

PIONEER APPLICATION BLANK
 PLEASE COMPLETE IN DUPLICATE AND RETURN BOTH COPIES TO
 NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY
 536 SHERIDAN ROAD, WILMETTE, ILLINOIS

Name *Mrs. S. S. Sunshine*
 Address *5054 Winthrop Ave*
 City *Chicago Ill*
 Telephone *Long Beach 1-8933*
 Date of Birth *April 27*
 Married or Single *single*
 Dependents - adults or minors ...
none

CHECK AREA DESIRED

- United States (new cities) ()
- Central America ()
- South America -
- Key West ()
- Puerto Rico ()
- Alaska ()
- Hawaiian Islands ()
- Kodiak ()
- Aleutians ()
- Falkland Islands ()
- Europe ()
- Asia ()
- Africa ()

BAHÁ'Í TEACHING AND ADMINIS-
 TRATIVE EXPERIENCE

Committee
 Assembly *Pioneering in*
Arkansas, Calif
 Isolated *Arkansas, Calif*
 Firesides *Alabama since 1938*

PRESENT OCCUPATION

Housewife
Willing to do any other work

FINANCIAL STATUS

(Please give full details)

- No aid needed ()
- Partial aid needed
- Full aid needed ()
- Financial Reserve *None*

EDUCATIONAL AND WORK EXPERIENCE

High School
 College
 Work Experience

When can you leave? *any time*
 How long can you stay? *no limit*

Have you any health problems, present or past? *none*

Knowledge of Languages other than English *Hungarian - German*
 Writing: () Speaking; () Understanding;

*Can learn Spanish
 quickly*

Signature *Mrs. S. S. Sunshine*
 Date *March 18 - 54*

بیت عالم

THE BAHÁ'Í WORLD

AN INTERNATIONAL RECORD

*Prepared under the supervision of
The Universal House of Justice*

VOLUME XV

125, 126, 127, 128 and 129
OF THE BAHÁ'Í ERA
1968-1973

BAHÁ'Í WORLD CENTRE
HAIFA
1976

youth. Indeed, he was so popular with the youth that sometimes we called him the 'youth' member of the Auxiliary Board. It was beautiful to see the touching affection between Curtis and the young people. The Indian people, so sensitive to the spirit, loved him. In fact, all of us loved him. And we knew clearly that he was an historic figure . . . The Counsellors are deeply honored to have had the treasure of his friendship."

Guest of honor at the Bradenton conference was the Hand of the Cause William Sears who wrote: "For many years, dearest Curtis has carefully planned, prayed for and energetically worked toward this end, the holding of this conference. All his fondest dreams came true. Although he could not participate, his presence was felt every minute throughout the weekend gathering. The conference created a feeling of precious closeness to our beloved Master, 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Throughout his long years of service to our cherished Cause, Curtis has always brought us especially close to 'Abdu'l-Bahá. It seemed as though the Master were there at each session to fulfil every hope that Curtis had, and to see the glorious fruition of all his plans."

Curtis often told his family and friends that his most profound impression of 'Abdu'l-Bahá was of His humility and service and even as a young man Curtis determined to follow in His footsteps. He was also greatly affected by a statement made to him by 'Abdu'l-Bahá. In the words of Curtis, "'Abdu'l-Bahá said the only difference between Him and us was that He was dependent on Bahá'u'lláh every instant, and we sometimes forget."

One had the feeling that Curtis's pace never slackened, his ardor and courage never diminished, that his death was just a momentary, fleeting transition from one field of service to another. An extract from 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Tablet to Roy Wilhelm dated October 12, 1921, conveys the spirit and essence of Curtis Kelsey:

. . . Mr. Kelsey, the electrical technician, has arrived. He is a true gentleman. Indeed, this loving friend is engaged in the service of the Cause of God with the utmost endeavour and this is but a token of heavenly grace.

CAROL RUTSTEIN
JUNE REMIGNANTI
MARY LOUISE SUHM

REZSI SUNSHINE

1888-1970

SADDENED NEWS PASSING REZSI SUNSHINE
DEVOTED CONSECRATED SERVANT BLESSED
BEAUTY STOP PRAYING DIVINE THRESHOLD
PROGRESS SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

Thus read the cable from the Universal House of Justice about Miss Rezsi Sunshine who ascended to the Abhá Kingdom on March 6, 1970, at the age of eighty-two, after having served tirelessly as a pioneer in the first and second Seven Year Plans, and the Ten Year Crusade of the beloved Guardian, and later in the Nine Year Plan given to the Bahá'í world by the Universal House of Justice.

Little is known of her early years save that she emigrated to the United States from Hungary when she was sixteen years old. She began her new life as a seamstress in New York City and later became an established modiste, creating expensive and elegant gowns for wealthy society women of the area. Many years later she laughingly recalled that when she pioneered in the Middle West she was offered only a dollar or two to make simple cotton summer dresses.

In New York she met Miss Jean Silver, her spiritual mother. There was an immediate attraction and affinity between them. Both were the daughters of rabbis and they had like characteristics of enthusiasm, devotion, independence and radiance of spirit.

In 1938, responding to the call for pioneers in the virgin States in the first American Seven Year Plan, Rezsi went to Arkansas and taught in Hot Springs and Little Rock. She continued pioneering in that area throughout the second Seven Year Plan.

During the Ten Year Crusade, in 1955, she pioneered to Bolivia and largely through her constant teaching efforts, the Spiritual Assembly of Cochabamba was formed at Riqván 1956, the fourth Assembly in the country.

From 1959 until 1963 she spent three and a half years in Paraguay, teaching in Villarica, Pedro Juan, Encarnación and Concepción. Her most notable contribution in this period was the establishment of a Spiritual Assembly in Concepción in 1962. She also served as a member of the first National Spiritual Assembly of Paraguay.



Rezsi Sunshine

Returning to her beloved Bolivia, she settled in the little city of Tarija near the Argentinian frontier. In 1967 the first Spiritual Assembly of Tarija was elected. She wrote to the Bolivian National Assembly before leaving for that post: "Indeed, I am all poised for Tarija. What a great privilege to start out again on another Divine adventure for Bahá'u'lláh! Can we ever be grateful enough?"

Finally, in 1970, Rezsi, so capable in opening up virgin places, offered to pioneer in San Luis, Argentina. She left Bolivia in January of that year, but her pioneer mission had now ended and she passed away in Córdoba, Argentina, on March 6.

This account of Rezsi's service would be incomplete without a reference to her unique personality. She embodied the teaching "*Be unrestrained as the wind, while carrying the Message . . .*" and "*Let God be all-sufficient for thee. Commune intimately with His Spirit and be thou of the thankful . . .*" Rezsi lost no opportunity to give the Glad Tidings. She would meet people at all hours, considering no one as a stranger. She taught in the parks, in the shops, in the markets, and in any byway in which she happened to find herself. Her hospitality and generosity are well remembered.

Everyone's sad story affected her heart; she wanted to feed and clothe all the poor, tend and heal all the sick. She took no thought of the morrow as she freely used her small resources for the Faith, for the needs of others and for purchasing great quantities of Bahá'í literature which she presented as gifts to anyone who would accept. The dynamic qualities of this dedicated pioneer can best be glimpsed through a few incidents told about her. A North American pioneer who accompanied her on a journey to Encarnación, Paraguay, recounts:

"We registered in a small hotel in the late afternoon. Rezsi would not rest for a moment. She wanted to start out immediately to look for a local Bahá'í centre. It was almost sunset as we walked down a long hill to a little plaza near the river. There, seated on a bench, we recited the *Tablet of Ahmad*. When we finished, Rezsi asked whether I had stood before her during the prayer; when I replied that I hadn't she explained that she had felt some Presence in front of us. Then she rose and said decisively, 'Now we will walk to the corner.' At the corner, 'Turn left'. In the middle of the next block we were led to a perfect little modern house, ideal for a centre. Rezsi paid the rent, purchased a mattress, and moved in immediately. No one had more faith in Divine Guidance than Rezsi Sunshine. That little house served as the local Bahá'í centre for the next several years."

A Bolivian believer relates that she unexpectedly found herself in Tarija without any idea as to where she could locate Rezsi. Attracted by the music of a street fiesta she paused and discovered Rezsi, whirling and dancing like a young señorita, an eternally youthful spirit in spite of having already passed her eightieth birthday!

Sr. Athos Costas, a member of the Continental Board of Counsellors in South America, has written: "Rezsi Sunshine lived only for the Faith and freely gave the Teachings to all who crossed her path. We still meet people who remember her with love and who received the first words about Bahá'u'lláh from her. A month before her passing, I visited Tarija. I found it very difficult to follow her in every direction as she took me to meet her numerous friends. In that one week, we had seven Bahá'í meetings. She spoke with enthusiasm about her transfer to San Luis, Argentina. As she spoke,

she told me that she saw the face of 'Abdu'l-Bahá before her."

Only a special event could take Rezsí away from her pioneer post even for a few days. One of the brightest moments of her last years was the visit of the Hand of the Cause of God Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum to Bolivia in 1967. As Rezsí entered the National Bahá'í Institute in Cochabamba she was overwhelmed at the large gathering of Bolivian friends and pioneers and recalled her early efforts to teach some of the first Bolivian believers. With tear-filled eyes she repeated the Greatest Name over and over again and expressed praise and gratitude to Bahá'u'lláh. She returned to Tarija and never left again to attend any other Bahá'í event in Bolivia.

Such precious pioneers as Rezsí Sunshine cannot be described. They are like quicksilver which children try to touch and cannot catch or hold. We can only be grateful that we have known briefly some of these indefatigable servants. As the Guardian said frequently of such dedicated ones after their passing: "Their services are unforgettable."

ELLEN SIMS

ELSA STEINMETZ

?-1970

GRIEVED NEWS PASSING VALIANT STEADFAST
PIONEER ELSA STEINMETZ HER DEVOTED SERVICES
CAUSE OVER LONG YEARS ETERNALLY
WOVEN ANNALS FAITH SWITZERLAND EUROPEAN
CONTINENT PRAYING SACRED THRESHOLD
PROGRESS HER SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

Universal House of Justice

On March 13, 1970, our dear Elsa Steinmetz was called to her Eternal Home. None of us who knew her will ever forget this faithful American pioneer who, with her sister, Mrs. Fritz Shaver, came to Switzerland in 1947 to assist in the building of Bahá'í communities.

The first Bahá'í community was established in Berne largely through the devoted efforts of Elsa Steinmetz. She quickly mastered the German language and was able to conduct Bahá'í meetings with little or no assistance. As she became fluent in the language she prepared a series of carefully planned lectures which attracted the hearts of her listeners and were a rich testimony to her deep knowledge of the



Elsa Steinmetz

Faith. Her presentations of the Cause were marked by a beauty of language which she strove hard to achieve. A spiritual atmosphere and great personal warmth and charm always surrounded her when she spoke.

Berne very soon became a true home for Elsa and Fritz and in 1949 they saw established there the first Local Spiritual Assembly in Switzerland. In spite of their love for our beautiful, old city they responded to the call of the European Teaching Committee and arose as pioneers to the city of Basel where they witnessed the establishment of a second Spiritual Assembly. Unfortunately Elsa's sister became very ill and passed away in Basel. A moving account of the services of Fritz Shaver, written by Elsa, appears in *The Bahá'í World*, vol. XIII, p. 918.

Although she felt deeply the loss of her sister, Elsa proceeded to a new post in Lucerne, responsive once again to a request for help. Where there was need, Elsa always stood ready to assist.

The Bahá'í Faith made of Elsa Steinmetz a true world citizen who won the love and respect of her fellow pioneers of that period and of the new Bahá'ís. She was a valuable member of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of