

In a report after her visit to Martinique in 1970, Ruhyyih Khanum stated that Mr. Martail and his wife, Constance, were both devoted Bahá'ís and were teaching the Bahá'í Faith to their children.

In late 1967 Janet and Edvard Lindstrom stayed four months in Fort-de-France, after which they returned to their pioneering post in Switzerland. While in Martinique they and Mr. Martail held Bahá'í activities.

When a regional National Spiritual Assembly was formed in 1967 for the Leeward, Windward and Virgin Islands a new committee was appointed to teach the Bahá'í Faith in French and Patois. Mr. Martail was one of the committee members. In the early 1970s, Canada was asked to put together a French-speaking Bahá'í travel teaching team for the French Antilles. Four French speaking Canadians, including pioneers Miss Theresa 'Teri' Rheume and Charles Fitzsimmons, plus Poova Murday, a Knight of Baha'u'llah from Mauritius, conducted mass teaching in Martinique from December 1972 to January 1973. Miss Rheume was later appointed the first Auxiliary Board Member for the French Islands.

To help with the consolidation of the new, large Bahá'í community, pioneers from Canada and the United States responded. Rowland and Vivian Estall arrived in January 1973. Mr. Estall, from Canada, also serves as a member of the Continental Board of Counsellors with responsibility for part of the Caribbean. Mrs. Estall, originally from the U.S. had been a pioneering the Caribbean for many years. Mr. and Mrs. Michel Guilaut [sp??] from Canada and Hedy Deuschle from her post in St. Thomas came to pioneer in Martinique in June 1973.

The wives of two men on the National Teaching Committee enrolled a year later [1974?], Mme. Montabard and Mme. Martin. The former was the first woman to become a chairperson on a National Spiritual Assembly in the Caribbean Islands.

Mme. Lea Nys, a traveling teacher from Belgium, visited all the French Islands several times over the years. One of her visits to Martinique took place from December 1973 to January 1974. Hand of the Cause 'Ali-Muhammad Varqa visited

Martinique in 1973, 1977, [1979] and 1984; Hand of the Cause of God, John Robarts in 1975; Hand of the Cause of God, Paul Haney in 1977; and Hand of the Cause of God, Enoch Olinga in 1977. Mr. and Mrs. James "Jim" P. and Clara A. McDonald pioneered in Martinique from mid November 1977 to 6 August 1988. They lived in Fort-de-France 1 June 1980 when they moved to the community of Ducos. In September 1978 Mr. McDonald started working as a television technician for Ets Guy Vieles, with which firm he remained until his retirement in December 1987.

Institutional development. Bahá'í administration of Martinique was assigned to the National Spiritual Assemblies of: South America in 1951; Central America in 1953; the Greater Antilles in 1957; the United States in 1964; the Leeward, windward and Virgin Islands in 1967; the Leeward and Virgin Islands in 1972; and the French Antilles in 1977. The National Spiritual Assembly of Martinique was formed in April 1984.

As a result of mass teaching six local spiritual assemblies were formed between December 1972 and January 1973. During the first half of August 1978 local spiritual assemblies were formed in each of the villages of: Morne des Esses; Bezaudin; Anse Belleville; Bellevue Macouba; and Fonds Bernier. [were the 20 other LSAs formed in Martinique or in Guadeloupe?]. As the Martiniquais were not happy with a system which formed local spiritual assemblies outside the political divisions of the the communs, the villages were integrated within two or three years with existing communs: Morne des Esses and Bezaudin with Ste. Marie; Anse Belleville with Precheur; Bellevue Macouba with Macouba; and Fonds Bernier with Schoelcher. A local Spiritual Assembly was formed at Ducos at Ridvan 1983; the comun of Trois Islets was soon to follow.

A Bahá'í Centre was purchased in Fort-de-France, Martinique, on 27 November 1976.

Official recognition. Mme. Nys was received by government officials and made presentations of Bahá'í books to them.

Distinctive contributions. Martinique had several low-powered, FM, low-budget Radio Libre stations whose policy was not to mention religion on the air. Nevertheless, Radio Majestic, at Gros Morne, broadcast the first Bahá'í interviews on the islands December 1973-January 1974 on radio and television. In 1980, Radio Eviel, in the comun of Lorrain, broadcast an interview.

Growth of the Bahá'í Community. As a result of mass teaching, 300 adults and 200 youth enrolled in the Bahá'í Faith in the month of December 1972-January 1973. A similar campaign in August 1978 led to the enrollment of 293 new believers, and brought the number of localities up to 75. [75 localities for the French Antilles as a whole?—BINS 96: 2]

year
of
Bahá'ís
of
localities
Spiritual Assemblies
incorporated

1963

2

1

1973

10

6?

10

1979

25

7?

11

1986

23

7

14

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