C R O S S R O A D S

A Newsletter of the Grail International Leadership Team

March 2012

An Update from the ILT

We met in Utrecht for the last ten days in January and February – working very hard to see how we can move forward with the decisions and recommendations from the IGA. We had two snows – one big enough to stop many trains and cancel a Grail programme. And the temperature dropped as low as -17C, but we stayed nicely warm with our wonderful Dutch friends and Grail members who provided us with fantastic hospitality! Since that time we have also followed up In a week with some work for you to do and a budget for 2012.

Here are the plans made at this meeting: (This update connects to your IGA report so you might want to look at them together)

Txintxa:

- The next topic will be on ecumenism and inter-faith dialogue – the papers will come soon
- A new team is being formed, and we hope that they will be able to meet in August or September to review our responses to the latest Txintxa papers and to make plans about how we move forward with this process and our work around theology and spirituality.

Formation:

- A new team is being formed. We have positive answers from Regina Bashasha from Uganda, Ina Conradie from South Africa, and Kay Hunt from Australia.
- As per our discussions in Pirapora, we will soon start a group email for those who are responsible for Formation in their countries so that we can exchange more information and resources.
- There are materials that we believe are core to our formation work, and we are investigating what needs translation.
- We ask each country that is planning formation programmes for this year or next to please let Mary Omedo know when and where they will be held, in what language, and whether you are interested in having some particular international participation or resources at these programmes.
- As part of the formation work, there is a small meeting (in the organizational phase) to think and write some Grail history for us.
- In the budget there will be some money available for language training as part of leadership development.
- Some monies will also be available for national/ regional formation programmes. Proposals must include goals; plan; and budget for the programme and can be submitted to Mary Omedo.

Outreach

- From the IGA recommendations, a fund is available for "mother" countries who are working with women in new Grail countries. A four year plan for this outreach and formation should be sent to Mary Omedo giving some idea of how you see this work progressing between the two countries and what funds are needed to have interaction and support
- Another recommendation for outreach was to hold at least one outreach event for young women during the coming year. Money will be available – up to Euro 500. And once again the goals, plan and budget should be sent to Mary Omedo.

Networks/ Workgroups/ Resource groups

These groups were named or renamed, defined or created as part of the IGA process by the groups themselves. And we also began to talk about their work. Each will have money available for administration.

Networks

GJOP - work is described in the Report.

- There will be a meeting of this team to think more about how they want to work and build in the future - probably European spring/ summer.

LIEN and LIEN Plus

- plans include participation in the 30/50 meeting in Golega, Portugal in August; travel in Europe by LIEN team members to build the work; and a September European meeting planned for Italy.

Workgroups

CSW and GLUN – Grail Link to the UN (this should not be called the UN Link Group – this was an error in the IGA report)

- As of this writing, women are expected to come to New York for CSW from Mocambique, South Africa, Uganda, Tanzania, Mexico, and Portugal. We were unable to bring interested girls from PNG or Brasil but hope to in future years as well as to bring young women from other countries that have not yet participated.
- This group works together with the Resource Group for the UN/UFER. Together they will help facilitate more effectively our connections to the United Nations.

Refugees and Migrants – see IGA report and please answer questionnaire

Transformative Education - see IGA report and please answer questionnaire see IGA report and please answer questionnaire

Sustainable Development/ Solidarity Economy – see IGA report

Language

- These workgroups are sending out questionnaires, setting up contacts and communication systems and working with the website team to continue developing plans and connections during the coming year. No special meetings have been planned at this point.

Resource Groups

Earth, Biodiversity, Environment, and Climate Change

- The people recommended at the IGA are being contacted to see if they would assist in providing resource materials for all the Grail via the website.

GLUN/ UFER and Rio + 20

- In May Grail UFER people and we hope also GLUN members will meet together in Cornwall to make some plans for deepening and growing our relationships to the UN as per the IGA report so that all of us will know more about UN work and our own countries.

- A team in Brasil will be representing us at Rio +20. They are currently making preparations. If you know Grail members who will be funded by other organizations and therefore will be in Rio for the meeting, will you please contact Shirlei Silva in Brasil.

Regional Groups

As discussed at the Assembly and in our preparation meetings, we hope that we can deepen and grow our regional work and cooperation in the coming years. Countries met in regions during the IGA. These groups also have money for administration available to them. Plans being developed:

- Africa – beginning preparation for a meeting in 2013
- Women in the Americas Region – planning a meeting for 2012.
- Asia- Pacific – planning a meeting in PNG this year to build a training team for a broader regional meeting in 2013
- Europe – some countries involved in building a common project related to immigration

International Teams

Communications Team

Website

- We are investigating the creation of a new look for our website.
- The proposal at the IGA to have our own platform for the Grail has been put on hold because of cost.
- A forum for theology and spirituality has been created for dialogue on the website. Mary Omedo will send the link to the countries very soon.
- As materials are added to the site, Mary Omedo will continue to notify us so that we all start using the site more regularly.
- As the new site is developed, we will be asking particular members to be part of an editorial council to review what can be uploaded into our resource area on our site.
- Other communication forms –

Monthly International Newsletter:

- We invite you to send information in your own language as we are a multi-lingual organisation, and it is good that this is reflected in our work.
- This year three of the Newsletters will focus on themes rather than general news. They are: COP 17 in March; CSW in May; and Rio+20 in July.
- We are investigating who can translate the GJOP Bulletin, Crossroads and the Newsletters. (Much of this work is currently being done for free in Portugal by Maria Emilia Malta and others. THANK YOU!)

Crossroads:

- Mary Gindhart is currently producing an edition of Crossroads. THANK YOU to YOU too, Mary. You have carried this for a long time.
- We are looking for a new editor and hope to focus the two issues a year on some topic important to us as Grail.

Archives Team

- Mary Gindhart and Loek Goemans have agreed to be on this team and are currently working on a plan to help us get this work done.
- They will be in contact with you when they need information and also to make suggestions for the creation of your country's archives.

International Exchange Team

- Ruth Crowe, Jeanette Loanzon, and Marian Schwab have agreed to be on this team.
- We are asking them to meet in the coming months to work with all the materials received as part of the IGA preparation materials and to think about what needs to be put in place to develop our capacity to have Grail members more actively moving about the globe.

Finance Team

- Mieneke Hage, Mary Farrell, and Cristina dosAnjos are on this team.
- They are planning a meeting for this year and will continue to work on how we can budget so that our finances are easier to understand and more transparent and also so that we disburse our money based on our strategic goals and plans.

Dialogue Group on Centres

- This is not an official team, but many ideas were raised at the IGA and we want people to continue with that conversation.
- The Email dialogue group is open to any Grail member interested in Centres, but we will also be asking NLT's to add names to the list as they see fit.

International Meetings

30/ 50 (55) Meeting –

- This meeting will take place at the Grail Centre in Golega in August this year. It will be a less-structured gathering and is open to the participation of Grail women between 30 and 55 years of age.
- There will be some international money available to the team to provide scholarships. And countries may also decide to provide funds for those interested.
- The International Grail will sponsor the participation of women identified at the IGA who want to build LIEN Plus.

70/100 Meeting – NOW POSTPONED to 2013

- Inspired by the idea of the 30/50 meeting and the Growing Older in the Grail Meeting of some years ago
- A gathering to bring together Grail members between seventy and one hundred years old to celebrate with one another, to gather some history and stories, to enjoy.
- Tentative dates – two weeks at the end of September or beginning of October. Place is being investigated and a team is being formed.

AND MONEY

ISF – International Solidarity Fund

- We have established a budget/ a fund for countries to apply for up to Euro 2000.
- This money can be used to build our involvement in our local communities – for example, local income generating/ economic solidarity or other small projects, revolving loan funds, seed money, matching funds for other donations received, etc.
- Please send goals and projected outcomes; the plan; and budget to Mary at the International Secretariat.

HEF – Higher Education Fund

- Applications can be sent to Carla van Thiel in the Netherlands

IAF – International Assistance Fund

- Applications can be sent to Anne Day in Australia.
- The ILT with the IAF team will be reviewing the categories and possibilities for assistance this year.

All other requests for money should be sent to Mary Omedo at the International Secretariat. She will forward them to the Finance Officer (Mieneke) and the ILT.

Tentative dates for the next IC Meeting are 23 February to 4 March, 2013. You will hear from us again soon when we send the 2012 budget and some requests for information.

Love and Prayers from us to all of you,
Christa, Cristina, and Carol

EASTER WISHES

For all the good works you are doing for the Grail movement on top of your jobs where you earn your daily bread, the International Grail Secretariat on behalf of the ILT would like to wish you a happy forthcoming Easter season. May the Easter candles shine light in the hearts of all the Grail members globally.

To our dear sisters who are down with health problems, we recognize the weight you carry each and everyday and we do lift you in our prayers. We cannot forget the caretakers of our sick sisters. Thank you so much for the great care you are providing and be blessed abundantly.

We wish you a very happy Easter!

International Grail Secretariat

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ILT February update 1

90th Grail birthday celebrations..... 7

Grail Network/workgroup reports. 8

Country reports..... 9

Grail pilgrimage to South Africa 11

Grail History..... 12

In Loving Memory..... 13

Announcement..... 14

Deadline for the next Crossroads — *November 1, 2012.*
Please send to Mary Omedo at iltsecr@thegrail.org Thank you.

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90th Grail birthday celebrations

Celebration in Germany

The Munich group and the Mülheim Grail Centre celebrated the 90th Anniversary. The Munich group invited Grail women and friends from other regions to share in their biannual retreat at the guesthouse of the Benedictine Missionary Sisters near a famous Bavarian lake. The Mülheim group extended their invitation to all they collaborate with in the municipality, church or other NGOs.

Both programs included a presentation of the history of the Grail mainly in Germany (1932 – 1938 and then from 1945 till today) by the church-historian Dr. Regina Heyder for which she dug up archival material and interviewed Grail women. She illustrated her presentations by photos and showed life-lines of the Grail development. The Grail in Germany is now a small group committed to the work of the International Grail. Inspired by bible studies and creative liturgical celebrations, the Grail cooperates with migrants, works on women's issues and participates in other movements.

The Bible Study in Munich was led by Regna Holzer, who is responsible for spiritual formation and guidance of the pastoral workers of the diocese of Munich. She inspired our reflection and sharing on Psalm 84 and the Sermon of the Mount, which became very much alive in relation to our own personal history and that of the Grail. The brother-in-law of Maria Schwab celebrated with us a Eucharist of thanksgiving and solidarity with all in the Grail.

In Mülheim, Silvana Ferraguti welcomed about 75 guests with a glass of champagne while they viewed posters that showed the various fields of activities and phases of development of the Grail. After Dr. Regina Heyder's presentation, all enjoyed delicious fingerfood while exchanging and meeting friends. In a second round Grail women highlighted some aspects they had been or are still involved in: **Friedel Steven**, the training of overseas workers in new Mülheim Grail Centre from 1962on; **Gerda Kaufman**, being a member of the International Presidency Team (1983 – 1988) and establishing with **Joan Dilworth** the Grail International Secretariat, that worked for 15 years in Mülheim; **Helma Schaumburg-Lowitz**, shared the broad involvements that emerged from the ecumenical bible study group, and witnessed the vital concerns of this group for a deep commitment to Christian unity;
Karoline Robins and Riki Eßers-Groß testified the commitment and support of the German Grail to the migrants, particularly the women and children.

Christa Werner (International. Leadership Team) and Silvana Ferraguti (National Leadership Team) envisioned the future of the International and the German Grail. Sigi Stecher, a cousin of Hilde Wailersbacher, wrote about this celebration: *"The Grail Movement is changing and it has to change. This seems to be an urgent national challenge. The International Movement of Christian Women – Grail" will not loose her radiance, because she will find answers to the burning questions of today fitting the society. And the Grail is doing this already!"*

Marita Estor

Celebration in the United States

Approximately 90 women from all over the U.S. celebrated the Grail's 90th birthday at a Sunday brunch at Grailville where they had gathered for a General Assembly. The celebration used the readings from Janet Kalven's history of the Grail, *Women Breaking Boundaries.*. The readings reflected on the beginnings of the Grail using quotes from Fr. Jacques Van Ginneken, the early days in the United States, the residential programs at Grailville through the years, the city centers, joining Movements for social change and last but certainly not least, the International. After each reading there was singing, including Gregorian chant, Lynn Malley's *Where There Is Charity and Loving Friendship*, a Spanish sing-along, Negro Spirituals and others that have become part of our singing tradition. The celebration ended with the whole community reading together the words of our new International Vision Statement followed by the singing of Rumi's poem, *"Come, come, whoever you are; worshipper wanderer, lover of leaving.*

Ours is not a caravan of despair. Though you have broken your vows a thousand times, come, come again come!"

Carol Siemering

Network Reports

Human Trafficking Report

Ten contact persons of the Human Trafficking Network responded to questions in preparation for the IGA in September 2011. They all receive the Global Justice Overcoming Poverty Bulletin (GJOP) and the Dutch Foundation of Religious Against Trafficking in Women (SRTV) Newsletter. Nine of them are continuing to be contact persons. Another is working in Germany with "SOLWODI" a very active group against prostitution and trafficking in women that works with SRTV.

They reported the following ways of making Grail members and others in their countries aware of the problem of trafficking?

Ireland forwarded information about a program with the title: Schedule of Events of Sex Trafficking in Ireland; How to prevent it? She will keep us posted of further publicity around this very important issue.
Uganda is planning to involve members so that they can have a setup for counselling services of trafficked 'humiliated' women who found their way back in the country and have nothing to start from.
Mexico mentioned that southern border migrants arrive from Central America trying to reach the US across the border are vulnerable to human trafficking.
Cincinnati has in the FREEDOM CENTER, a museum dedicated to the Underground Railroad, a permanent exhibit on Human Trafficking.
Tanzania shares information with the Grail members about trafficking in women at general meetings and encourage them to read the different documents and newspapers about the subject.
South Africa gave a report at the 2008 SA Grail National Meeting and distributed pamphlets. A power-point presentation 'Elena' was used in the Gauteng Grail group and also as a reflection during the National Meeting. Copies of the DVD Elena were given to each of the 3 Grail local groups.

by Ton Brouwer and Elly König, Coordinators

Grail Participation in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) 17th Conference of Parties (194 governments) in Durban from 27 November – 9 December 2011

The Grail participants were: Patricia Nakityo (Uganda), Ephetha Mcha (Tanzania), Abida Jamal (Mozambique) joined South African Grail members, Jane Ngobese, Sibongile Mtungwa, Thoko Makhanya, Nqobile Masuku and Marilyn Aitken. If we add the girls and young women who are in a Grail formation process in KwaZulu Natal and Mozambique, 11 in all, we were quite a significant Grail presence of 19 people.

We went to remind the negotiators from 194 governments to put the future of the Earth before profits by reducing Greenhouse Gas emissions and paying into a Green Climate Fund to enable developing countries to install green technology. The highlight was the peaceful march/dance/song of 10,000 through Durban's city centre. We paused outside the US Consulate to make the point that the big polluters must make commitments to cut emissions. The president of the negotiators received our petition outside the International Convention Centre.

The UNFCCC will celebrate its 20th birthday in June at the Rio+20 gathering in Rio de Janeiro. The negotiators are still far from a Fair Ambitious Binding deal while the planet teeters on the brink of disaster. Many parts of the globe have experienced extreme weather events during the past few years and the overheating is growing to a point of no return. We cannot wait till 2020 to begin cutting carbon. We must begin now. Let us know how **you** are addressing the challenge of Climate Change? (maitken@wltp.co.za)

We hope this article will whet your appetite to read and study the longer article that those of us who were in Durban will produce in March. Look out for it.

If you want to go to Rio+20, please try to raise your own funds. Ask Mary Kay Louchart (grail-ipt@juno.com) to register you before May and tell Shirlei Silva (ssilva@ubee-marista.com.br) in Brazil that you are coming.

Marilyn Aitken

Country Reports

Grail Kenya Civic Education Drive

Following the promulgation of the new constitution of Kenya on August 27, 2010, the Grail Kenya recognized the role that the WOMEN within the movement can play in informing, defending the rights and empowering of all WOMEN and girls in the country: The Grail Kenya Civic Education Drive 'WOMEN informed for a New Kenya' was launched to promote civic engagement and support democratic and participatory governance.
Kenyans and especially WOMEN need to keep Parliament under watch to ensure they enact the 50 or more legislations that are required to operationalize the new Constitution which contains the following provisions:
WOMEN are guaranteed one-third of all elected or appointed posts in government. "Political parties…will have to pay special attention to gender parity — an obvious departure from what has been the norm."
"We expect better deployment of health workers in all parts of the country, better nutrition and provision of health services. We expect more WOMEN to deliver in hospitals and a sharp improvement of family planning services."
Devolving power and resources to more localized levels and hence promoting development transformation of local governance to ensure that citizens benefit from the same.
Equal rights to own property including land, rights to inheritance are just a few among the many benefits that WOMEN stand to gain in the implementation of the new constitution.
Recognition of the cultural practices that are harmful to WOMEN as being unlawful is big gain for WOMEN.
The supremacy of the constitution is guaranteed thereby giving it overall authority over other laws like customary laws which usually discriminate against WOMEN.
A new Bill of Rights now provides that all marriages shall be registered under an Act of Parliament. This means that even customary law marriages will be certified, protecting WOMEN's interests in disputes between a widow and her in-laws over property.
A minimum of 15 percent of the national budget will now be allocated at a local level. WOMEN discriminated against on any grounds can challenge it in court or complain to the National Human Rights and Equality Commission. Such cases will not be subject to court fees, making access to justice much easier for all, especially WOMEN.
For more information:
womenofgrailnairobi@yahoo.com

“She is compassionate, caring, visionary and joyful!

The Grail Mozambique celebrated her 25th anniversary on 25th-26th September 2011 at Caritas Head office in Maputo. The guests were welcomed by a photo exhibition of more than 100 photos showing activities and moments of the Mozambican Grail.
The slogan “Elas dão as mãos, cuidam, sonham e celebram” was transformed in a song mixing marrabenta and rap rhythms. The result was just amazing and as soon as the group entered the hall, the guests and visitors simply freed their bodies and voices and joined the group in a very enthusiastic way…
The moment “A Thankful hand” was an opportunity to honour Teresinha Tavares, a member of the Portuguese Grail who back in 1986 sowed the first seeds that started the Grail in Mozambique.

A drama presentation based on the "Percival" opera by Wagner was prepared by the Grail youth group with the objective of taking all the presents in a journey to the Grail roots
The panel "I, the woman called Mozambique" had three speakers: "Which powers and expressions mark my social participation?" by Sara Jona: "Which social constructions coerce me?" by Teresinha Silva and "Which hands mould my ways of thinking and act?" by Pedro Muiambo. The presentations confirmed that women are still struggling with different issues facing our society, but they are gaining some space/voices and more importantly some battles are being won. It is clear that a lot more needs to be done to ensure balanced gender relationships.
On the second day, three remarkable women gave their testimonies on "Who do I serve when serving the Grail". It was a very important and special moment to hear Carol Webb, Teresinha Tavares and Marilyn Aitken sharing their histories and challenges. The Grail was just there, alive and spreading messages of hope, peace, justice and the need to preserve the environment.
A parade of history of the Grail Mozambique "At that moment I was there…" was another special moment, because It was possible to tell the history of the Mozambican Grail and allowed the guests to see the growth of the Group and understand the different passages and experiences that they went through.
The event ended at the Grail centre with a ritual called "Kupalha" that in our tradition symbolizes the blessing and protection that we ask from our ancestors, linking the visit of all guests. The last part was a festive moment with sharing of songs, presents and dinner with Mozambican typical dishes.
In summary, we've celebrated our abundant life of inspiring women gathering together; celebrated with like-minded visionaries and the honour of receiving visitors from all walks of life. We've opened our hearts; we've expanded our minds and realized our dreams at this celebration!

The Grail Mozambique

The Grail Pilgrimage to South Africa

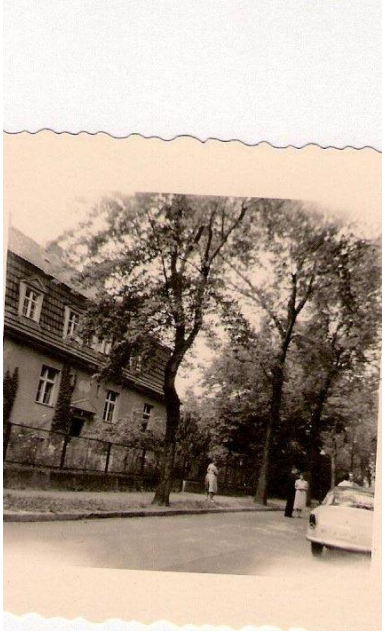
Participants in the pilgrimage to South Africa at a wine tasting in the Stellenbosch wine region. Left to right: *Annika Ohlinder (Sweden) Karen O'Brien (USA) Satu Heikkinen(Sweden) Anna Stenquist (Sweden), Kerstin Jacobsson (Sweden), Lenie Schaareman (USA/Holland), Ina Conradie (South Africa) Anne Palmer (Sweden) and Karin Beskow (Sweden)*

South African Grail member Ina Conradie was our generous hostess and avid hiking leader for the Grail Pilgrimage to South Africa, which was held late December and early January.
Participants from Sweden and the United States joined Ina, her family and other South African Grail members in both Cape Town and Kleinmond for two weeks of seaside and mountain hiking, touring local highlights, sharing meals and growing in relationship with one another. Much of our time together centered on the theme of liberation, both in the South African reality as well as in our personal lives, and resulted in renewing our energies for our own work of liberation and empowerment.
Mountain and seaside hikes provided time to appreciate the Divine in nature, walk in contemplative silence yet also spend time getting to know one another better. Many of us walked up Table and Lion's Head Mountains, through the Newlands Forest trail, and climbed the Three Sisters Mountains just north of the Grail Centre in Kleinmond, while others took an occasional day of personal rest and renewal away from the group. We also visited Noordhoek Beach, the coast of Kleinmond and walked along the Palmiet River, where we had the opportunity to swim in clear mountain streams. Much of our sightseeing centered around South Africa's struggle with the legacy of apartheid, visiting Robben Island and the District Six museum. We also visited

projects in the township of Khayelitsha, where Ina partners with women building economic enterprises in that impoverished district. We were the guests of Sally Timmel and Anne Hope, who shared their work at the Grail Centre in Kleinmond as well as Mthimkhulu Village Centre. Ina and her family treated us all to a South African "braai" or bar-b-que, as well as took us to the Stellenbosch wine region for a wine tasting and al fresco luncheon. The women of the Kleinmond Grail Centre shared their stories of their own work in "the struggle" and hosted a lovely commemoration ceremony around South African liberation our last morning in Kleinmond. Ina, and the other Grail women of South Africa who so generously offered their time and talents for our benefit, gave us a powerful understanding of the legacy of apartheid, and a priceless experience of the complexities of the ongoing struggle to build a new South Africa. They introduced us to a country of immense natural beauty, rich cultural heritage and enormous potential, filled with women and men of goodwill and hope from all backgrounds. They shared their work and lives with us, and those of us who participated in this pilgrimage continue to benefit from the gift of their time with us.
Many of us ended our time in South Africa with a day safari to Inverdoorn Game Reserve in the Little Karoo region three hours from Cape Town; a special treat, while Lenie Schaareman proceeded on to Johannesburg to visit with Grail friends there. We all departed richer for our time together in South Africa, having formed new friendships, strengthened old friendships and brimming with ideas and enthusiasm for future Grail collaboration and sharing.

Grail History

The photo of the **Grail house in Berlin in 1959** was sent to me in a Christmas card this year by Father Thomas Stransky, the Paulist priest who was one of my co-workers in the Vatican Secretariat for Christian Unity starting in 1961.



As a young priest in the United States he was acquainted with Grail members in the United States. In 1958 when he was preparing to go to study in Münster, Germany they gave him the address of the Grail in the Netherlands. Father Tom visited the Grail at the Tiltenberg and other Grail houses in Holland. In Amsterdam, he was given the address of the Grail in Berlin.

His professor in Münster urged him to not only study from books and libraries, but also to interview mission and ecumenical leaders in Europe. The first days after his arrival in Europe Father Tom stayed at the Tiltenberg and where Dé Groothuizen arranged a meeting with Mgr Willebrands who together with his friend Dr Frans Thijssen had founded the Catholic Conference for Ecumenical Questions (CCEQ). They invited him to the meeting of the CCEQ in Paderborn in 1959.

At the time of his visits to the Tiltenberg I was in Ubbergen and did not meet him. When in 1960 the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity was erected Mgr Willebrands was named its Executive Secretary. That meant that he had to set up an office; next to the President, Cardinal Bea, and the Secretary another two staff members were allowed. It seemed recommendable to have one whose mother tongue would be English, and then Mgr Willebrands thought of… Fr Stransky. It was the beginning of a lifelong cooperation and friendship between Willebrands and Stransky. In 1961 I came to Rome to assist Mgr Willebrands in replacement of Corinna De Martini still recuperating from a long illness. As a lay woman I was not allowed to work in the office, but of course working for the same cause we knew each other and became friends and this is how I received the photo of the German Grail house.

I send the photo to the Grail in Germany and thus the circle is closed, but it shows how much influence the Grail can have, even unintentional and unknown.

Josette Kersters, January 2012.

In Loving Memory

Marieke van der Grinten
1931 - 2011

A few years ago Marieke underwent surgery for intestinal cancer, but she did not really recuperate afterwards. At the end of October Marieke was admitted in a hospice where she consciously prepared for the last part of her life's journey here on earth. Late in the evening of 6th December she passed quietly away. We are grateful she did not have to suffer any longer. We know she will be welcomed by the heavenly Grail community.

In the 1950s and 1960s, Marieke lived at the Tiltenberg. She spent a long time at the Ark, took care of the guests and was the director of the choir. Later, she studied theology and moved to the south of the Netherlands where she was born and where her parents had lived. She worked as a librarian. Education and study for women were very important to her.

Life has not been easy for Marieke, a quiet, intelligent and faithful woman. She could ponder over things and was not always understood when trying to share it with others. She was very lonely at times. Except for Jolanda Spaninks, who kept good contact with her, no Grail people were living nearby. Carla van Thiel also visited her regularly. Fragile as she was, Marieke had a deep belief in God, open for all that happened in the Church and in the Grail, knowing that things can change, but that God would always be the same and with her.

Together with her relatives we had a service of thanksgiving for Marieke's life on Wednesday, she was buried December 14th in Venlo, in the tomb of her parents. Please remember Marieke and us all in your thoughts and prayers.

On behalf of the Grail in the Netherlands,
Phily van Dijck

Dorothy Smith
Member of the Nucleus of The Grail
Born: March 19th 1921
Died: September 27th 2011

On September 27th 2011, Dorothy Smith, being cared for in St. Scholastica´s Retreat, Buckinghamshire, UK, went home to the Lord in great peace.

As last member of the International Grail in England, she was out of sight for many of
us, but the contacts with some friends, and feeling connected with every Grail woman through a deep spirituality, kept her united. Born in the year the Grail was founded, she celebrated her 90. Birthday in March 2011. Weak and tired, but fully aware of her "belonging", she was grateful for all the graces of her life.

In many Grail countries her name and services are well remembered. As a devoted and excellent High school teacher, she lectured from 1957 till 1961 in the Senior Secondary School in Kalisizo, Uganda, and acted from 1958 till 1961 as Principal in that big and famous Boarding School, where several African Grail members studied. She spent the late 1960s and early 1970s in the Grail community in Moshi, Tanzania, teaching in the Weruweru SS of the Assumption Sisters. After a time in Rubaga, Uganda, she went back to Great Britain. Then she joined a Grail group living contemplatively in Portugal, until she returned to England and went to live in a home where she was cared for physically and spiritually.

Dorothy (Gold) Smith (as she was called in the Grail to distinguish her from Dorothy Smith in Canada) was a very gentle woman, loved by the students she lead efficiently to the Cambridge exams, and by those she taught needlework and dressmaking in their free time. Besides English and Religion, her special subjects, she loved art and music, played the piano, and painted Icons – she gave on that love to young women. As a nucleus member she practiced meditation in silence and prayed for Grail meetings she could not go to in person. The people she touched, keep her alive in their hearts. May she be fulfilled in the presence of the Lord!

For the International Grail,
Christa Werner

Trees van Voorst tot Voorst
6/1/1921 – 28/11/2011

While in this Advent season we are all waiting and preparing for Christ's coming, this waiting ended for Trees on Monday morning, 28th November 2011, when she met Jesus and has quietly passed the threshold joining the heavenly Grail community. Lately Trees was very tired and these last days she was rapidly declining; on Saturday she remained in bed, sleeping practically the whole time. There was no reaction to the visits she received till late at night. Praying at her bedside helped to ease her breathing.

We are grateful that she did not suffer and that the difficult last months of her life here have now come to an end.

All who ever visited the Tiltenberg will remember her as the vivid, cheerful, witty, ever busy woman, concerned about people's welfare and wishing to share her faith and inspiration.
This is how we shall always gratefully remember Trees and especially also on Friday, 2nd December when at 13.00h., we shall farewell her at "De Mantel", nursing home where she spent these last months, and put her to rest at the "Oosterbegraafplaats" Rodelaan in Voorburg.

Please join us and her many friends, who found in her strength and inspiration, in thanking God for Trees' life.

On behalf of the Grail in the Netherlands.
Josette Kersters

Announcement

The 30/55 Gathering in Portugal This August 2012: "Embracing our Future As Grail"

Out of the 2010 European Grail gathering in Brussels, a wonderful plan emerged. Six Grail women, each from different countries and all under 55, found they enjoyed one another's friendship, resonated with one another's dreams and visions, and wanted to commit to building a future together as Grail women. Thus, the idea for the 30/55 Gathering was born—an informal gathering of Grail women between the ages of 30 and 55 who simply want to gather to meet each other, grow more deeply in relationship and discuss what it is we all might build together as international Grail women in collaboration and friendship with one another.
The 30/55 Gathering will be taking place in Golega, Portugal, from Saturday, August 4 until Sunday, August 12, 2012. The cost is 35 euro a day for room and board. Expect this gathering to involve a few day trips with one another around the region, as well as lots of time dream and plan and simply enjoy one another's company. If you want to come and finances are an obstacle, limited scholarships are available. Please also consider being in touch with your national leadership team to explore financial assistance.
For more information about joining us, please contact Karen O'Brien at karen_obrien520@yahoo.com . Please let us know if your preferred language for communication is English, Italian, Portuguese or Spanish as we have women on our committee who can address your inquiries in those languages.

Karen O'Brien