

# *Theosophy*

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## ***Freedom of Thought***

As the Theosophical Society has spread far and wide over the world, and as members of all religions have become members of it without surrendering the special dogmas, teachings and beliefs of their respective faiths, it is thought desirable to emphasise the fact that there is no doctrine, no opinion, by whomsoever taught or held, that is in any way binding on any member of the Society, none of which any member is not free to accept or reject.

Approval of its three Objects is the sole condition of membership.

No teacher, or writer, from H.P. Blavatsky onwards, has any authority to impose his or her teachings or opinions on members. Every member has an equal right to follow any school of thought, but has no right to force the choice on any other. Neither a candidate for any office nor any voter can be rendered ineligible to stand or to vote, because of any opinion held, or because of membership in any school of thought. Opinions or beliefs neither bestow privileges nor inflict penalties.

The Members of the General Council earnestly request every member of the Theosophical Society to maintain, defend and act upon these fundamental principles of the Society, and also fearlessly to exercise the right of liberty of thought and of expression thereof, within the limits of courtesy and consideration for others.

Resolution passed by the General Council of the Theosophical Society (1924)

## ***Freedom of the Society***

The Theosophical Society, while cooperating with all other bodies whose aims and activities make such cooperation possible, is and must remain an organisation entirely independent of them, not committed to any objects save its own, and intent on developing its own work on the broadest and most inclusive lines, so as to move towards its own goal as indicated in and by the pursuit of those objects and that Divine Wisdom which in the abstract is implicit in the title, 'The Theosophical Society'.

Since Universal Brotherhood and the Wisdom are undefined and unlimited, and since there is complete freedom for each and every member of the Society in thought and action, the Society seeks ever to maintain its own distinctive and unique character by remaining free of affiliation or identification with any other organisation.

Resolution passed by the General Council of the Theosophical Society (1949)

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*The Theosophical Society* welcomes students or seekers, belonging to any religion or to none, who are in sympathy with its Objects. The motto of the Society is *There is no Religion higher than Truth*. The word *Religion* in this statement is a translation of the Sanskrit *dharmā*, which among other things means practice; way; virtue; teaching; law; inherent nature; religion; and that which is steadfast or firm. The word *Truth* in the motto is a translation of the Sanskrit *satya*, meaning among other things, true, real and actual. It derives from the root *sat*, sometimes translated as boundless unconditioned existence.

*Theosophy* is not defined in the Constitution of the Theosophical Society, or in any official document. It literally means divine wisdom, *theosophia*, but members of the Society are left to discover what it is for themselves, taking as guides whatever religions or philosophies they wish.

### The Three Objects of The Theosophical Society

*To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour.*

*To encourage the study of Comparative Religion, Philosophy and Science.*

*To investigate unexplained laws of Nature and the powers latent in the human being.*

## From the National President ...

Dara Tatray



These days you can do courses in Pranic Healing for Business, and Pranic Corporate Management, while ensuring that you almost always get that parking spot for your car. According to *The Secret*, a modern application of the law of attraction with a strong emphasis on material gain, you can create your own reality. Or can you?

There is no doubting the power of thought; and there is no doubting the power of intention. But mastering that power is quite another matter. I suppose it is not impossible that a television producer could have discovered the secret of the universe, but somehow I think that a power likened to the energy of cosmic creativity itself is not about to be harnessed without a great deal of effort on our part. What is perhaps more likely is that those who seek to employ the law of attraction, or the power of thought, for personal gain, will manifest more than they bargained for.

*Kriyashakti* is one of the seven forces of nature. It is also one of the *siddhi-s* or powers of the yogi. In both cases, it is the power of thought 'to produce external, perceptible, phenomenal results by its own inherent energy' (H.P. Blavatsky *The Secret Doctrine* Vol. II, p.173). Without a high degree of detachment, self-awareness and selflessness, what will be produced is the external, perceptible, phenomenal manifestation of hidden desires and latent tendencies, most of which have been hidden for good reason. This is known as unconscious *kriyashakti*—the clothing of latent

tendencies (*skanda-s*) in material form. And if the ancient wisdom is anything to go by, this generally causes trouble.

The power of thought can only be fully awakened and safely employed by those with pure, unselfish motives. Playing with this highly creative power makes playing with fire look like a walk in the park on a good day, with a low ultraviolet rating. It may appear to work in our favour for a while, only to rebound with force later on.

A healthy attitude to positive thinking is exhibited in an article produced by the staff of the Mayo Clinic (< <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/positive-thinking/SR00009>>). It provides a salutary contrast to the cult of positive affirmation with its mercantile edge. With time and practice you can transform negative thinking patterns and benefit from a wide range of health effects. Two points in their list of five tips struck me as beneficial and sensible:

1. Do a self-check periodically throughout the day to see which way your thoughts are tending. If in a negative direction, then try to put a positive spin on them.
2. Don't say anything to yourself that you wouldn't say to someone else. When negative thoughts arise try to evaluate them rationally and counter with something positive.

This process of awareness, self-reflection and discernment (*viveka*) is very down-to-earth, but no less spiritual at that. ❀

## Why do we Belong to the Theosophical Society?

Lecture, 2010 World Congress of the Theosophical Society

Linda Oliveira, Vice - President



It may be interesting, useful and perhaps even educative to reflect upon why we originally joined the Theosophical Society. Were we particularly conscious of the reason we joined at the time? What was it about the Society then which especially appealed to us? Various responses to the question of why we originally joined the TS may reflect some of the initial reasons for the Society's formation.

The fact is that individuals are drawn to the Society for many reasons: perhaps because of an interest in a particular teaching, a friendly environment in a Lodge or an attraction to the Society's Objects, because of the guarantee of freedom of thought, and so forth. In one interesting case, a member explained that he joined the TS because he had something to teach the Society. He clearly considered, as a member of relatively short standing, that he knew what was best for the TS. Significantly, he did not seem to have an ability to work with others in a cooperative endeavour and listen to other views. And even more interestingly, he did not remain a member for too long.

### The Original Programme

'*Errare humanum est*', wrote Madame Blavatsky in 1875. The translation from Latin into English may be more familiar—'to err is human': 'It was never denied that the Organization of the T.S. was *very* imperfect. *Errare humanum est*. ... From the founders down to the humblest member, the Society is composed of imperfect mortal men—not gods.' It would be difficult to quibble with this. Joining the Theosophical Society does not instantly immunize us

against unbrotherliness, or enkindle within us compassion and universal understanding.

Madame Blavatsky's 'Original Programme of the Theosophical Society' stated:

The members of the T.S. have to be reminded of the origin of the Society in 1875 ... the writer received orders from her Master and Teacher to form the nucleus of a regular Society whose objects were broadly stated as follows:

- (1) Universal Brotherhood;
- (2) No distinction to be made by the member between races, creeds, or social positions;
- (3) To study the philosophies of the East—those of India chiefly, presenting them gradually to the public in various works that would interpret exoteric religions in the light of esoteric teachings;
- (4) To oppose materialism and theological dogmatism in every possible way.

These four points have been abbreviated for convenience. Despite some changes to these Objects, it is fair to say that the general purpose of the Society has not changed substantially. HPB continued:

The two chief Founders were not told what they had to do, how they had to bring about and quicken the growth of the Society and results desired ... But if the two Founders were not told *what they had to do*, they were distinctly instructed about *what they should never do*, what they had to avoid, and what the Society should never become.

### What the TS Should Never Become

This is where it gets particularly interesting, because through the following two points, which clearly indicate what the Mahatmas behind the formation of the TS considered that it should *never* become, its specific nature emerges even more vividly. In the first place, HPB wrote:

(1) The Founders had to exercise all their influence to oppose *selfishness of any kind*, by insisting upon sincere, fraternal feelings among the Members—at least outwardly; working for it to bring about a spirit of unity and harmony ... expecting and demanding from the Fellows, a great mutual toleration and charity for each other's shortcomings; mutual help in the research of truths in every domain—moral or physical—and even, in daily life.

Noteworthy here is the insistence upon unselfishness, fraternal feelings and an animating spirit of unity and harmony.

HPB's second statement concerning what was to be avoided read, in abbreviated form:

(2) They [the two chief Founders] had to oppose in the strongest manner possible anything approaching *dogmatic faith and fanaticism*—belief in the infallibility of the Masters, or even in the very existence of our invisible Teachers, having to be checked from the first ... The greatest spirit of free research untrammelled by anyone or anything, had to be encouraged.

Therefore, two other requisites were, opposition to dogmatic faith and fanaticism—including belief in the infallibility of the Masters—and the encouragement of free and untrammelled research.

Clearly, from the Society's genesis, two noble ideals have been present: Brotherhood and unlimited mental freedom. If the TS only embraced one of these two, then our task would be easier. Let us contemplate this. If the TS were a Society of mental conformists,

Brotherhood could be a considerably simpler task. There would be less potential disagreement about teachings and viewpoints, what we should emphasise, and so forth. On the other hand, if from the outset the Society consisted of free thinkers *without* any constraints on attitudes towards other members, then we would no doubt have had a considerably more checkered and quarrelsome history, possibly a highly intellectual Society and, quite likely, a body devoid of spiritual integrity and heart.

So a spirit of brotherly unity on the one hand, *and* the complementary spirit of freedom of belief on the other, have been twin elements of the TS from its birth. Their coexistence requires individual and collective vigilance, for there may be conflict between the two.

### What Brotherhood is Not

We may discuss Brotherhood fairly often, yet have quite different understandings about its meaning. Let us firstly consider what Brotherhood is not. It does not consist of mere sentimentality about others, which may not last and may be superficial. Nor is it synonymous with effusiveness, which may not be authentic. Brotherhood is decidedly absent when we speak or write negatively or aggressively against others; this only creates, or else perpetuates, division. It tears at the very heart of our organisational matrix. If we imagine for a moment the ideal Theosophical Society, its members could set daily examples to the world, setting a benchmark for brotherly behaviour. However, Brotherhood is glossed over at times, or even conveniently ignored when an individual becomes overly enamoured with his or her freedom of thought.

Brotherhood does not mean that we should compromise our principles in the interests of maintaining peace, when something goes against our conscience. Sometimes silence is the wiser option. At other times it is simply not appropriate to remain quiet about something. And here lies the great challenge, for so much depends upon

how we put something across. Possibly the two most potent, yet little emphasised, words in the Freedom of Thought resolution are ‘courtesy’ and ‘consideration’. Why? Because they remind us of the need to treat others with dignity. They remind us to strive for integrity and cultivate nobility of character; in short, they remind us of the possible. It is possible (and essential in our Society, if we are to form this nucleus) to express our mental freedom in a brotherly way.

### What Brotherhood is

Just what *is* Brotherhood? It means ‘the relationship between brothers, a feeling of kinship and closeness’; and secondarily, ‘an association or community of people with a common interest’. So, we can consider it as a feeling of closeness with both our brother and sister members. Also, the Society itself can be regarded as a Brotherhood, in the sense of being an association of people with a common interest: the quest for Truth.

In theosophical literature, there is a definite distinction between the terms ‘self’ and ‘Self’. The former pertains to the personality, while the latter relates to our deeper nature. There is an interesting parallel here. The word ‘Brotherhood’ happens to be capitalized in the first Object of the Society. The implications of the distinction between self and Self can be applied similarly to the distinction between brotherhood and Brotherhood. In its more pedestrian sense, brotherhood may be shallow, a mere toleration of others, brotherhood with a small ‘b’. But our Society has the noble ideal of forming a body of an exceptional order—a nucleus of humanity’s universal Brotherhood. This demands considerably more than mere tolerance. It requires a real attempt to understand ourselves and our responses to others; a feeling of deep and unshakeable connection, and a fundamental solidarity strong enough to transmute the more or less inevitable internal ructions which occur from time to time. Rather than simply considering Brotherhood as a noun, let us also think of it as a verb and

therefore a mode of action. Brotherhood should be something which we *do*, and therefore a living force, not something which we simply name.

### Freedom of Thought

When there is a brotherly environment it becomes easier to accept that our own viewpoint on something is not necessarily final. Therefore a relationship exists between Brotherhood and freedom of thought, the second fundamental element of the TS. Brotherliness can foster the latter.

Let us consider briefly the second thing which Madame Blavatsky was told that the Theosophical Society should *not* become—that is, a harbourer of dogmatic faith and fanaticism. Both of these stifle mental freedom. This general intent was codified by the General Council in 1924 in our well-known resolution on freedom of thought, guaranteeing to all members liberty of thinking. There were also historical reasons for the framing of this Resolution at that particular time. If the Society had degenerated into an environment of dogmatism and fanaticism, it would have become severely diminished in stature. Perhaps it would not even be in existence today. At the very least, it would have taken on a markedly different character. Freedom of thought, although it clearly has the potential to be misused, is also a force in its own right. It allows for rich diversity within the Society, and for the unique unfoldment of each individual.

### A Buddhist Perspective

The two principles of Brotherhood and freedom of thought are also broadly reflected in the Buddhist tradition. The perfect human being, according to Walpola Rahula, should develop equally compassion or *karuna* on the one hand, and wisdom or *panna* on the other. He commented that compassion or *karuna* represents love, charity, kindness, tolerance and so forth—qualities of the heart, of Brotherhood. On the other hand, wisdom stands for certain

qualities of the mind. The author was of the view that if one develops only emotionally, neglecting the mind, then one may become a good-hearted fool. On the other hand, neglecting our emotional nature may result in a hard-hearted intellect without feeling for others. A compassionate mind, which has the courage to open out and drop its barriers, may come to a new kind of consciousness—one of deep harmony which leaves no residue, but which generates balance and good will in one's life.

### A New Consciousness

We have considered so far Brotherhood and freedom of thought, two explicit elements which have characterized the Society since its birth, each a force in its own right. An individual with a panoramic mind and a brotherly heart possesses the possibility of changing quite dramatically. Therefore it is suggested that there is a third and implied element of the TS which potentially derives from Brotherhood and freedom of thought—that is, the role of an agent which can assist the awakening of a new consciousness. The Society was formed to help give an evolutionary impetus to humanity, an impetus which could result in very real change—even if only for a small number of individuals.

To that end, a suitable and conducive environment surely needs to be cultivated within our lodges and Sections. Yet the TS is only an agent. Ultimately, the flowering of consciousness is the province of the individual who possesses deep insight into the Self within, as well as the world without.

One original Object of the TS concerned opposing materialism, which is possibly the greatest distinguishing characteristic today of the world without. It is fuelled by the sense of self, and a limited view of life. This thing we call self is a contracting vibration or energy, extraordinarily resilient and difficult to subdue. The purely materialistic mind, driven by self, sees and knows only this physical world. It

does not admit the possibility of superphysical realms. Therefore it views things and people in terms of physical attributes and monetary value, rather than intrinsic worth. It is a mind devoid of depth. The pure materialist sees things from the point of view of the part—himself or herself—and not the whole. There is, in effect, a disconnect with Reality, resulting in fractured thinking and actions which focus on personal material advancement—all too often at the expense of others.

### Are we Theosophists?

Many individuals who are gradually comprehending the inadequacy of materialism may become more conscious of the spiritual, and the need for a universal ethic which can benefit the greater whole. In due course some may consider themselves Theosophists. Are we, in fact, Theosophists? In a state of honesty, we may discover that we are only *partial* Theosophists—that is, not yet fully capable of selfless actions which are dedicated to the good of others.

In contrast to the commonplace materialist, a true Theosophist is relatively rare. Such an individual has an unshakeable sense of unity, seeing things from the point of view of one single Reality, sensing keenly the interconnected web of life at all times. Aided by an inherent sensitivity, a Theosophist can apprehend the Spirit behind diverse forms. Responses, decisions and actions therefore take on a different quality. As Śrī Sankārachārya put it: 'no matter what shape may be given to the moulded clay, the reality of the object remains always the clay, its name and form being but transitory appearances.' Therefore, can one give attention to the clay and not the appearance?

The awakening of a new consciousness means to become a Theosophist in the fullest sense, not a partial Theosophist. The vehicles, hardened by long ages of conditioning, require purification and untangling.



## The Binding Energy of the Personal Ego

In this regard, Professor Renée Weber observed in her book *Dialogues with Scientists and Sages: The Search for Unity*, that a remarkable likeness exists between the work of the mystic and that of the physicist:

The ego, like the atom, coheres in time through its 'binding power', what Buddha called 'the aggregates' (*skandha-s*) that make up our personality.

When the binding power of the physical atom is released in an accelerator, the resultant energy—staggeringly huge—becomes freed. Analogously, huge amounts of binding energy are needed to create and sustain the ego and its illusion that it is an independent, ultimate entity.

The text continues:

The sage who has seen through this principle and understood it, no longer fragments and exhausts himself trying to hold his bounded self together, but lets go of the ego and releases its energy, opening a channel to the limitless universal energy.

We expend an enormous amount of energy maintaining and preserving our sense of self. Great Spiritual Teachers throughout history have unshackled themselves from this very bond; they have worked solely for humanity, not for themselves.

## One Further Question

To review the strands of this lecture, we commenced with the question of why we originally joined the Theosophical Society. Some responses to this question may coincide with the four early Objects of the TS, which were mentioned. We have also revisited Madame Blavatsky's *Original Programme of the TS* and, from that basis, explored two enduring and explicit elements or forces of the Society which have been present since its inception—Brotherhood and freedom of thought.

The third element of the TS that has been discussed is its role as an agent to assist the

awakening of a new consciousness, although this is ultimately an individual journey. A pure materialist and the pure Theosophist are dramatically different. Brotherhood, and due reflection upon the Wisdom teachings in a spirit of free investigation, can help spawn such a new consciousness. Recall Madame Blavatsky's *errare humanum est* meaning 'to err is human'. To one who aspires to be a genuine Theosophist, some alternative words might apply: 'to live in Truth is *fully* human'.

Have we actually changed in some way since joining the TS? Are we perhaps a little more conscious of the needs of life around us, a little less self-absorbed? Have we really embraced the Wisdom teachings? With this in mind, let us collapse our years of membership of the TS into this present moment and ask ourselves one more question: Why do we belong to the Theosophical Society *today*? ❀

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## Evolution of Consciousness – A Time for Cultural Creativity

David Lorimer



*We look forward to the time when the power to love will replace the love of power. Then will our world know the blessings of peace.*

William Ewart Gladstone

I believe that the general evolution of human society is towards a Culture of Love, a phrase originated by the Bulgarian sage Peter Deunov. Here I will just highlight the seed thoughts from a few people whom I think offer a profound diagnosis, which applies to ourselves as individuals and as a society, in terms of the main challenges we face.

### Overcoming self-centredness

I begin with an insight from the historian Arnold Toynbee. On the one hand, Toynbee observes that:

... self-centredness is just another name for being alive, and power is one of the consequences of self-centredness, because all living creatures are competing with each other for exploiting the universe; and this competition is a conflict of power.

On the other hand, he points out that:

Love, as we know it by direct experience in living creatures on this planet, is also present as a spiritual presence behind the universe. Love is the only spiritual power that can overcome the self-centredness that is inherent in being alive. This love that is a form of self-denial is also the only true self-fulfilment.<sup>1</sup>

Toynbee arguably encapsulates the challenge and purpose of life in these few sentences.

Spiritually attuned individuals would surely exclaim: ‘Yes! Love is present as a spiritual presence behind the universe’. But for scientific materialism, there is nothing behind the universe, there is no spiritual presence, just a blind watchmaker. Inner experiences are simply brain experiences. There is no transcendence. There is no dimension beyond the physical. But if we are to turn the world inside out, as present needs seem to dictate, this spiritual presence must be at the core of our reflection.

I now turn to Albert Schweitzer, who said in one of his last works:

Three kinds of progress are significant for culture: progress in knowledge and technology, progress in the socialisation of humanity, and progress in spirituality. The last is the most important—technical progress, extension of knowledge, does indeed represent progress, but not in fundamentals. The essential thing is that we become more finely and deeply human.<sup>2</sup>

So to Schweitzer progress in spirituality is most important. And becoming ‘more finely and deeply human’ means, in my view, becoming more finely attuned to the underlying presence of love and wisdom.

### The power of love

Pitirim Sorokin is perhaps a less familiar but no lesser thinker. Born in 1889, the same year as Arnold Toynbee, he was Professor of Sociology at St Petersburg University, eventually becoming founding Professor of Sociology at Harvard. Sorokin was condemned to death, at different times in his life, by both the Tsarists and the Bolsheviks. After being on Death Row

for six weeks he proclaimed three of the deepest convictions of his heart and mind:

Whatever may happen in the future, I know that I have learned three things which will remain forever convictions of my heart as well as my mind. Life, even the hardest life, is the most beautiful, wonderful, and miraculous treasure in the world. Fulfilment of duty is another marvellous thing making life happy. This is my second conviction. And my third is that cruelty, hatred, violence, and injustice never can and never will be able to create a mental, moral or material millennium. The only way toward it is the royal road of all-giving creative love, not only preached but consistently practised.<sup>3</sup>

This insight was won in the hard school of life; but in the 1950s, he went on to conduct research along similar lines at the Centre for Creative Altruism, Harvard University. Based on that research Sorokin concluded:

Hate begets hate, violence engenders violence, hypocrisy is answered by hypocrisy, war generates war, and love creates love. Unselfish love has enormous creative and therapeutic potentialities, far greater than most people think. Love is a life-giving force, necessary for physical, mental and moral health. Altruistic persons live longer than egoistic individuals.<sup>4</sup>

Research at the Centre for Creative Altruism demonstrated that children deprived of love tend to become defective, physically, morally and socially. This centre eventually ran out of money and was closed down. Fortunately though, the Templeton Foundation is now supporting research of this kind.

### **A shift in consciousness urged by world leaders**

We come now to the need for global revolution

in the sphere of consciousness. In a speech to the US Congress in 1990, the former President of the Czech Republic, Vaclav Havel argued:

Without a global revolution in the sphere of human consciousness, nothing will change for the better in our being as humans, and the catastrophe toward which our world is headed ... will be unavoidable...We are still incapable of understanding that the only genuine backbone of our actions—if they are to be moral—is responsibility: responsibility to something higher than my family, my country, my firm, my success, responsibility to the order of being where all our actions are indelibly recorded and where, and only where, they will be judged.<sup>5</sup>

The former Secretary-General of the Communist Party, Mikhail Gorbachev, echoes this in his dialogues with Daisaku Ikeda, in which we find the following arresting, if not astonishing, remark:

We now realise that atheism which encroaches on the soul and on the search for God is both inhuman and amoral ... In proclaiming freedom from God, atheism essentially proclaims freedom from conscience... unless spiritual and moral factors are afforded priority, the world will collapse.<sup>6</sup>

The Prince of Wales also speaks about his conviction that there is in our time:

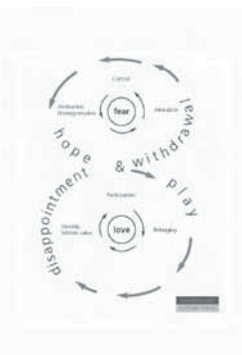
... a resurgence of spirituality across the world; small beacons of civilising values in the face of the all-pervading materialism of recent times, which represent a yearning to improve the deeper quality of our lives and to restore those enduring cultural priorities which represent a moral fountain in a world dominated by consumerism.<sup>7</sup>

All three world figures are then saying in

essence that what matters is the inner state of the individual and the collective, because what is on the inside will be projected on the outside, thus forming a cycle.

Toynbee also held a series of dialogues with Ikeda shortly before he died in 1975. Expanding on the wider picture he argues that the goal of a true and lasting peace can never be reached without a world-wide spiritual revolution. He came increasingly to this view during the 1940s and 1950s, emphasising the need to overcome self-centredness by striving for an alignment of mind, heart and will. The crucial problem he identifies is the ever-widening morality gap whereby the exponentially increasing power, acquired through technological progress, is patently not being matched by a proportionate increase in spiritual insight and moral stature. This problem is becoming more obvious as current advances in science are attended by enormously complex and difficult ethical issues wrestled with by ethics committees. Unfortunately, some aspects of scientific research are not subject to the direction of ethics committees at all.

## Love and fear



This figure shows an analysis in 2001 by the late Brian Goodwin a fellow of the International Futures Forum.

The decisive question posed is this: given that we are mainly operating in the “fear loop” of an “eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth” system, where we create a climate of fear in order to maintain control—is it possible for us individually and collectively to ascend to the “love loop”? The love loop represents participation, engagement and belonging; while the fear loop implies

alienation and separation, leading to the need to try to control things when life isn’t actually controllable. A machine can be controlled. But we cannot control an organism in the literal sense, despite long-standing political attempts to manipulate people through fear.

So we exist collectively in a climate of fear, while humans can only flourish in a climate of love. The satirist H.L. Mencken reflects wittily: ‘The whole aim of practical politics is to keep the populace alarmed (and hence clamorous to be led to safety) by menacing it with an endless series of hobgoblins, most of them imaginary.’<sup>8</sup> General MacArthur echoes this attitude, stating in 1957:

Our government has kept us in a permanent state of fear—kept us in a continuous stampede of patriotic fervour—and the cry of grave national emergency. Always there has been some terrible evil ... to gobble us up if we did not blindly rally behind it by furnishing the exorbitant funds demanded. Yet, in retrospect, these disasters seem never to have happened, seem never to have been quite real.<sup>9</sup>

All this is part of what I call a Psychology of Alienation, echoing Plotinus’s insight that the “fall” is not due to eating the wrong fruit and passing it on to somebody else, but rather it is a fall into separation. A fall into separation is a fall into a limited form, a fall into structure. Another way of putting it is that it is a condition of condensation, just as light is condensed into matter. In the Ariege Valley in France you will find some very heavy meteorite rocks that were used by the Cathars as a symbol for the fall from the light spheres into the more dense spheres. So a dense environment symbolises an environment of separation.

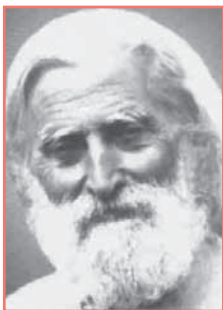
Polarity is quite natural because without it there would be no manifest existence at all, no physical forms, but the problem arises at the level of the ego and lower mind when polarity turns into

duality, engendering separation and alienation. Then fear and suffering ensue. In an attempt to deal with this impasse on its own terms, the normal reaction is to control and dominate. But the dilemma is that the very effort to control and dominate maintains this duality and separation in a closed feedback loop. So a vicious circle is established. Separation begets separation, duality from duality, alienation from alienation.

However if the ultimate reality is Divine Love and Light—spiritual presence—it is necessarily beyond duality. Spirit is seamless and indivisible. We are the ones who divide it up, we who categorise it, we who compartmentalise it; but in itself, the Spirit flows through all of us, flows through everything. How can we indeed come to realise this?

The great and central fact in human life, in your life and mine, is the coming into conscious realisation of our oneness with this Infinite Life, and the opening of ourselves fully to this divine inflow. What does this mean? That we are recognising our true identity, that we are bringing our lives into harmony with the same great laws and forces as have all the prophets, seers and sages in the world's history.<sup>10</sup>

### Evolution of consciousness



In the 1920s the Bulgarian sage Peter Deunov (Beinsa Douno) spoke about the evolution of consciousness in a sequence of phases that correspond to that of the poet and philosopher of human consciousness, Owen Barfield, who

outlined a progression from Original to Final Participation.<sup>11</sup> Deunov delineates the following stages:

- Primitive Collective Consciousness (as identified by the French anthropologist Levy-Bruhl).
- Individual Consciousness (can lead to atomism).
- Collective Consciousness—solidarity in which the individual can be repressed.
- Cosmic Consciousness—expressed as altruism.
- Divine Consciousness—a sense-seamless spirit, a unity known and felt and expressed in the Golden Rule.

Can you see how gradually the process goes beyond all boundaries? For example, the collective consciousness of socialism—solidarity and so on—is not as sublime as one that is in tune with the spiritual presence behind the universe, which is moving towards cosmic consciousness and the altruism which stems from that. Finally, in divine consciousness you realise a seamless spirit where you can no longer simply separate yourself out, either from other people or from the Universal Mind. This unity is not only known but also felt and it exemplifies the Golden Rule, which is based on the fact that we are one consciousness: if you do something to someone, if you provide an input to the system, then since you are the system this is bound to create a cycle which returns to you.

In another expression of cultural evolution, Deunov refers to the Four Degrees of Human Culture, as we progress towards a Culture of Love: from violence to law, then justice, and finally love.<sup>12</sup> The understanding of Love here is service, world service, life for the whole. Each human being is like a cell, and each nation, an organ within the body of humanity.

Deunov insisted that no special belief system will get us to the next stage, but rather the application and embodiment of these principles, both individually and collectively. He maintained that the transformation of the world is through love: ‘All believers will have to get together and agree on one single principle: to make love the basis of any and every belief. Love and brotherhood, that is the common basis.’<sup>13</sup> Deunov embodied his insights in a system of symbolic movements set to music, movements that represent the rhythms of life in a world of creation and destruction. This offers the participant an experience of connection at three levels. You have the connection with the earth through your feet, you have a set of connections horizontally with your fellow dancers, and you have a set of connections with the invisible world vertically through your thinking and your feeling.

## Conclusion

Pitirim Sorokin attained an incredibly important insight from his research: that people who were most solidly based in altruism were those who had an experience of the supra-conscious. He found that only one in fifty of those who were converted to a new belief had a truly root and branch reordering of their lives, the remainder indulging in empty words and platitudes, shuffling a few beliefs around, but with little real change. We have the means to move from

self-interest to group interest, then to a love of the whole. The latter surely is the foundational work we should all be taking forward as the basis of a new culture. ✠

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6. Mikhail Gorbachev and Daisaku Ikeda, *Moral Lessons from the 20th Century*, I.B. Tauris, 2005, p. 126.
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8. William Blum, *Rogue State*, Zed Books, 2002, p. 20.
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10. Ralph Waldo Trine, *In Tune with the Infinite*, G. Bell, 1920, p. 8.
11. Peter Deunov, *L'Amour Universel*, Courrier du Livre, 1964, p. 28.
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David Lorimer will be touring the Section in 2011. See p.123.



**A mind all logic is like a knife – all blade. It makes the hand bleed that uses it.**

*Rabindranath Tagore*



## NATIONAL PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT 1 SEPTEMBER 2009 TO 31 AUGUST 2010

### NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

#### National President's Work to Date—

In the past year to August, I have given talks at the following places and events: the Springbrook Education and Retreat Centre; Blavatsky Lodge; Canyonleigh; Melbourne Lodge; Adelaide Lodge; Perth Branch; Newcastle Lodge; Sunshine Coast Lodge; Brisbane Lodge; Canberra Branch; the annual Convention at Adyar; the World Congress in Rome; and The Manor in Sydney (an event attended by members of the TS mainly from Sydney).

I also visited Melbourne with the Education Coordinator in order to set up and man the TS information booth at the Parliament of the World's Religions. We received a great deal of assistance at this event from Melbourne Lodge. Members of the committee kindly took care of the booth whenever we needed a break, and took over entirely when we had to depart a day or so before the close of the Parliament. Melbourne Lodge also furnished the booth and arranged for transportation of furnishings to and from the site, at its own expense. A brief report on the TS presence at the Parliament may be found later in this report.

#### National Headquarters—

The main duties of the headquarters staff and volunteers during the year were:

\* Donald Fern, National Secretary (Headquarters office administration; accounting; maintenance and management of Section properties; Administrator of both the Springbrook and Canyonleigh properties; Chair of the Rules Committee; Secretary of The Theosophical Foundation Pty. Ltd. and Secretary of The Australian Section

Theosophical Trust).

\* Zehra Bharucha, Assistant Secretary (assistant to the National President and the National Secretary; minute secretary for the National Council, national Executive Committee, The Australian Section Theosophical Trust and The Theosophical Foundation; design and layout of Theosophy in Australia magazine and publicity material; Convention Secretary; overseeing Headquarters office computers).

\* Edi Bilimoria, Education Coordinator (assisting the National President with organising tours for a number of international lecturers; research for the Third Object Project; assistance with programming for the national Convention and events at Springbrook and Canyonleigh; proofreading *Theosophy in Australia*; lecturing; ordering CDs and DVDs for the Section's audio-visual library; liaising with The University of Sydney on the *Legacies of Theosophy* conference; networking with the Scientific and Medical Network in Sydney).

\* Jennifer Hissey (entering data for the Online Public Access Catalogue; handling enquiries for material from the Campbell Theosophical Research Library and Archives; networking with other libraries in Australia; liaising with Softlink in order to improve OPAC).

\* Gil Murdoch (Webmaster for the Australian Section's website; overseeing sound equipment at the national Convention; updating the Union Index of Periodicals).

\* Richard Larkin, Membership Secretary (preparing membership reports, maintaining the membership database; banking; and general office duties).

\* Marie Brennan (voluntary work as National Treasurer; Chair of The Theosophical Foundation Pty. Ltd.; assistance with mailing out the national magazine and some regular correspondence to members).

\* Dai Trandang (voluntary assistance at the National Convention in the audio-visual department; managing the mail out of *Theosophy in Australia*; voluntary assistance in several departments of the Campbell Theosophical Research Library and Archives, including the Union Index).

\* Brian Parry, Supporting Lecturer (speaking at the national convention in Launceston, Canberra Branch, Melbourne Lodge, Hobart Branch, Launceston Lodge and Adelaide Lodge).

\* Noel Bertelle, Supporting Lecturer (his tour commenced after September 2010 so does not enter this report).

\* Romana Villa (indexing for the Union Index and other duties in the Campbell Theosophical Research Library and Archives).

\* Fareeda Amir, Aman Amir, Romana Villa, Nora Johnson, Richard Larkin and Edil Bilimoria (assistance with mailing *Theosophy in Australia* magazine).

### Volunteers—

Throughout its history a great deal of the work of the Theosophical Society has fallen to volunteers, and sometimes to a very few. No doubt every Lodge, Branch and Group owes a great deal to those who volunteer to chair meetings, hire or set up venues, serve on committees and take on the task of reporting back to the national headquarters, give talks and take care of discussions.

We are able to keep the cost of Section-run events at Springbrook to a minimum mainly

because of the good grace and hard work of a number of members who regularly step up to cater for those events on a voluntary basis. In the past year the volunteer caterers were Kay Schiefelbein (Sunshine Coast), Lynden Thomas (Toowoomba Group), Rohzi Hicza (National member) and Megan Spence. Janet Blake, a member of Sunshine Coast Lodge, undertook the task of painting the kitchen and the store-room at Springbrook.

Similarly, a number of key functions are regularly performed by volunteers at the national headquarters. Sincere thanks and deep appreciation is due to them all.

### National Council—

The National Council met twice during the year under review. As is our usual practice, a comprehensive agenda was sent out in advance, with all relevant documents attached, so that decisions could be given due consideration with all the available time given to their careful consideration at the meeting. All routine business matters were dealt with on the first day of the meeting, with a discussion on weightier matters on the second. Each State Representative is asked to send a written report on the meeting to his or her constituents, so that each Lodge/Branch is kept informed.

Lodges/Branches and members may make representations through their State Representatives to the National Council regarding issues of concern. Dates for receipt of representations appear twice a year in this magazine. The time and energy given to the work of the Council is greatly appreciated.

As at August 31 the National Council comprises: three *ex-officio* members (the National President, National Secretary and National Treasurer) and six elected State Representatives, each of whom may serve up to three consecutive three-year terms:



Hana O'Rourke—New South Wales/Australian Capital Territory  
 Harry Bayens—Western Australia  
 Georgina Fode—Victoria  
 Paul Robb—Queensland  
 Denise Frost—Tasmania  
 Patricia Hale—South Australia/Northern Territory

Harry Bayens was appointed Chair of the National Council and National Vice-President until January 2011.

In January 2010 the National Council made the following appointments for a 12 month period:

Executive Committee—see next item  
 National Treasurer—Marie Brennan

The continuation and appointment of the National Secretary is subject to the determination of the National Council.

### **National Executive Committee—**

As in previous years, the national Executive Committee met monthly except in January. Its members include the *ex officio* members, the National President, National Secretary and National Treasurer, as well as those members appointed by the National Council: Beatrice Malka, Zehra Bharucha, Marlene Bell, Simon O'Rourke and Ken Edwards. Simon O'Rourke resigned from the national Executive shortly after his appointment and was replaced by Dianne K. Kynaston. The time and support given by the members of the Executive Committee is gratefully acknowledged, particularly those travelling from interstate. At present we have one member from Adelaide and one from Melbourne. This practice prevents the national Executive from being too Sydney-centric, or from being perceived that way. The interstate members commute to Sydney every second meeting, to keep costs to a minimum. They are consulted by email or telephone if necessary between meetings.

Members of the national Executive Committee are also required to be Directors of The Australian Section Theosophical Trust, which is responsible for the Section's properties except for Theosophy House in Sydney.

In December 2009 the following appointments were made by the national Executive Committee:

Assistant Treasurer—Beatrice Malka  
 Editor, *Theosophy in Australia*—Dara Tatrav

The Executive Committee also appointed several committees for 2010: Finance, Public Relations and Promotions, Website and Rules.

### **GENERAL COUNCIL** **Background information**

The Theosophical Society in Australia is made up of its Lodges or Branches and National Members. The National Council is its governing body. Similarly, the Theosophical Society worldwide is made up of the Sections around the world, and members directly attached to Adyar (the equivalent of our National Members). The Theosophical Society is Incorporated as an Association under the Societies Registration Act of 1860, according to which: 'The governing body of the society shall be the governors, council, directors, committee, trustees or other body to whom by the rules and regulations of the society the management of its affairs is entrusted'. This is reflected in the Rules of The Theosophical Society, which plainly state that management of its affairs is in the hands of the General Council: 'The General Council shall be the Governing Body of the Theosophical Society'. From the fact that very few powers are vested solely in the President, it can be seen that the General Council has a significant role to play in the administration of the Society and in the maintenance of its welfare. Each General Secretary/National President is a member of the General Council, which also comprises a number of *ex officio* members and Additional Members nominated by the President and

elected by a vote.

In view of the continuing disturbance surrounding the 2008 International Elections, I spent considerable time thinking about how the General Council might best resolve the problems presently before it, which include allegations of electoral impropriety and unresolved issues in several areas of the administration of the international headquarters. After due consideration, I proposed the formulation of a policies document, to cover the functioning of the General Council and the Executive, as well as the administration of the international headquarters. A policies document could also cover matters of procedure not presently addressed in the Rules, and address grey areas in the Rules of the Society.

The world has changed considerably since the founding of the TS in 1875, and in some respects its administration has been slow to catch up. This is perhaps an opportune time to bring our Rules and policies into line with best practice worldwide. In doing so we may prevent the recurrence of the present situation, with persistent calls for re-elections, and no end of conflict in sight.

I have therefore placed on the agenda of the meeting in December a resolution that a policies document, applying to the work of the General Council, essential aspects of the administration of the Society, and the administration of the international headquarters, be formulated by members of the General Council and the Executive Committee during the year, for further discussion and adoption at the General Council meeting in December 2011. Mindful of the fact that the National President represents the TS in Australia at the General Council, and not herself, the proposed agenda item was first circulated for comment to members of the national Executive and the National Council of the TS in Australia.

The present International President has served

the TS for several decades. Given her age, the TS will soon have a new President. It would be highly beneficial to the Society if some of Radha Burnier's valuable knowledge and experience were to be embodied in what would amount to a handbook for the General Council. If instituted, such a document would serve as an induction to incoming General Council members, and help the members of the Council work together effectively, regardless of geographic distance.

## EDUCATION

The Education Unit has been engaged in two main activities this year: research for the Third Object Project, gathering material on the milestones in science and psychic research from 1875 to the present; and the preparation of course material which will soon be made available for the use of Lodges/Branches and Groups in the Section. Several new documents have been created:

1. Organising and Chairing Lodge/Branch/Group Meetings.
2. Format of Meetings in the Theosophical Society.
3. Programme Outline for Informal Groups Wishing to be Part of the Theosophical Society.
4. A vastly updated and revised reading list has been placed on the website.

Additionally, the following material is now in final stages of production:

1. An Introduction to Esoteric Philosophy and Theosophy.
2. Esoteric Philosophy and Occult Science.
3. Fundamental Propositions.
4. The Laws of Nature—the Unity of Life.
5. The Laws of Nature—Karma.
6. The Laws of Nature—Correspondences.
7. The Human Constitution or Esoteric Anatomy.
8. Approaches to Self-Transformation.
9. Unity Underlying the Religions.
10. God or Nature.
11. Thought and Consciousness.

## 12. Occult Science in Contrast with Western Science.

As can perhaps be imagined, this has been rather time-consuming, but it will be well worth the effort if the Education Unit can provide interesting, informative and usable material to augment the work of the Lodges/Branches and Groups in the Section. Each of the titles above could provide material either for a single meeting or as the basis for two or three meetings: depending on the person making use of the material provided.

The Education Coordinator has compiled a substantial document on physics, cosmology, biology, and consciousness research for the Third Object Project, outlining significant developments. The National President has gathered material on psychic research, mediumistic phenomena, remote viewing, subtle energy research, reincarnation and near-death experiences. A smaller file has been compiled with material on scientific research into UFOs. It is hoped that within the next twelve months all of this will be reviewed and written up in the first draft of a monograph. In the present period the Education Coordinator lectured at Blavatsky Lodge, Melbourne Lodge, Hobart Branch, Launceston Lodge, Newcastle Lodge, Brisbane Lodge, Sunshine Coast Lodge and the Caboolture Group. He also delivered the public talk at the national convention in Launceston.

### Study Papers—

Study Paper 15 was issued this year. It consisted of *A Principle in Nature* by Alfred Taylor, with an essay *On Laws and Principles in Nature*, written by the Education Unit.

### Website—

While we encourage members of the public and members of the Society to attend meetings at our various Lodges and Groups, the fact of the matter is that the first port of call and in some

cases the preferred port of call for many people today is the internet. The main development on the website in the year under review is a new link to the growing Online Public Access Catalogue as mentioned later in this report; and the inclusion of a number of new texts online, available as e-books in various formats. The new links to texts online include the following material available for download or printing:

- \* Birch, L. Charles, *Christian Obligation for the Liberation of Nature*, Religion Online.
- \* Bird, Isabella L., *Among the Tibetans*, eBooks@Adelaide.
- \* Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy*, translated by Henry Francis Cary, 1772-1844, Project Gutenberg.
- \* Dasgupta, Surendranath, *A History of Indian Philosophy, Volume 1*, Project Gutenberg.
- \* Emerson, Ralph Waldo, *Nature*, eBooks@Adelaide.
- \* Emerson, Ralph Waldo, *The Transcendentalist*, A Lecture read at the Masonic Temple, Boston, January, 1842, eBooks@Adelaide.
- \* Fa-Hien, *A Record of Buddhistic Kingdoms: Being an Account by the Chinese Monk Fa-Hien of his Travels in India and Ceylon (399-414) in Search of the Buddhist Books of Discipline*, translated and annotated with a Korean recension of the Chinese text by James Legge, eBooks@Adelaide.
- \* *Goethean Science*, Goethean Science Site.
- \* Huxley, T. H., *Autobiography*, eBooks@Adelaide.
- \* James, William, *The Principles of Psychology*, eBooks@Adelaide.
- \* James, William, *The Varieties of Religious Experience—A Study in Human Nature*, eBooks@Adelaide.
- \* Kandinsky, Wassily, *Concerning The Spiritual In Art* (translated by Michael T. H. Sadler), Theodore Gracyk, Minnesota State University, Moorhead.
- \* Leibniz, Gottfried Wilhelm, *The Monadology*, translated by Robert Latta, eBooks@Adelaide.

- \* Plato, *Phaedrus*, translated with an introduction by Benjamin Jowett.
- \* Plato, *The Republic*, translated by Benjamin Jowett.
- \* Plato, *The Seventh Letter*, translated by John Harward.
- \* Plato, *Timaeus*, translated with an introduction by Benjamin Jowett.
- \* Schopenhauer, Arthur, *Religion*, translated by T. Bailey Saunders, M.A., eBooks@Adelaide.
- \* Schopenhauer, Arthur, *The Wisdom of Life*, eBooks@Adelaide.
- \* Spinoza, Benedict de, *The Ethics [Ethica Ordine Geometrico Demonstrata]*, translated from the Latin by R. H. M. Elwes, eBooks@Adelaide.
- \* Spinoza, Benedict de, *On the Improvement of Understanding [Tractatus de Intellectus Emendatione]*, translated by R. H. M. Elwes, eBooks@Adelaide.
- \* Yogananda, Paramahansa, *Autobiography of a Yogi*, Project Gutenberg.

*Theosophy in Australia* is now regularly placed on the website, with each issue uploaded around one month following each mail-out. As reported last year, the web-based publications of The Theosophical Society in Australia are now archived by the National Library of Australia.

### **Campbell Theosophical Research Library and Archives**

The Library acquired a number of books throughout the year, mainly in the areas of biography, history, parapsychology and science. New acquisitions are now regularly listed in *Theosophy in Australia*. A Campbell Library newsletter was produced by the Education Coordinator and sent to various libraries, including the State Library of New South Wales. It may be found on the Section's website. Routine work in the Library and in the Archives is progressing. During the year it was of assistance to researchers looking into a number of subjects including the Florence Fuller portrait of Lord Buddha; the Star Amphitheatre

at Balmoral in Sydney; the life of Indra Devi (Eugenia Peterson), a Russian actress who was a young theosophist in the 1920s; and the writings of J. Krishnamurti.

### **Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC)**

Jennifer Hissey, at the National Headquarters, and Pamela Lloyd at Melbourne Lodge, continue to work steadily at this vast project. To date, close to six thousand resources have been listed on the catalogue, from the collections of Melbourne Lodge, the Campbell Library, and Adelaide Lodge Library. Brisbane Lodge, Launceston Lodge and Hobart Branch are due to supply data for the project early in 2011. It is anticipated that the entire collection will be added to the Australian National Bibliographic Database in 2011. It is presently accessible from the Section's website via the Resources menu on the home page.

### **International lecturers**

Professor P. Krishna was to undertake an extensive tour of the Section in September/October 2009 but unfortunately had to leave the country due to illness. He visited Blavatsky Lodge and Canberra Branch. I am very grateful to the other Lodges, which, at very short notice, managed to fill in for him with another speaker or in some cases a DVD and discussion.

Colin Price toured the Section in March 2010, accompanied by Cornelia Crowther, visiting Melbourne Lodge, Ross in Tasmania, the Sunshine Coast, Brisbane Lodge, Toowoomba Group, Blavatsky Lodge, Newcastle Lodge, Adelaide Lodge, Perth Branch's Mt Helena Centre for their Easter retreat, and Perth Branch.

As will be evident from the above list, touring this vast continent is no small feat, particularly for speakers coming to Australia from Europe, the map of which could fit into a small corner of ours.

## Supporting lecturers

Noel Bertelle was Supporting Lecturer in 2010 and reappointed for 2011. Barry Bowden and Simon O'Rourke were appointed Supporting Lecturers for 2011. Brian Parry was a supporting lecturer in 2010, delivering a number of excellent talks as listed earlier in the report.

## FINANCE

The Section's funds continue to be managed in such a manner as to minimise the negative effects of the current market. A cautious, conservative approach has enabled The Theosophical Society in Australia to emerge almost unaffected from another very difficult year. The Finance Committee and the national Executive are mindful of the need to conserve the Section's resources and concentrate the major part of spending on its core business. The Finance Committee comprises Marie Brennan (National Treasurer), Beatrice Malka (Assistant Treasurer), Donald Fern (National Secretary) and Dara Tatravay (National President). Dr Hugh Murdoch is a consultant to the finance committee. The Budget for the year ending 31 August 2011 was approved by the National Council at its mid-year meeting. The Annual Accounts and the Budget appear as a supplement to the November 2010 issue of *Theosophy in Australia*.

## ANNUAL FUND

Donations to this fund received during the year were matched \$ for \$ by The Theosophical Society in Australia, up to \$10,000. In the past twelve months the Fund was used to finance the presence of the Australian Section at the Parliament of the World's Religions in December 2009, and the creation of new publicity material for that event. One third of the cost of the Online Public Access Catalogue project is paid out of this fund; and the other main expense during the year was the purchase of a number of copies of *N. Sri Ram—A Life of*

*Beneficence and Wisdom*, as reported below.

## MEMBERSHIP

As at 31 August 2010 there were 1,204 members of the Australian Section, including 144 National Members. In the year under review all members of the TS in Australia received the quarterly, *Theosophy in Australia*, and one Study Paper. New members received monthly letters from the National President. Additionally, each member was offered a copy of *N. Sri Ram—A Life of Beneficence and Wisdom* written by Pedro Oliveira and published by TPH. Around one hundred and fifty members took up this offer and were posted a copy of the book free of charge.

It may be pointed out once again that of our membership dues, 15% is sent to the international headquarters in India, and an additional 1% is contributed annually to the work of the Indo-Pacific Federation to which our Section belongs.

## SUPPORT TO OTHER SECTIONS AND INTERNATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

Mindful of the fact that we are part of an international Society, The Theosophical Society in Australia lends support to other Sections and the international headquarters in various ways. As mentioned above, 1% of membership dues go to support the Indo Pacific Federation. As reported in previous years, the Australian Section also makes a regular donation to the international headquarters, to be utilised at the President's discretion. The base rate of this donation is \$3000 annually, but it can be considerably more, as approved by the National Council, depending on the Section's finances, and on need. Such funds may be used for Adyar building repairs, contributions to the wages of workers at Adyar approved by the National Council, and contributions to international travel for International Officers residing at Adyar. In the year presently under review the amount donated for these purposes was \$36,553.

The donation of 3,000 euros to the Italian Section in support of the World Congress, approved by the national Executive in 2009, was very gratefully and very graciously received by the General Secretary, Antonio Girardi. Mr Girardi made a point of calling over an interpreter to translate into English the profound thanks of the Italian Section for this gift. It meant a great deal to them to receive unsolicited support from so far away. The money was certainly well spent. Not only because the Italian Section hosted the event so generously, going to the extent of live-streaming most sessions on the internet—but also because it underscores the unity of the Society.

## NATIONAL CENTRES

### Theosophical Education and Retreat Centre, Springbrook, Queensland—

This centre continues to be very ably managed by Barry Hora, the resident Caretaker, with regular help from a dedicated band of TOS volunteers from Brisbane Lodge. Kay Schiefelbein has been of great help in the kitchen, and also looks after the centre when Barry is away on leave.

**October 2009 Event:** The October event at Springbrook was to be run by Professor P. Krishna, but because he had to return to India unexpectedly, the event was instead run by the National President and the Education Coordinator, who had to conjure up eight talks between them at very short notice. All those registered for Professor Krishna's retreat were offered a full refund, but most elected to attend the revised event. Their presence and support was much appreciated.

### School of Theosophy, March 2010:

Unfortunately this event had to be cancelled due to under-subscription. The guest teacher was to be Colin Price, who toured the Section with his partner Cornelia Crowther. The reasons for the low number registering for the School are unknown. Colin's talks were very well received and well attended throughout the Section. It is

a shame that so few sought to avail themselves of the opportunity to spend more time exploring Theosophy with him, but on the positive side, the cancellation of the School enabled Colin to visit a number of Lodges and Groups not originally on his schedule.

### Canyonleigh Centre, New South Wales—

Charlotte and Ron Stahl, our nearest neighbours at Canyonleigh, live on the adjoining property about a mile away. They continue to work at the centre on a casual basis. In addition to the preparation of meals when required, and giving the house a spring clean before each event, their main occupation at present is the intricate stonework forming the small amphitheatre behind Bolitho House. The TS is most fortunate that Charlotte, a self-taught stone mason, happens to live close by and is interested in undertaking this task, assisted by her husband Ron.

**November 2009 Event:** The first event in the period under review was a single day event on *The Sacred Depths of Consciousness*, with talks by Edi Bilimoria and Dara Tatray. This was extremely well attended, with one participant driving three hours each way. To give some idea of the area serviced by some of the Canyonleigh events I might point out that we had members from Sydney, Canberra, Bowral, Helensburgh, Robertson and Berkeley Vale at this enjoyable event. It was agreed that given its location, a minimum of two days for an event there is preferable.

**April 2010 Event:** *Foundations of Esoteric Philosophy* was held over the weekend of April 10 and 11 with presentations by Dianne Kynaston, Edi Bilimoria, Dara Tatray and Simon O'Rourke. This event was fully subscribed, with one participant from Adelaide and another from Queensland, both of whom had travelled to Sydney solely in order to go to Canyonleigh.

Meetings such as these go a long way towards providing the TS with a backbone of study,

reflection and relationship. Some of the Lodges and Groups around the country regularly hold live-in events or day seminars, and they often report on the benefits gained.

## UNIVERSITIES

### John Cooper Memorial Prize, University of Sydney—

The Australian Section continues to fund a prize for research into the perennial philosophy in its Eastern and Western traditions, in memory of John Cooper, who died in 1998 while working on a scholarly edition of the correspondence of H.P. Blavatsky. John had a strong research interest in the Society, and frequently lectured at Blavatsky Lodge, Sydney and elsewhere, on various aspects of Hinduism, Buddhism and the Gnostic tradition. I was invited to say a few words at The University of Sydney Prizes and Awards Ceremony in April, and gladly did so. The winners of the John Cooper Memorial Prize this year were Samuel Meenahan, for his undergraduate essay, comparing Tantric and Augustinian Christian traditions, *‘How can desire be understood to disable and enable relations with the sacred?’*; Alex Norman, for his postgraduate essay, *‘Spiritual tourism: Secular examination of the self in the mirror of religious practice’*.

### The Theosophical Society/La Trobe University Bendigo Perennial Philosophy Prize—

The prize winners for 2009 were Jessica Mountjoy, for her undergraduate essay titled *‘The Universal Language of Symbolism’*, and Sharron Jamisson, for her postgraduate essay, *‘A Universal Tradition of the Avatara’*.

Unfortunately, due to severe cutbacks to the Philosophy & Religious Studies department, and the termination of its Honors program, Dr Harry Oldmeadow wrote to say that the university no longer had the student numbers to justify the continuation of the prize at the present time.

## CONVENTIONS

The 2010 National Convention was held in Launceston in January, on the theme *Divine Wisdom in Art, Science and Philosophy*. The guest speaker was the art historian and curator Jenny McFarlane and the public lecture was delivered by the Education Coordinator, Dr Edi Bilimoria. There was a change in format to the convention programme, with the official opening of convention and the annual convention business meeting taking place on Saturday night, rather than on Sunday morning as in many previous years. This seemed to result in a larger than usual attendance at the business meeting. Considering the fact that the convention of the TS in Australia is really the business meeting and not the programme of lectures, it is desirable to have as many people attend it as possible.

The 2011 National Convention will be held in Brisbane on the theme *Undivided Consciousness in Mind and in Nature*. The guest speaker will be Professor Richard Silberstein.

### THE PARLIAMENT OF THE WORLD’S RELIGIONS Melbourne, 3-9 December 2009

We were surprised to find that the Society’s proposal for a talk at the Parliament had been rejected. The proposed talk, *The Scientific Basis of Universal Brotherhood*, was however delivered at the World Congress in Rome. About a dozen members of the public questioned why the TS was not on the programme, particularly since it has played such a prominent role in the history of the Parliament. I have no real answer to that as the question, when posed to a member of the selection committee, was not answered.

The TS did not sell any books at the Parliament. Instead, we provided free information about Theosophy, the TS and Melbourne Lodge, in the form of leaflets and a number of books. Eight posters were created for publicity at the Parliament, along with a new leaflet,

*Theosophy: Revisiting the Ancient Wisdom.* The posters were made in-house and some of them were designed to highlight books we were giving away: Annie Besant's *An Introduction to Yoga*; Colonel Olcott's *Buddhist Catechism*; and H. P. Blavatsky's *The Voice of the Silence*. We also gave away copies of *The Bhagavad Gītā*, *Buddhist Meditation*, *Thoughts for Aspirants*, and *The Foundations of Esoteric Philosophy*. The leaflets we distributed were: *Theosophy and Islam*, *Theosophy and Christianity*, *Theosophy and Science*, *The Art of Meditation*, *The Writings of H.P. Blavatsky*, *Theosophy and the Zeitgeist*, and *The Theosophical Society: What is it all About?* In addition to these books and leaflets we also distributed free of charge two Study Papers: *Masters and Gurus/Stages on the Path* by Radha Burnier; and *Opinion and Belief Within The Theosophical Society/The Theosophic Life* by Annie Besant.

Most visitors to our booth knew the Melbourne TS bookshop well; and one of our enduring memories of that event is the esteem in which the bookshop is held by the public in that city.

## TENTH WORLD CONGRESS

A report on the World Congress held in Rome 10-15 July 2010 was published in News and Notes in the September issue of *Theosophy in Australia*. The Congress theme was *Universal Brotherhood A Road to Awareness*, and the event was attended by around 29 members of the Australian Section, including the National President and the Education Coordinator. Although residing at Adyar, Linda and Pedro Oliveira are still members of the Australian Section, and they were also present. A significant number of young people and working professionals among the 520 or so delegates from around the world seemed to bode well for the future of the TS. An outstanding effort was made by the Italian Section as hosts of the Congress, and by the charity bazaar organized by the TOS. The Australian Section's support of the Congress was mentioned under Support

to Other Sections.

## REPORTS FROM LODGES/BRANCHES

The following report is based on information supplied by the Lodges and Branches, and represents just a fraction of the work that is done year-round by members of the Society active in their Lodges.

### Hobart Branch, Tasmania (Chartered 1889)

Hobart Branch holds a public meeting once a week and also provides assistance to an informal group in Kingston. Support is also given to the Theosophical Order of Service (TOS). The library is open before meetings on Mondays and for about two hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Colin Price and Edi Bilimoria each visited Hobart Branch during the year under review.

### Melbourne Lodge, Victoria (Chartered 1890)

Melbourne Lodge holds public meetings twice a month, member's meetings once a month and a philosophy study course monthly. In addition to that it makes available to the public a range of study and discussion groups, covering yoga, astrology, meditation, metaphysics, colour therapy and mandala symbolism. A library sub-committee has been formed, with a view to promoting the library. Guest speakers included Colin Price, Edi Bilimoria and Dara Tatray. Melbourne Lodge provides assistance to the Wodonga-Albury group and to the Mornington Peninsula Group. It also runs the Percy Bona Homes, which provides accommodation for sixteen elderly people at minimal cost.

### Adelaide Lodge, South Australia (Chartered 1891)

No report was received, but I can say that the newsletter of the Adelaide Lodge, *The Voice*, is now in its fiftieth volume and has recently had an attractive face-lift. The Radcliffe Theosophical



Library is open to public subscribers and members of the Lodge from Mondays to Saturdays for a few hours each day. The Lodge owns New Dimensions Bookshop, which operates on the Lodge premises. Adelaide Lodge holds meetings several days per week and also supports a long-standing Theosophy Science group. This Lodge is fortunate to have among its members several long-standing members of the Society, including a former National President. The Lodge thus has a solid foundation in Theosophy.

### **Brisbane Lodge, Queensland (Chartered 1895)**

A range of study groups augment the weekly public lectures of Brisbane Lodge: *Isis Unveiled*, the works of Krishnamurti, meditation, *The Voice of the Silence* and the *Bhagavad Gītā*. The Lodge also runs a regular Introduction to Theosophy course, and is host to a fairly new Theosophy-Science group which appears to be thriving. Brisbane Lodge is in a beautiful heritage-listed building on Wickham Terrace, which requires considerable attention regarding maintenance. The bookshop owned and operated by the Lodge attracts new people and represents a valuable resource for TS groups in Queensland. Brisbane Lodge holds regular TOS meetings and regular working bees at the Springbrook Education and Retreat Centre, to the benefit of all members of the TS in Australia. For some years now a meditation retreat has been run by the Lodge at Springbrook. Visiting speakers to the Lodge in this period included Edi Bilimoria, Dara Tatray and Colin Price.

### **Perth Branch, Western Australia (Chartered 1897)**

This is another active Branch, although it does not hold regular public meetings. If necessary, the weekly members' meeting is however opened to the public when there is a visiting speaker, as in the case of Colin Price and Dara Tatray in the year under review. Perth Branch

hosted a special weekend in October on *The Secret Doctrine*, led by Simon O'Rourke from Blavatsky Lodge. It also ran seven retreats/events at its Mt Helena centre, which involved a significant commitment of time and effort. Colin Price led the Easter weekend retreat on *The Ancient Wisdom Tradition and Its Practical Implications*. The library belonging to the Branch underwent something of a face-lift in the form of a large cull of unwanted books, which were sold to members and the public to make way for, and fund, much-needed new books.

### **Launceston Lodge, Tasmania (Chartered 1901)**

Launceston Lodge holds its meetings once a week and also conducts a number of study courses. The Upanishads, the perennial philosophy, and the evolution of consciousness have formed the backbone of the meetings in the past year. With a strong emphasis on discussion and participation at the Lodge, a visiting speaker is almost always guaranteed a lively question and answer session at the end of a talk. Visiting speakers included Colin Price, Edi Bilimoria, Denise Frost and Brian Parry. The Lodge has been updating its library catalogue for the OPAC project.

### **Blavatsky Lodge, New South Wales (Chartered 1922)**

Blavatsky Lodge holds a members' meeting monthly and two public meetings weekly. It has also begun to hold a study group for members once a month, in addition to the study groups open to the public. It offers short courses covering an introduction to Theosophy and a more advanced course; as well as study/discussion groups on Krishnamurti, Eckhart Tolle, the *Bhagavad Gītā* the book *Ancient Wisdom and Modern Insight*, the works of A.E. Powell and much more. Regular meditation meetings are also held. When it became evident that the School of Theosophy had to be cancelled, the Lodge very kindly made room on its programme for a

two-day seminar led by Colin Price. This was very well attended. Blavatsky Lodge had a stall at the Mind, Body and Spirit Festival in May. It provides assistance to the Gosford Group and the Blue Mountains Group.

### **Newcastle Lodge, New South Wales (Chartered 1941)**

Newcastle Lodge holds a study-based members meeting once a month and a public meeting once a month. This is a small Lodge in terms of membership, but it has a solid core of study and commitment. Visiting speakers included Dara Tatray, Edi Bilimoria and Colin Price.

### **Atherton Lodge, Queensland (Chartered 1950)**

Atherton Lodge meets monthly for a talk and discussion preceded by a shared lunch, which adds a welcome social dimension. Seminars are held when national and international speakers visit the Lodge. A seminar was led by Dara Tatray on Education, Science and Spirituality, in place of Professor Krishna, whose visit in October was cancelled.

### **Canberra Branch, ACT (Chartered 1971)**

Canberra Branch was one of the few fortunate Lodges visited by Professor Krishna before he took ill. Simon O'Rourke, from Blavatsky Lodge, also visited Canberra, giving a talk on Rumi and Theosophy. Topics covered in talks and discussions throughout this period included esoteric healing, evolution and self knowledge. A small TOS group was formed during the year. Funds were raised for projects in Pakistan.

### **Sunshine Coast Lodge, Queensland (Chartered 2004)**

The Sunshine Coast Lodge meets at Buderim once a week and at Noosa/Tewantin once a week. In addition to these meetings, a study course on Theosophy is run in both locations.

The Lodge ran a weekend at Springbrook, led by Yvonne Malykke on Rāja Yoga. This was very well attended and well received. Visiting speakers included Colin Price, Dara Tatray and Edi Bilimoria. Among other subjects, talks were given on meditation, H.P. Blavatsky, the role of compassion in the development of consciousness, the life of W.Q. Judge, paganism and Paul Brunton. A number of members of Sunshine Coast Lodge are active in the TOS and the Lodge is extremely welcoming to visitors.

## **REPORTS FROM CERTIFIED GROUPS**

In addition to the Lodges that make up the TS in Australia, a number of Certified Groups are recognised by the TS in Australia. A Certified Group has a set of Rules approved by the national Executive committee. It has permission to use the name and seal of the Society and has a significant role to play in the provision of meetings in an area not serviced by a Lodge. The following is based on reports received from our Certified Groups.

### **Blue Mountains Group, New South Wales**

No report was received from this group, but I believe that it meets monthly and is supported by Blavatsky Lodge.

### **Gosford Group, New South Wales**

This group meets twice a month, setting aside one of those meetings for a study group. Two members from Blavatsky Lodge, Simon O'Rourke and Hana O'Rourke, regularly attend meetings of this group. Talks and discussions have covered the nature of consciousness, climate change, meditation, healing and the spiritual path, among other topics.

### **Northern Beaches Group, New South Wales**

This group meets monthly. Several of its members are long-standing members of the TS, and a number of non-members also regularly

attend meetings. This gives the group a sound eclectic mix. Cosmogogenesis, the third Object of the Society, the philosophy of nothing and the nature of reality were among the topics discussed during the year.

### **Caboolture Group, Queensland**

No report was received from the Caboolture Group, which since a change of meeting location appears to have gone through something of a slump. I believe that there is now a move to resurrect the group under a new Coordinator and we wish it well for the future. It was certified in 2007 and perhaps has not yet established itself.

### **Toowoomba Group, Queensland**

This group is fairly well established and meets twice a month for talks, discussions and study. It held a stall at World Environment Day, with material by and about The Theosophical Society. Its annual camp at Lake Somerset regularly draws a good attendance from groups and Lodges in Queensland. Continuous support is given to an informal group at Warwick. Due to the cancellation of the School of Theosophy at Springbrook, Colin Price was able to give a talk in Toowoomba, which was much appreciated.

### **Mornington Peninsula Group, Victoria**

This group meets monthly with a strong emphasis on meditation and discussion. Topics covered during the year include the Mayan prophecy, the nature of pilgrimage, the art of listening to and telling stories, and Rudolf Steiner and Theosophy.

### **Wodonga-Albury Group, Victoria**

The Wodonga-Albury Group meets once a month for talks and discussions, holding an additional meditation meeting once a month. Its library is open for four hours, four days per week.

### **The Theosophical Order of Service**

*The following is based on a report kindly provided by Carolyn Harrod (despite being in Germany at the time of the request) and is included here in support of the work of the TOS in Australia.*

Theosophical Order of Service activities were conducted in association with nine TS Lodges and Groups. TOS members worked in both their TS groups and the wider community. The annual working bee to maintain the buildings and grounds at the Theosophical Education and Retreat Centre at Springbrook was again energetically supported by TOS members.

TOS members contributed time and raised funds for a range of activities in their local communities including tutoring refugees in English, supporting a refuge for homeless women, helping in animal shelters, collecting for relief appeals and volunteering in aged-care centres and cancer support groups. Through conducting seminars, talks and petitions they raised awareness about social and animal welfare issues.

TOS members supported three major national projects in 2009-10. They raised funds for four 'literacy home-schools' for children and young women in Pakistan. They gave donations to the SEE project in Chennai that provides free vision testing, spectacles and cataract operations to needy people. They also provided funds to a child-health project in Tanzania. In addition, individual TOS Groups sponsored students in Pakistan, donated funds and books to the Golden Link College in the Philippines and gave donations for mobility aids and to educational and animal welfare projects in India.

Once again Maple-Brown Abbott Limited generously supported the work of the TOS. This company is the investment manager for the Theosophical Society in Australia. Their donation was distributed among three projects

managed by International TOS groups: Pakistan's Educational Sponsorship Program, the SEE Project in Chennai and the Heart Baby project in Tanzania.



I would personally like to thank everyone involved in the provision of all the activities mentioned in this report. They represent countless hours of work, thought and care. Several recent visitors to the Section have said that they found it to be remarkably propositions, the freedom of thought, the motto of the Society, and the stand taken against dogmatic theology and scientific materialism combine to produce a vibrant and, dare I say it, highly marketable, package. If we could remove everything that obscures these things from view, then what The

Theosophical Society essentially is may become all the more evident to ourselves and to the passer-by. An enthusiasm for this project evident throughout the Section makes my present position as National President all the more worthwhile. ❀

Dara Tatray

### Annual Membership Analysis Lodge/Branch Membership as at 30/09/2010

Lodge/Branch	Members	Transfer in	New	Rejoined	Total in	Resigned	Lapsed	Deceased	Transfer out	Total Out	Members	Differences
	30-Sep-09										30-Sep-10	
Adelaide	124	-	10	4	14	3	30	1	-	34	104	-20
Atherton	18	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	19	1
Blavatsky	276	-	22	1	23	3	25	3	1	32	267	-9
Brisbane	102	-	8	5	13	-	24	2	1	27	88	-14
Canberra	16	-	1	-	1	2	-	-	1	3	14	-2
Hobart	42	1	-	-	1	4	3	1	-	8	35	-7
Launceston	29	-	3	-	3	1	1	-	1	3	29	-
Melbourne	239	4	11	4	19	5	22	5	1	33	225	-14
Newcastle	21	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	20	-1
Perth	165	-	17	5	22	-	25	1	1	27	160	-5
Sunshine Coast	95	-	19	-	19	6	12	-	-	18	96	1
Sub Total	1127	5	92	19	116	24	142	14	6	186	1057	-70
National	154	3	14	5	22	2	26	1	-	29	147	-7
Total	1281	8	106	24	138	26	168	15	6	215	1204	-77

## Calendar of Events National TS Centres ...



### Springbrook School of Theosophy, April 29 to May 6

**Theme: Revisiting the Ancient Wisdom—A Sketch of the Doctrines and Principal Sources on which Madame Blavatsky based modern Theosophy.**

Subjects covered will include:

- \* The Buddhism and Brahmanism of HPB and the Masters
- \* Kabbalistic teachings of the origin and constitution of the human being
- \* Platonic views of matter and mind
- \* An outline of the doctrines of the alchemists of the middle ages
- \* Theories respecting psychic phenomena

More information early next year.

### Canyonleigh Event February 25 to 28

**Theme: Living in Harmony with Nature**

Presenters: David Lorimer, Barry Bowden and Dara Tatray.

The reality of our interconnectedness and interdependence is now recognised in science, psychology, ecology and economics. At this retreat we will explore with David Lorimer ways of reconnecting with nature; enhancing our health and well-being in the process.

David Lorimer was educated at Eton and Cambridge. His eclectic career has taken him from merchant banking to the teaching of philosophy. Among other things, he is currently program director of the Scientific and Medical Network (SMN), Vice-President of the Swedenborg Society and Chair of the All Hallows House Foundation, concerned with holistic health.

Barry Bowden has been farming all his life and has a strong connection with nature. For the past twenty-two years he has run a 700 acre biodynamic farm on the Darling Downs, based on the Anthroposophy of Rudolf Steiner. His soil is good enough to eat.

Dara Tatray holds a PhD from the University of New South Wales (2006), for her thesis *Rebuilding the Foundations of Deep Ecology, A Nondualist Approach*.

Registration forms in this issue.

## 2011 CONVENTION PROGRAMME

15-22 January

St John's College, Brisbane

**Theme: Undivided Consciousness in Mind and in Nature**

**SPECIAL GUEST: Professor Richard Silberstein,  
Brain Sciences Institute, Swinburne University of Technology**

### Saturday 15 January Arrivals

7.30pm Official Opening of Convention  
ANNUAL CONVENTION BUSINESS MEETING OF  
THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN AUSTRALIA  
Agenda  
Roll Call of Voting Delegates and Proxies  
Confirmation of Minutes of 2010 Convention Business Meeting  
National President's Report for the Year Ended 31 August 2010  
National Treasurer's Report for the Year Ended 31 August 2010  
Financial Statements and Balance Sheet for the Year Ended 31 August 2010,  
and Auditor's Report thereon  
Budget for the Year Ending 31 August 2011  
Appointment of Auditor  
Announcement of Newly Appointed Officers  
Announcement of Ballot Results: State Representatives  
Vote on Notices of Motion  
Place and Time of Next Convention  
Resolutions of Goodwill  
Any Other Business  
Greetings to the Convention  
Introduction – Guest Speaker/s  
Introduction – Workshops  
Light Reception Tea

### Sunday 16 January

6.30am Yoga  
7.30am Morning Attunement  
9.15am Professor Richard Silberstein, Swinburne University of Technology  
*Do We Inhabit A Conscious Universe?*  
11.00am Short talks: *Holistic Consciousness: Intimations from Mystics and Philosophers*  
Noel Bertelle and Barry Bowden  
4.00pm Public Talk: Dara Tatray, National President, *Developments  
in Psychic Research Suggestive of Undivided Consciousness*  
7.30pm DVD *The Mahatmas and Their Letters* (2010) produced by Steve Schweizer

**Monday 17 January**

- 6.30am Yoga  
 7.30am Morning Attunement  
 9.15am Rosane DeBats, *Evolution of Consciousness: The significance of Spiral Dynamics for our times*  
 11.00am Short Talks: *Thought and Transformation*  
 Stephen McDonald and Esther Pockrandt  
 4.00pm Theosophy Science Panel and Discussion:  
*Advances in Science Related to Theosophy*  
 7.30pm Sarah Hopkins *Sacred Sound Journey*

**Tuesday 18 January**

- 6.30am Yoga  
 7.30am Morning Attunement  
 9.15am Edi Bilimoria, *What Divides Us?*  
 11.00am Short Talks: *Practical Expressions of an Undivided Consciousness*  
 Carolyn Harrod and Harry Bayens  
 4.00pm Workshops:  
 \* *Mary Masselos Seven-Tone Healing Workshop*  
 \* *Falu Eyre -The Science of Ayurveda*  
 7.30pm TBA

**Wednesday 19 January**

- 6.30am Yoga  
 7.30am Morning Attunement  
 9.15am Sheryl Malone, President Adelaide Lodge, *The Mysterious and Elusive Antahkarana*  
 11.00am Short Talks: *Creativity as a Spiritual Process*  
 Marie Bertelle, Carmen French and Tina Hentisz  
 4.00pm Plenary Session Structured Workshop  
*Presenting Theosophy on a Learning- Based Model rather than a Teaching-Based Model*  
 7.30pm Edi Bilimoria, *To Be Sung on the Waters*  
 Moods of music at the hands of masters

**Thursday 20 January**

- 6.30am Yoga  
 7.30am Morning Attunement  
 9.15am Dianne K. Kynaston, *A Mind to Embrace the Universe*  
 11.00am Invitation to 2012 Convention, Melbourne  
 Closing of Convention (National President)  
 2.00pm Theosophical Order of Service AGM and Information Meeting  
 7.30pm The Melotonins – a cappella vocal performance  
 Followed by a light supper

Friday 21 January

OUTING AND PICNIC LUNCH

Saturday 22 January Departures

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## Results-Election of State Representatives

As announced in the June 2010 issue of *Theosophy in Australia*, nominations were called for one *State Representative* for each of the Electoral States of New South Wales/ACT, Victoria and Western Australia. As two valid nominations were received for all three states, a ballot was held. The following members were elected to office:

**New South Wales/ACT:**

**Victoria:**

**Western Australia:**

**Dianne K. Kynaston**

**Georgina Fode (re-elected)**

**George Wester**

The term of office for the above *State Representatives* is for a period of two years from the date of declaration of these election results. The *State Representative* will represent the Lodges (Branches), Groups and Members in the State in all meetings and affairs of the *National Council*. They shall also liaise with all Lodges (Branches), Groups and National Members in their Electoral State and shall represent their views to the *National Council* and to the National Society Officers, as appropriate. As well, they shall receive and deal with representations from individual Members within their Electoral State, and shall refer the representations where requested or deemed necessary.

In addition, a Call for Nominations for the election of *State Representative* for the Electoral State of Queensland to fill a casual vacancy was made. As only one valid nomination was received for this state, no ballot was necessary. The following member was elected to office:

**Queensland:**

**Geoffrey Harrod**

The term of office for the above State representative will be the remainder of the current term (approximately 11 months). The elected State Representative will be eligible for re-election in 2011.

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## NEWS and NOTES

### The National Secretary

Under strict orders for nothing more, there was a warm but low-key farewell tea in the office for the National Secretary, Donald Fern, who has now retired after almost fifteen years of service. As many of you know, the Section owes a great debt to Donald's business acumen and his regular input of innovative ideas. It was Donald's idea to transform a disused garden bed opposite the lift on the ground floor of 484 Kent St, into a thriving cafe, Bar Adyar, which has transformed the entrance to our building and resulted in the TS having ready access to the best coffee and lunch in the CBD. The care with which Donald supervised the construction of the Springbrook and Canyonleigh centres has also resulted in a substantial gain to the Section, which has in several other ways benefitted from his flair. As National Secretary, Donald supervised the running of fourteen national conventions, the election of forty-two State Representatives and the election of three National Presidents. Though this is not all, it perhaps shows the significant positive contribution he has made to The Theosophical Society in Australia. His humour and his wit will be sorely missed in the office. We all wish him well in his retirement, and look forward to perhaps seeing him soon in other capacities.

### Legacies of Theosophy The University of Sydney, 1-2 October, 2010

Michael Gomes, Edi Bilimoria and the National President represented the Theosophical Society at the conference of

which so much has already been said in past issues of the magazine. By way of an update I can now report that in its own way the conference was a success. Although attended by only twenty or so on each of its two days, many of the talks given were of a high standard, very enjoyable, and a welcome tribute to the positive influence Theosophy has had on twentieth-century culture, spiritual practice and art. It was a little surprising to find that only two or three members of the local Lodge attended the event, but this was most likely the first and not the last event of its kind, so TS members may have another opportunity to see Theosophy and the Society in the eyes of sympathetic academics. The University of Sydney was very gracious in its thanks of the support given to the conference by the TS in Australia, which sponsored Michael Gomes as a keynote speaker. It is likely that the talks will be published in book form, or as conference proceedings. Information will be provided about that as it comes to hand.

### Annual Convention of the Theosophical Society, Adyar

The 135th International Convention of the Theosophical Society will be held at the International Headquarters, Adyar, from 26 to 31 December 2010. The convention theme is *Theosophical Teachings on the Path*. All members of the Society in good standing are welcome to attend as delegates. Anyone interested in attending should read the relevant item on <http://www.ts-adyar.org/content/135th-international-convention>. ❀

# Section Directory

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## *Australian Capital Territory*

### *Canberra Branch, Chartered 17/7/1971:*

Postal Address: PO Box 7418, Fisher ACT 2611  
Meet: Senior Citizens Club 10 Watson Street, Turner ACT 2612  
8.00pm 1st Monday of month (Please confirm by email or telephone)  
President: Peter Fokker  
Telephone: 02 6236 3170  
Email: fokker@cyberone.com.au  
Secretary: Tony Fearnside  
Telephone: 02 62887656

## *New South Wales*

### *Blavatsky Lodge, Chartered 22/5/1922:*

2nd & 3rd Floors, 484 Kent Street, Sydney NSW 2000  
Telephone: 02 9267 6955 Fax: 02 9283 3772  
Email: contact@tssydney.org.au  
www.tssydney.org.au  
Meet: 2.30pm & 7.00pm Wednesdays  
Members Meeting: 2.00 pm 2nd Saturday each month  
President: Stephen McDonald  
Secretary: Ruth Keenan

### *Newcastle Lodge, Chartered 3/12/1941:*

Meet: Carrington Community Centre, Carrington NSW 2294  
8.00pm 2nd Friday each month (excluding January)  
Study group (members) confirm dates with Lodge  
President: Therese Woods  
Contact: Danny Boyd 02 4937 4225

### *Blue Mountains Group:*

Meet: Springwood NSW  
11.00am 1st Tuesday each month  
Coordinator: Simon O'Rourke  
Telephone: 02 9267 6955

### *Gosford Group:*

Meet: The Neighbour Centre,

Pandala Road, Narara NSW 2250  
8.00pm 2nd Tuesday each month  
Coordinator: Vivien Wareing  
Telephone: 02 4325 7434  
Secretary: Roni Ostergaard  
Telephone: 02 4358 1413

### *Northern Beaches Group:*

Postal address: c/ Mina Singh Batra, 22 Woodland Street, Balgowlah Heights, NSW 2093  
Meet: c/- above address  
8.00 pm 3rd Friday each month  
Coordinator: Patricia Wits  
Telephone: 02 9450 1362

## *Queensland*

### *Atherton Lodge, Chartered 27/4/1950:*

Postal Address: 14 Herberton Rd, Atherton QLD 4883  
Meet: Meeting Room, Atherton Neighbourhood Centre, Mabel St, Atherton, 2nd Saturday of month  
President: Max Brandenberger  
Secretary: Chris Pang Way  
Tel: 07 4091 5156

### *Brisbane Lodge, Chartered 21/1/1895:*

355 Wickham Terrace, Brisbane QLD 4000  
Telephone: 07 3839 1453  
Email: brisbanelodge@theosophyqld.org.au  
http://www.theosophyqld.org.au  
Meet: 10.00am & 12.00 noon Wednesday and 7.30pm Friday  
President: Noel Bertelle  
Secretary: Angela Read

### *Caboolture Group*

Meet: Caboolture Senior Citizens Hall  
Hasking St Caboolture 7.00 pm Mondays  
Coordinator: Position Vacant

### *Sunshine Coast Lodge, Chartered 1/4/2004*

Meet: Buderim Croquet Club, Syd Lingard Drive, Buderim QLD 4556 7.00pm Thursday  
President: Jean Carroll  
Telephone: 07 5443 4733  
Email: oneness@tpg.com.au  
Secretary: Penny Houghton

### *Toowoomba Group:*

Meet: Laurel Bank Park Hall, 50 Hill St, Toowoomba  
1st Wed at 7pm and 3rd Sunday at 2:30pm of each month (Meditation 1pm & Study Group at 1:30pm)  
Annual Springbrook Retreat each winter  
Coordinator: Barry Bowden  
Secretary: Lynden Thomas  
Tel: 07 4693 9157  
Email: lynden.thomas@bigpond.com

## *South Australia*

### *Adelaide Lodge, Chartered 26/5/1891:*

310 South Terrace, Adelaide SA 5000  
Telephone: 08 8223 1129  
Email: president@tsadelaide.org.au  
http://theosophy.org.au  
Meet: 2.00pm Sunday & Members Meeting 1.30pm last Friday of every month.  
President: Sheryl Malone  
Secretary: Audrey Brimson

## *Tasmania*

### *Hobart Branch, Chartered 7/6/1889:*

13 Goulburn Street, Hobart TAS 7000  
www.theosophicaltas.websytle.com.au  
Meet: 8.00pm Monday  
President/Secretary: Helen Steven  
Telephone: (03) 6228 3048

### *Launceston Lodge, Chartered 12/1/1901:*

54 Elizabeth Street, Launceston, TAS 7250  
Postal address: 188c George Street  
Launceston TAS 7250  
email: kevin\_odea@yahoo.com.au  
www.tased.edu.au/tasonline/theolaun  
Meet: 7.30pm Wednesday and noon-2pm Thursday  
Library open noon-2pm Thursdays  
President: Jay Wilson  
Secretary: Kevin O'Dea  
Telephone: 03 6331 2534

## *Victoria*

### *Melbourne Lodge, Chartered 9/12/1890:*

126 Russell Street, Melbourne VIC 3000  
Telephone: 03 9650 2315 Fax: 03 9650 7624  
email: meltheos@netspace.net.au  
Meet: 2.30pm Saturday & 6.30pm Tuesday  
President: Ken Edwards  
Secretary: Edward Sinclair

### *Mornington Peninsula Group:*

Coordinator: Daphne Standish  
Telephone: 03 9589 5439  
Meet: Mt. Eliza Neighbourhood Centre, Canadian Bay Road  
first Sunday of the month 11am-3.30pm (meditation - lunch - Theosophy)

### *Wodonga-Albury Group:*

Meet: Shop 6, Tower Place, High Street, Wodonga VIC 3690  
1st Tuesday each month  
Library hours Mon-Fri 10.00am-2.00pm  
Coordinator/Secretary: Denis Kovacs  
Telephone: 02 6024 2905

## *Western Australia*

### *Perth Branch, Chartered 10/6/1897:*

21 Glendower Street, Perth WA 6000  
Tel/Fax: 08 9328 8104  
Email: tsp Perth@iinet.net.au  
http://tsp Perth.iinet.net.au  
Meet: 7.30pm Tuesday  
President: Harry Bayens  
Secretary: Deborah Weymouth

### *Mount Helena Retreat Centre:*

1540 Bunning Road, Mt Helena WA 6082  
Tel: 08 9572 1513  
Caretaker/Manager: Elizabeth Collins

## *Theosophical Education and Retreat Centre, Springbrook*

2184 Springbrook Road, Springbrook QLD 4213  
Telephone: Office/Hall 07 5533 5211  
email: bhora@bigpond.net.au  
Caretaker: Barry Hora  
Administrator: Position Vacant

