4% is an incredible achievement, it is estimated by the UN that based on current unconditional pledges, the world is predicted to gain a 3.2 degrees Celsius rise in temperature. In order to circumvent the worst effects of climate change, the UN Environment Programme has determined a global emissions decrease of 7.6% is needed in order to achieve a gain of 1.5 degrees Celsius.

The unintended byproduct of the COVID-19 virus has shown us the benefits of clean energy but it has also illuminated the need for fundamental systemic changes. The 4% emissions decrease that is being achieved today is unsustainable. It is the result of tens of millions of people out of work.

To create a sustainable decrease in emissions, fundamental changes are needed on a personal level, industry level and at a state level. While most of the lifestyle changes people are currently making are assumed to be short term, Sabrina McCormick, an associate professor of environmental and occupational health at George Washington University, is optimistic that the new environmentally friendly habits that have been recently adopted could be adopted long term saying, *"we may actually see some more permanent incorporation of [new] behaviors into our daily life"*. As a by-product of the global pandemic, we have become more aware of how our actions impact the climate. We need to continue our awareness even as we are able to resume our normal lifestyles post-COVID-19.

Further changes are needed to be taken on a global scale and adopted by countries and industries around the globe. The world needs systemic change in our energy infrastructure such as the wide-spread adoption of alternative energy and in the adoption of greener technology. In his opening address to COP 25, hosted by Chile in Madrid, UN Secretary General António Guterres called on states saying, *"what we need is not an incremental approach but a transformational one. We need a rapid and deep change in the way we do business, how we generate power, how we build cities, how we move, and how we feed the world"*. In order to decarbonize the global economy sustainably, in order to meet the UN sustainable development goals of 2033 and in order to achieve climate neutrality by 2050 fundamental changes are needed.

Though COP 26 which was to take place in Glasgow, Scotland has since been postponed, we cannot forget the urgency of these issues. As the Secretary-General implored at the COP 25, *"If we don't urgently change our way of life, we jeopardize life itself."*

Sources:

- <https://www.unenvironment.org/news-and-stories/press-release/cut-global-emissions-76-percent-every-year-next-decade-meet-15degc>
- <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2019-12-02/secretary-generals-remarks-opening-ceremony-of-un-climate-change-conference-cop25-delivered>
- <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement/the-paris-agreement>

- <https://www.unenvironment.org/news-and-stories/press-release/cut-global-emissions-76-percent-every-year-next-decade-meet-15degc>

Ananda Young      PTU Co-worker      [anandayoung154@gmail.com](mailto:anandayoung154@gmail.com)

## **THE GREAT INVOCATION**

**From the point of Light within the Mind of God  
Let light stream forth into the minds of men.  
Let Light descend on Earth.**

**From the point of Love within the Heart of God  
Let love stream forth into the hearts of men.  
May Christ return to Earth.**

**From the centre where the Will of God is known  
Let purpose guide the little wills of men -  
The purpose which the Masters know and serve.**

**From the centre which we call the race of men  
Let the Plan of Love and Light work out  
And may it seal the door where evil dwells.**

**Let Light and Love and Power restore the plan on Earth.**