

RHYTHMS IN HISTORY: KARL KÖNIG'S 50TH DEATH DAY

Marking His Death Day Easter Sunday 2016

Can you remember 1966? Just think of the first 3 months of that year: the terrible fights in African countries; particularly Ghana, Nigeria and Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) and the Muslim uprising around Sudan. Malaysia was almost out of control and President Johnson was responsible for the escalation in Vietnam. The Pakistani-Indian peace-treaty was successful, but the Indian Prime-Minister died the day after and Indira Gandhi was elected. The Russian 'Luna' capsule performed the first landing on the moon and John Lennon announced that the 'Beatles' were more popular than Jesus. Those were the days! And these were the last months of Karl König's life. During that time he travelled from his new home of Camphill at the Lake of Constance: it was his last visit to Scotland, where he lectured in January and February about reincarnation and destiny, took part in a conference about crafts in the village communities, and consciously said farewell to the birthplace of Camphill; particularly to Camphill Hall. For a talk about Rudolf Steiner's birthday he was back at the Lake. March was a full tour, lecturing and seeing children with problems in Wiesbaden, Mainz, Heidelberg, Karlsruhe (birth place of Kaspar Hauser++) and at Pforzheim. There he also talked about birth and death. Taking up the destiny which he wanted so dearly to resolve, he then visited Dornach, where his lecturing had begun under Ita Wegman's+ guidance 39 years previously. Here he had important talks with the Council of the Anthroposophical Society and with the Medical Section, going then to nearby Freiburg for a course on embryology, the subject that had led him to anthroposophy, to Ita Wegman, who in turn led him to the experience of his "future task" with special needs people.* Returning to Brachenreuthe, König gave his last lecture about 'The Three Phases of Birth of the Human Being' on March 17 before going to the hospital in Überlingen, overlooking the Lake of Constance he loved so much. He died there on March 27, 1966. What a rounding off of this special biography! This Easter will therefore be the 50th anniversary of his death. How often does that date fall on an Easter Sunday I wondered! It seems that this has only happened once since 1966 (2005) and won't happen again until the middle of the next century!

But how the world had changed from the time König's outset in 1938, when he inspired a whole youth group in Vienna to take "a seed" of the Good and plant it in safe earth, that after the horrific cloud had passed, this little plant could share some of its blossoms and fruits to a world striving for new and higher values. So many idealistic young people have joined that cause since - two generations; and still not all the clouds have passed. He knew that Camphill has a long lasting task towards the future. And today much reminds us of '66 and even of '38 while we still hope for the sun of morality, freedom and real globality. It seems fitting that this year we can present König's work on The Grail

and the Development of Conscience - a theme that was very close to his heart, describing St. Paul in connection to the Grail and how anthroposophy is a continuation of the Grail quest in our time - a community task that he wanted

the Camphill Movement to nurture. And it calls up our own conscience as those responsible for the future.

I'm sure you will see how timely this volume comes! This is the 16th volume of the Karl König Edition.

Have you read them all yet?

**Hence the title "My Task" for the book about his life and his work.*

+ Dr Ita Wegman MD is known as the co-founder of Anthroposophical Medicine with Rudolf Steiner in 1921, she founded the first anthroposophical medical clinic in Arlesheim near Basle Switzerland, now known as the Ita Wegman Clinic.

++ Kasper Hauser: The mysterious circumstances surrounding the life and death of Kasper Hauser still raises questions. Who was this young man who spent the whole of his childhood in isolation locked in a dungeon it is claimed? Was he a rightful heir to the German Baden throne?

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