

# *Theosophy* IN AUSTRALIA

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**INSIDE** 2022 National Convention, Perth  
Clarice Beckett - The Art of Seeing  
Carl Hartmann - TS Pioneer  
Lodge & Group Histories  
Positions Vacant - Education Co-ordinator

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**The Theosophical Society** welcomes students or seekers from all walks of life, belonging to any religion or to none and who are in sympathy with its Objects. It was formed to assist in showing to people that Theosophy exists, and 'to ascend towards it by studying and assimilating its eternal verities'. Wisdom is known by a mind that is completely open. Therefore freedom of thought and open enquiry are given special emphasis in the Society. **Theosophy** essentially refers to 'Divine Wisdom', Sacred Knowledge, which is a transcendent state of consciousness. In a secondary sense, Theosophy is an ancient yet distinct stream of enquiry, exploring and interpreting the truths of existence in terms suited to particular ages, e.g. in the teachings of ancient India, ancient China, Platonism, Neoplatonism, and, since 1875, through the contribution of the TS. At the core of Theosophy is the principle of indivisible Unity underlying the diversity of forms.

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### **Mission Statement of the Theosophical Society**

To serve humanity by cultivating an ever-deepening understanding  
and realisation of the Ageless Wisdom,  
spiritual self-transformation,  
and the Unity of all Life.

## From the National President

Stephen McDonald



Our June edition of *Theosophy in Australia* (T in A) marks the centenary of its production as the organ of the Society in Australia. It was one hundred years ago, in May 1921, that the first copy was produced under the banner of T in A, although there were journals under other names before then. To mark this milestone, this edition has been devoted to articles and materials that relate stories about some of the figures and places that have shaped the movement in Australia since its inception in 1880, just 5 years after the birth of the Society in 1875.

You will notice more photographs than usual because of their ability to tell part of the story of this organization in Australia. With such a rich history, it was hard to decide which of the many interesting stories to tell. In this edition, I tried to avoid articles about the many prominent theosophists that have been extensively written about before, such as Alfred Deakin, second Prime Minister of Australia, Professor John Smith, founding professor of Sydney University, and Edith Cowan, a prominent social reformer and the first Australian woman to serve as a member of parliament, whose picture is on the Australian \$50 bill. I sought articles about some of the lesser-known figures who were strongly influenced by, or who shaped the landscape of, the Theosophical Society in Australia. Our lead article, by Olga Gostin, surveys the life and work of one of the lesser-known people involved in the Theosophical movement in Australia, artist Clarice

Beckett. Her article coincides with a retrospective of Beckett's work recently featured at the Art Gallery of South Australia. Olga's beautifully and passionately written piece reveals how captivated she was by Beckett's work. Clarice Beckett lived from 1887–1935, yet her spiritual perceptiveness was contemporary in focus. Although she never joined the Theosophical Society, her art was concerned with deeper spiritual development, such as inner stillness, awareness in the moment and recognition of the unity of all life. There is little doubt that many of her insights were greatly influenced by Annie Besant and other theosophical writers and speakers. It is notable that a whole chapter of the exhibition's catalogue is devoted to a description of the influence that the TS had upon her art.

This is followed by two shorter articles, one on Carl Hartmann and the other about Josephine Ransom. Phillipa Rooke has written a captivating piece about Carl Hartmann, who is often credited with having started the first TS branch in Australia, Brisbane Lodge, in 1881. As the story goes, Hartmann started meetings in Toowoomba, where he lived, before moving to Brisbane City. Apart from his work for the TS, he was a noted botanist and philanthropist; an important figure in his own right. Josephine Ransom was the first editor of the new *Theosophy in Australia* magazine in 1921. Rosanna Sheridan has painted a brief picture of her prolific career in the

TS both in Australia and internationally. Like many women involved in the TS, Ransom was a courageous pioneer in the vibrant world of Theosophy in the 1920s and 30s. She was an international lecturer, educationist and held a number of important jobs from the English General Secretary to International Vice President (a post which she was never able to take up).

To round off our journey into the past, there are short articles about each of the Lodges/Branches and some of the Certified Groups. The TS in Australia has had a colorful and eventful history, which makes for an interesting read. In News and Notes, I have written a brief account of a recent piece of TS history; the opening of new premises for Melbourne Lodge. The Book Review is also about a figure who visited Australia several times, Annie Besant. Pedro Oliveira has released a new book based on research undertaken by C.V. Agarwal and his own work, which focusses on her life in India. It is an important contribution and a final chapter about the prolific impact that Besant had upon the TS and upon the world.

### **Important Announcements**

In the Calendar of Events, you will notice an advertisement for the 2022 TS National Convention in Perth, WA. Please note that the convention will only go ahead if there are enough fully paid registrants. If you are keen to attend this event, please get in early and show your support by sending your registration now.

Finally, there are three important advertisements: an expression of interest for the position of National Secretary; a call for nominations for State Representatives for Qld, Tas and SA/NT; and an opportunity to apply for the position of Education Coordinator. If you are interested, or know of anyone suitably qualified for any of these important jobs, please read the details and consider applying.

Our next edition (September) will be devoted to articles about science and Theosophy. I am keen to hear from anyone interested in writing an original piece, or recommending articles that have been written about this topic. For this edition, I will be giving preference to Australian authors.

### ***The Freedom and Responsibility of Lodges and Branches***

The freedom of Lodges and Branches is defined by the scope of the Society's Objects as well as its essential mandate to make Theosophy known as a practical living Wisdom, which can uplift human consciousness to a realisation of the Oneness of life. Therefore, although the Society has no official creed of its own and upholds freedom of thought, and while it is acceptable to invite some outside speakers who can contribute to the exploration of the Ageless Wisdom, it is not appropriate for our platform to be used by such speakers to actively promote other organisations or belief systems. Each Lodge and Branch was chartered by the International President to be a representative of the Society in its area. Its work and programme should reflect the character, altruistic ethos and spirit of the Theosophical Society.

*Resolution passed by the General Council of the Theosophical Society (2019)*



### THE FIRST SYDNEY CONVENTION OF THE AUSTRALIAN SECTION, 1895

Miss Moore relates that the first Sydney Convention of the Australian Section was held at 42 Margaret Street, Wynyard Square, in which the group photograph (below) was taken. This was the home of the Sydney Lodge for some years. After the Lodge had vacated it Dr. Besant took up her quarters in the same room during her 1908 visit.



### A Preamble to our feature article: The art of seeing – through the eyes of Clarice Beckett

In the 1924 *Twenty Melbourne Painter's* exhibition catalogue, Clarice Beckett stated her artistic aim was, "To give a sincere and truthful representation of a portion of the beauty of Nature, and to show the charm of light and shade, which I try to set forth in correct tones, so as to give as nearly as possible an exact illusion of reality" (McGuire, as cited in McFarlane, 1999). She preferred the outdoors and the charm of light and shade and sought out transitory light effects requiring memory and imagination. She was attracted to authors like W.B. Yeats, Hilda Mangan and Walt Whitman. Whitman's poetic leitmotif emphasised the local and familiar opening out to a deeper spiritual dimension. His poem *The Song of the Open Road*, for example, is not about exotic travel but staying at home to observe and connect more intimately... "To know the universe itself as a road – as many roads – as roads for travelling souls." (Whitman, as cited in McFarlane, 1999). Beckett also did not look beyond the local for satisfaction. Her compositional space is striking. Many of her paintings are the streets and seascapes of Beaumaris, from the foreground of which the viewer is never offered an open horizon. Unlike her artistic mentor, Meldrum, she found the glare of electric lights too stark and sought out softer effects such as blurred borders, mists and fogs suggesting an unseen dimension to the familiar, a dream world or a spiritual dimension as perceived through her emotional eyes. (Adapted from: 'Clarice Beckett's *Open road; suggestions of an unseen dimension to the familiar*' Art and Australia vol 37 no 2 1999 pp 196-98 by Jenny McFarlane)

## The art of seeing – through the eyes of Clarice Beckett

Olga Gostin



The Covid-19 pandemic has had diverse impacts that still unfold before us, eighteen months after its ravages became an established world-wide fact. Under the privileged (Australian) conditions of restricted movement within the confines of homes provided with water and electricity, not to mention access to others through the internet, we have learnt to live with a keener sense of awareness and possibly even, mindfulness. Some of us may even have developed the art of *listening* and actually *hearing* those within our ambit. As the pall of nationwide lockdowns lifts from our nation, it seems extraordinarily fortuitous that the Art Gallery of South Australia (AGSA) has opened an exhibition of the works of Clarice Beckett that invites us to refine the art of seeing. And not only seeing, but doing so in a context of inner stillness and wonderment at the innate beauty of the present moment captured in the simple, the mundane, the very ordinary. The exhibition is appositely named **Clarice Beckett: The Present Moment**, and is curated by AGSA's Tracey

Lock whose splendid accompanying catalogue *The Present Moment: The art of Clarice Beckett* seduces the reader with verve and clarity into the life and works of this intriguing and much under-recognised painter, effectively an important pioneer of modern Australian art in the 1920s and 30s. The cover of the catalogue presents as a real-size framed reproduction of Beckett's first recorded painting *Luna Park* (1919) – a masterly touch promising to inveigle even those who may not be able to sight the exhibition before it closes in mid-May.



Clarice Beckett, *Luna Park*, (Courtesy of AGSA)

## Biography

Clarice Beckett was born in Casterton, Victoria on 21 March 1887 into a well-to-do middle-class family. Her father Joseph Beckett (1850-1936) was a banker and the family including Clarice and her younger sister Hilda (1891-1980), moved between Melbourne, Ballarat, Bendigo and back, following his various appointments. An older brother Thomas Beckett (1882-1899) was born with microcephaly and died as a teenager. It was in Ballarat, as a pupil at Queen's College that Clarice developed her interest in spiritualism and subscribed to *The Harbinger of Light*, Australia's first spiritualist magazine. At this time her favourite reading included Darwin's *On the origin of species* and HPB's *The Voice of the Silence*. During a brief return to Melbourne between 1904 and 1906, Clarice completed her secondary education where she emerged as a talented student with artistic ability. She attended a theosophical lecture at the Princess Theatre and joined the artist circle of Beatrix and Alexander Colquhoun, themselves practising theosophists and spiritualists. In 1908, Annie Besant, then President of the Theosophical Society, toured Australia a second time and included Melbourne in her itinerary. The major theme was 'Nature's finer forces' and topics included astral sight, anti-psychic bodies and spiritualist phenomena (Lock, 2020:168). Though Beckett never joined the Theosophical Society there is little doubt that she was receptive to some key theosophical ideas that later found expression in her art, as for example, the recognition of the underlying unity of all

things, the importance of centring oneself in the present moment, of practising mindfulness and embracing an immanent spiritual reality beyond that which is visible to the physical eye.

The outbreak of WW1 appears not to have touched the Beckett family. Clarice and her younger sister Hilda lived in



Clarice Beckett, *Collins Street, Evening* - Public Domain  
Via Wikimedia Commons

temporary accommodation in Melbourne and between 1914-16 Clarice took drawing lessons from Fred McCubbin at the National Gallery School. A year later, aged 29, she decided to study for nine months under the controversial artist and theorist, Max Meldrum (1875-1955) commuting twice a week from the family home in Bendigo to attend classes in Elizabeth Street, Melbourne. Meldrum was an important mentor for the budding artist, recognising her talents and remaining a sounding board and critic of her work for many years. In essence Meldrum guided Beckett to develop an intuitive connection with her subject and to express that connection on canvas



directly, simply and minimally. There were to be no sketches, no outlines, and no drafts. Thinned paint was applied swiftly with flat brushwork and never reworked. The focus was on reproducing the subtle relationship between shape, colour and composition with priority on capturing the tonal effect of the scene.

By 1918 Beckett affirmed her independence from Meldrum although she still valued his appraisal of her work. She painted mostly outdoors, lured by



Clarice Beckett, Beach Scene 1932 Public Domain Via Wikimedia Commons

the tones and ineffable quality of diffuse light especially at dawn, at dusk, on misty days and in heavy fog. She constructed a painting trolley that she would drag along to favourite venues round the bayside suburb of Beaumaris to which the family moved in 1919 and where she would be based for the rest of her creative life. Other favourite areas included the Mornington Peninsula, Westernport Bay, Geelong, Ballarat and Lorne. An important interlude was six months spent in Naringal on a sheep station in Victoria's western district owned by the brother of her friend

Maud Rowe. For the first time Beckett had her own studio (above the shearing shed) and was able to devote herself uninterrupted to her painting, producing some of her more innovative and poetic work. The artist never travelled outside Victoria though this did not restrict her awareness of wider artistic and intellectual trends. Indeed, a prominent bookseller Gino Nibbi described her as the best read woman in Melbourne.

Beckett exhibited her work over sixteen years, including ten solo exhibitions between 1923 and 1933 at the Athenaeum Gallery in Melbourne. She was invited to join several group shows including the Twenty Melbourne Painters, and one of her paintings was exhibited at the first international exhibition of contemporary Australian artists at the Roerich Museum in New York in 1931. Despite these accolades, Beckett and her work were increasingly marginalised. Her perceived alignment with Max Meldrum (who had become a figure of division and derision) alienated her from the mainstream, while her persistent ethereal embrace of simple and unpretentious subjects ran counter to the dominant engagement with heroic themes and grandiose landscapes. Even so, she worked prolifically, ever focussed on an inner dimension in recognition of which she described each painting as 'a self-renewing act'.

In the early 1930s Clarice devoted herself to looking after her ailing mother (Elizabeth née Brown) who died in 1934. The following year on 7 July 1935 Beckett herself unexpectedly succumbed to double pneumonia and was buried at

the Cheltenham cemetery. Her premature death at the age of forty-eight cut short the career of this prolific painter. Her father reputedly burnt some of the paintings in her estate though he and Clarice's surviving younger sister Hilda (Mangan) helped organise the Clarice Beckett Memorial Exhibition at the Athenaeum Gallery in 1936. Soon after, Joseph Beckett died and Hilda was left in charge of her sister's estate.

After her death and for the next three decades, Clarice Beckett and her work fell into almost total obscurity. The extraordinary sequence of events that brought the artist to light to claim her

and Melbourne gallery owner Rosalind Humphries/Hollinrake. This videoed interview forms an integral part of AGSA's exhibition. Hollinrake recollects how in the late 1960s, an elderly woman walked anonymously into her gallery and unfolded several unframed small canvases that Hollinrake immediately recognised as works by Clarice Beckett. The elderly person was none other than Hilda. The chance encounter led to a subsequent and enduring fifty-year commitment by Hollinrake to bring Beckett's work back into the mainstream of Australian modern art. Specifically, she sought to validate Clarice Beckett as one of Australia's leading female artists.



Clarice Beckett - *Sandringham Beach Circa 1933*  
Public Domain Via *Wikimedia common*

proper place in the annals of Australian modern art, is recorded in a fascinating January 2021 interview by AGSA's Tracey Lock with octogenarian art critic

Back in the sixties, Hollinrake was invited to Hilda Mangan's rural property near Benalla where she was taken to an open-sided hay shed where about two thousand canvases, barely covered with hessian sacks, were stacked higgledy-piggledy, open to the elements, vermin and wildlife. In the salvage operation that followed Hollinrake was able to save, restore and/or frame some 369 paintings. These formed the basis of the Clarice Beckett retrospective at the Rosalind Humphries Galleries in Melbourne in November 1971. Although several exhibitions of Beckett's work ensued in subsequent decades, the current AGSA exhibition featuring some 139 works is the first major retrospective since the 1970s. Most importantly, Hollinrake has identified the Art Gallery of South Australia as the future beneficiary and repository of the works of Clarice Beckett that she currently holds in trust.

## The AGSA 2021 Clarice Beckett exhibition

All exhibitions reflect the perception and sensitivity of their curator, and this retrospective is no exception. Viewers of course, involuntarily and necessarily add their own unique perception and reaction to the totality of the experience, beyond the impact of individual paintings. It is a unique and enriching immersion where the act of seeing adds up to more than the sum or imprint of the individual works on display. It is a wondrous experience, akin to a walking meditation. This effect is enhanced by Tracey Lock's decision to present Beckett's work as though one were following the artist in her solitary artistic communion with nature, starting at dawn and then moving from gallery to gallery throughout the course of one day, until the exhibition ends at dusk and nightfall. The paintings are thus clustered not by date (Beckett rarely dated or even signed her paintings) but by time of day, no matter that the subjects reflect different localities, vagaries of weather or foci of interest. Lock's second masterly ploy is to seduce the viewer by leading one from room to room through portals: arches, narrow passages giving entry into larger spaces, and small framed apertures within walls that invite the viewer to peep into another space, or a single painting on a distant wall. It is an unobtrusive way of stilling the pace, of training the eye to see, of focussing the mind to absorb, to meditate, to celebrate.

Almost counterintuitive is the viewer's sudden stepping out into a replica kitchen, furnished with functional furniture

including a large table, sink and an imposing bay window that looks out onto another exhibition space. Here Lock has hung Beckett's still-life paintings, mostly floral arrangements, and her portraits, notably of her sister Hilda. There is a huge understatement in this room that so



Clarice Beckett - *Mordialloc Pier (The Petrol Pump)*, 1927  
Public Domain Via Wikimedia Commons

incongruously displays Beckett's artistic prowess beyond painting en plein air. It is an emphatic rebuttal of Beckett's father's refusal to acquiesce to her plea that he include a studio at St. Enoch's, the new home that he built at Beaumaris on retirement. His retort to his daughter's request was simply that "the kitchen table will do". The relative confines of the kitchen space are in marked contrast to the sweep of other galleries, some semi-circular, one offering a fully immersive circular white space on which are projected waves of muted colour reflecting Beckett's tonal palette. The final gallery featuring some of Beckett's dusk and night scenes dedicates a whole wall to a silent image of a life-size corrugated iron shed that flickers in and out of

shadow. We are reminded of the fragility of art, the transience of our existence, and triumphantly, of the positive and lasting contribution of those who have cared enough to rescue and honour the silenced and forgotten.

### The art of seeing

So come, come with me, passing through the transitional space of pastel shifting colours, into an alcove where a single painting silently greets us. Muted tones of grey, a blush of rose and wash of green suggest daybreak along an indistinct roadway from which emerges a single,



Clarice Beckett - *The Yarra, Sunset, 1930* Public Domain  
Via Wikimedia Commons

solitary, shadowy grey figure. *Silent Approach* (c. 1924) sets the tone for Beckett's numerous paintings at this hallowed time of day. Other daybreak scenes (named by her sister Hilda, as were all of Beckett's paintings) like *Tranquility*, *Solitude*, *The First Sound* or *First Light*, entice the viewer into a suspended state of being and seeing. As Lock puts it in the general signage of the exhibition, it

is as though the paint 'had been "sighed" onto the board, generating an illusion of a breathing atmospheric moment.'

In his all too brief review of this exhibition, *The Australian's* art critic Christopher Allen explains why Beckett's early morning paintings are so effective:

What she evidently loved about this time of day was not simply the low light and mist which soften forms and reduce tonal range, but more precisely the gradual reappearance of ambient and radiant light in the period just before the rise of the sun...and it is this mysterious, transitional moment when colour saturation and tone are still faint, that particularly appeals to her sensitivity (Allen, 2021, p.11).

Yet as we move through subsequent galleries featuring daylight scenes whether in the rain or sunshine, at the beach, depicting boatsheds, street scenes, storms or summer fields, there is no mistaking Beckett's pervading and consistent sense of stillness and depth through understatement. So also her sunset and evening paintings which draw us into the mysterious if not the mystical, by replacing as Allen puts it 'the hope of dawn with the melancholy of twilight' (ibid).

Back in 1936 *The Age's* art critic had laconically observed that Beckett's paintings were something to be seen and felt, rather than written about. Amen to that. So also Christopher Allen who describes her work as 'the visual



equivalent of meditation...in which wilful looking is suspended in order to discover the disinterested clarity of pure seeing'. I return to the exhibition again, and again, each encounter richer and more internally soothing than the last. It is a salutary reminder of the unity of all things: as above, so below – pandemic notwithstanding.



Clarice Beckett *Silent Approach* circa 1924 Public Domain  
Via Wikimedia Commons

### References

Allen, Christopher, *Jewels in the mist*, The Weekend Australian Review, March 27-28, 2021.

Lock, Tracey, *The present moment: The art of Clarice Beckett*, Art Gallery of South Australia, 2020.

*Of mixed Belgian-Russian parentage, Dr Olga Gostin did her undergraduate studies in social anthropology in South Africa before obtaining a scholarship to the Australian National University. From 1963-65 she did research into resettlement and cash cropping among the Kuni of Papua, obtaining her PhD in 1968. A post-doctoral exchange at Moscow State University honed her interest in syncretism and cultural change. She was part of the foundation of Australia's first specifically designated tertiary program for Indigenous Australians in 1973 and remained associated with it for the next 40 years. In 1992 she obtained her Master's degree in Environmental Studies from Adelaide University. She remains passionately interested in social justice and environmental issues. Olga has been a dedicated member of the Theosophical Society since 1970.*



## **CARL HEINRICH HARTMANN, 1835 — 1887.**

Phillipa Rooke

**A**dventurer, gold miner, nurseryman, explorer, botanist and ardent Theosophist, and promoter of Theosophy. Carl Hartmann was born in 1835 in Dahlen, in the German kingdom of Saxony. He travelled to Australia at the age of 20, and lived in NSW for 10 years. During this time, he became co-owner of a plant nursery at Parramatta, married in 1863, and worked as a miner in the gold fields to subsidise his income from the nursery.

He was a successful practitioner of homoeopathy, and performed many cures on the goldfields of NSW and later in Toowoomba. This he did free and for the love of ameliorating the suffering of others. He was also known to be a strict vegetarian.

In 1865 he and his family settled in the then country town of Toowoomba. He purchased 4 acres of land, which he eventually extended to 42 acres, and on which he grew many different species of plants and trees, experimenting with viable crops such as fruit trees, and sectioned off part of the property as a rainforest of local trees. His nursery won several hundred diplomas and medals at various horticultural shows. He also corresponded with the most eminent botanists and naturalists of his time,



From the Hartmann, Carl Heinrich biographical file in the State Botanical Collection of the Royal Botanic Gardens in Victoria.

and gave his name to some new species of plants and insects. In the Canberra suburb of Banks, there is a street named 'Hartmann Gardens' in honour of the botanical work of Carl Hartmann.

Hartmann made scientific collections of native plant material, notably ferns and orchids, for Baron Von Mueller of the Melbourne Botanic Gardens. He also wrote a scientific treatise on Queensland flora for the Great Philadelphia Exhibition of 1875. He was a foundation member of the Royal Society of Queensland, and was sent by the Queensland Government on two expeditions to New Guinea in 1885 and 1887, the hardships of which led to his death. He was also sent as a representative

for the Queensland Government for an Embassy of Peace with the indigenous population on Thursday Island.

In July 1884 Carl Hartmann gave a lecture to the members of the Darling Downs Horticultural Association in which he tried to explain why some people are good at raising and growing plants whilst others are not. He likened this observable phenomenon to ‘animal magnetism’, the power of hypnotism or mesmerism. He believed that those people who have ‘green thumbs’ possess the power to influence plant growth by a similar process, supporting his theory from his own experience:

I have been a close observer of this matter for many years, and have experimented in various ways on a lot of plants and cuttings grown under the same conditions, half of them magnetised by will power and passes of the hands which have grown far more vigorous and beautiful than the others which were not magnetised.

In 1881, only 6 years after its founding in New York in 1875, Carl Hartmann joined the Theosophical Society. In 1882 he befriended George Smith who owned the Progressive Book Depot in Brisbane (selling books of ‘advanced thought literature’ and periodicals such as *The Theosophist* of India and *Harbinger of Light* from Melbourne – published by theosophist W.H. Terry) and he encouraged Smith to also join the Society. Smith had already started the Psychological Society in 1881 in Brisbane, and its members became the nucleus for the founding of the Brisbane Lodge in 1882, with Smith

as the Hon. Secretary, and Hartmann as the Hon. President of the ‘first branch of the Theosophical Society in the Southern Hemisphere’. This original Brisbane branch appears to have lasted until after the death of Carl Hartmann.

Hartmann distributed theosophical literature as testified by George Smith, who, in a tribute to Hartmann, stated ... “many a lot of books and pamphlets did he select and pay for, for the purpose of gratuitous distribution as directed by him”. Of the 29 names listed as having joined the TS between 1881 and 1885, 24 were brought in by Hartmann, including the first woman, Margaret Woolley of NSW.

In 1886 he wrote a letter which was published under the heading ‘Indian Theosophy’ in the South Australian Register on March 31st, in which he defended Madame Blavatsky against the accusations made by Hodgson and the Coloumbs. The letter ended with these words:

Mr. Hodgson also is incapable of comprehending a spiritualized, unselfish, and unsectarian mind, with a heart large enough to take in all humanity, realizing the motto in its fullest meaning “the world is my home, and every man a brother,” like Madame Blavatsky. Verily no small minds can comprehend such a feeling, but they generally put the worst construction upon honest motives. There are things between heaven and earth not yet dreamed of in Mr. Hodgson’s philosophy.

On his death in 1887 his whole estate, valued at approximately five thousand

pounds, was left to the Theosophical Society, much to the chagrin of his family. However, in 1891 Col. Olcott made a special visit to Toowoomba during his tour of Australia, arranged to meet the family and reversed the bequest, giving back the estate to the family. Col. Olcott recorded in his *Old Diary Leaves* that he gave back to the family four-fifths and kept one-fifth for the Society – 1000.00 pounds and 150 pounds expenses. When he returned to Adyar the document administering the estate received the unanimous approval of his colleagues.

Somewhat later, he goes on to say:

There came a panic in colonial real estate values, and so I cancelled my claim for the 1000.00 pounds and gave over absolutely the whole estate to the family, taking nothing out of it but the bare cost of my journey and a few New Guinea curios, worth, perhaps, five pounds, which may be seen in the Adyar Library. I was amused to see the instantaneous change of public opinion towards the Society and myself; the heirs now went about singing my praises, and the Australian press echoed the feeling.

Several of the family members joined the Society during Olcott's visit, and formed the nucleus of the Toowoomba Lodge which Olcott chartered. A number of years later they built a hall and named it Olcott Hall, which, in a newspaper article was described as now a cultural centre by virtue of its theosophical activity and those of the Board of Adult Education. The Society sold the building in 1975 and it is now used for commercial purposes.

In his obituary published in *The Chronicle* in 1887 Hartmann was described as a man of strict morality, eager to do good for his fellow people. In another article on his passing, published in *The Telegraph* it was stated:

The service was read by Mr. J.B.L. Isambert, M.L.A., after which Mr. W. Widdop, in feeling language, spoke of Mr. Hartmann's earnestness in doing good to others, of his singleness of purpose, and of his upright life. There were but few dry eyes among the little group of friends that laid the mortal remains of Carl H. Hartmann, the philanthropist, in their last resting place.

Carl Hartmann was a true pioneer of theosophical work here in Australia, encouraging membership, interacting with like-minded people, distributing books and pamphlets, defending the Society and living a life of service and dedication to higher ideals.

*(Compiled from material provided by the TS national archive, and from the extensive research of John Swarbrick of Toowoomba, which was generously shared.)*



*Phillipa Rooke is a past President of Brisbane Lodge, a former National Vice-President and State Representative. Her theosophical passions include meditation, Eastern spiritual thought, and the ever-unfolding journey of discovery of the essential unity of all things.*



**JOSEPHINE RANSOM**

22 March 1879, Armidale,  
Australia,  
died 2 December 1960

Compiled by Rosanna Sheridan



Josephine Ransom courtesy  
of Theosophy Wiki

Josephine Ransom was the first Editor of *Theosophy in Australia*. She was a leading member of the Theosophical Society, lecturer and author of many books.

She had a deep connection with India and went there as a young girl and lived with an Indian family. This would have been an unusual and quite difficult thing to do in the late 1800's especially for a single female. She studied Eastern philosophy, especially Hinduism and became adept at Sanskrit.

She joined the Theosophical Society in Adyar, Madras on 23 November, 1897, and became involved in educational work among Buddhists in Sri Lanka, and completed an Arts degree in Benares from 1904-1906. She married Captain Sidney Ransom in London on 30 March, 1907 and together they lectured in England, and at Adyar. She performed a lecture tour of Australia in 1912 and did educational work in England where she founded the Harrogate T.S. Training Centre and the Britain and India Society. She toured the United States in 193-1932. She served as manager of the Theosophical Publishing House in Adyar and from 1924-1926, was General Secretary of the Australian Section, the South African Section from 1926-1927 and then the English Section from 1933-1936. She was also an executive of the European Federation and served on the World Congress Committee in 1936. In London she presented two Blavatsky Lectures, "*The Occult Teachings of the Christ*" in 1933 and "*The*

*Direction of the Theosophical Society by Masters of Wisdom*" in 1942. She wrote over 140 articles for many Theosophical periodicals as well as books and pamphlets.

In 1960 she was nominated International Vice-President of the T.S. but did not formally take office as she was badly injured in a car accident in London and remained unconscious for four months before dying on 2 December of that year.

In correspondence held in the Campbell Library in Sydney, we see that Josephine wrote about Australia on 7 March, 1955 to the General Secretary, J.L. Davidge. She was a second generation Australian and Australia has always had a warm place in her heart. She had noticed the great changes that were rapidly occurring and saw the close connection between the ideal of Universal Brotherhood of the T.S. and the Australian population who were striving for radical changes – "not so much in physical appearance but in an attitude to life of fine, strong comprehending tolerance such as has not so far been seen. A wise mingling of peoples is now going on to bring richness and variety to the blending."

She had foresight about problems that Australia is still tackling today.

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The Campbell Library, Sydney

## The History of our Australian Lodges

### Adelaide Lodge Chartered 26 May 1891



From the Campbell Library Archives

The Adelaide Lodge was formed by Henry Steel Olcott when visiting Australia in 1891 bringing the total number of Australian Lodges to seven, which then allowed for the formation of an Australian Section of the Theosophical Society.

Foundation members included Mr A.W. Dobbie who became the first President, Mr Nathaniel Knox, a Solicitor who used his offices to hold the first Lodge meeting and who became the second President in 1894, Messrs Janceczy, Cooke, Boulger, Kennedy, Caldwell, Mackenzie and Harrison, Benham and Derrington and Meses Knox and Milan and Sinnett (sister-in-law of A.P. Sinnett).

In 1894 and 1908 Annie Besant visited Adelaide and gave many public talks where her well recognised oratorical abilities captivated her audience. The Countess Wachtmeister visited in 1895 for several weeks and Col. Olcott revisited in 1897 and gave several well-attended public talks. In 1905 C.W. Leadbeater came and gave public talks to an over-

flowing hall holding over 400 people. The Theosophical Order of Service was started in Adelaide in 1908, the Theosophical Literary Society gave public concerts and Mr H.G. Oliphant (father of Marcus Oliphant, a scientist and Governor of South Australia) became the third President of the Lodge. 1961 saw the commencement of the current newsletter "*The Voice*".

In 1908 the first premises were purchased at Angas Street and in 1914 moved to King William Street for 82 years. In 1996 the Lodge moved to its current premises at 309-310 South Terrace.

The Lodge opened its current bookshop in 1968 – the first metaphysical bookshop in South Australia and is open to the public 7 days a week. It also offers a library open to the public with a reference only collection and an online book store along with an active monthly programme of events.

## Blavatsky Lodge Chartered 22 May 1922

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From the Campbell Library Archives

Next year, Blavatsky Lodge will celebrate its centenary. Its birth emerged from a schism that had developed in the old Sydney Lodge, which had been established in 1891. Like most of these events, the reasons were complex and opaque. One major reason was a disagreement between some of the members related to the influence of the Liberal Catholic Church in the Theosophical Society (TS). Annie Besant, who was visiting Australia when the crisis came to a head, mediated between the two factions and a new branch, Blavatsky Lodge, was chartered in 1922. Some of the members of the Sydney Lodge continued to agitate and, eventually, were expelled from the TS. Gradually, the Sydney Lodge, which had a large membership, dwindled and was supplanted by the new branch.

Out of this unfortunate situation came a Lodge, which went on to play a vital role in the life of the TS in Sydney. During the halcyon days in the 20s and 30s, the growth in its membership was substantial. This was buoyed by the presence of several prominent people who lived and worked in Sydney. C.W. Leadbeater, who had been at the centre of the controversy, was pivotal in helping to establish The Manor at Mosman, which became a thriving community of Theosophists and an important spiritual centre. It was here that one of Australia's first radio stations, 2GB, was established. Although its licence was sold in 1936, broadcasts of Theosophical programs continued until 1976 which was largely undertaken

by dedicated members of Blavatsky Lodge, such as Gladys McCarthy.

Numerous luminaries of the TS lectured on the platform of Blavatsky Lodge. The founding members listed on the Lodge's charter contains the names of many famous individuals, such as J. Krishnamurti and his brother Nityananda, Dorothy Jinarajadasa, and Karel van Gelder. Karel's daughter, Dora married Fritz Kunz who was also a frequent speaker at Blavatsky Lodge. Dora Kunz would go onto become President of the TS in America and a noted clairvoyant and healer.

Before long, a new building had been opened in Bligh Street in Sydney's CBD. The building was well known to most Sydney-siders as it housed the Savoy Theatre. In 1925 the Adyar Hall was hosting events with audiences of 500 or more attending to hear speakers, such as Josephine Ransom, Prof. Ernest Wood and Dr van der Leeuw. A book depot was established, which later evolved into one of the largest and most well-known specialist booksellers in Australia, the Adyar Bookshop.

Unfortunately, the bookshop eventually went the way of many city booksellers and closed its doors. Despite a decline in membership, Blavatsky Lodge, now located in St Leonards, continues to operate as a focus of Theosophy in Sydney, offering numerous talks, workshops and study groups. Its large library is undergoing a renaissance and continues to provide a wonderful resource for members and visitors.



[FOUNDED AT NEW YORK 17<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 1875.]

# The Theosophical Society AND UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD.

To all to whom these presents may come,

## Greeting

Know Ye, that it being expedient that a Lodge of our said Society shall be established at Sydney, in the State of New South Wales, and an application having been made to that effect and approved, Now Therefore I, the undersigned President, for and on behalf of the General Council and by virtue of the authority of the Society do hereby give to J. Mackay - L. W. Bart - K. V. Gelder - W. Harding - L. M. Capper - J. Fletcher - A. W. G. W. G. Chappel - A. K. Davidson - O. Kollerstrom - A. J. Jenkins - E. Menewether - J. Putjananda - E. Hunt - H. F. Hoall - J. Krishnamurti - D. Jinarijadasa - G. Kollerstrom and their associates full power to organize a Lodge of the Theosophical Society at the aforesaid place, the same to be known as

## The Blavatsky Lodge

and to be subject to the jurisdiction of the Parent Society.

In Testimony whereof I have signed these presents with my name, and affixed the Society's Seal at Adyar this 22nd day of May in the year 1922 and of the Society's foundation the 47th

Countersigned.

J. D. S. Bean



Curie Besant

Secretary.

President.

Curie Besant P.T.S.

22/5/22



## Brisbane Lodge Chartered 1880

Various contributors



The gracious and serviceable home we have now for the Brisbane TS, Besant House, is due to the efforts and generosity of earlier members. The building began life as a pair of semi-detached workers cottages built in 1864. In 1910 they were bought by the Dods family, and extensions to provide Dr Espie Dods and his family with a home and medical rooms were made by Robin Dods, who was a highly-regarded architect in Brisbane.

Besant House was purchased by the BTS in 1925, and planning for the renovation work started in 1986. A hardworking building committee, convened by Edna Jenks, spent many hours working with a 'hierarchy of specialists on site for twelve months' in order to restore the building to its historic beauty in every detail. The architect stated ..... *This is also the rare case where an important building is owned by altruistic people with the capacity to conserve it for the community.* Besant House was Heritage listed in 1994. It was through a legacy from the estate of Matthew Reid, a former Queensland Senator (1917 – 1935) and long time TS worker, that the renovation was made possible. Matthew Reid joined the TS in 1908. He ran a study class, gave public lectures on Theosophy and provided Annie Besant with material on the Australian Constitution, which she used in framing her Commonwealth of India Bill. In 1919 he was, like

many theosophists at that time, also a member of the Liberal Catholic Church.

The flyleaf of the newly established book, *The Liturgy*, was made out to Matthew Reid and signed by C.W. Leadbeater and J. Wedgwood.

Edna Jenks was an indefatigable worker for the TS. In addition to organising the restoration of Besant House, she was instrumental in the building of the accommodation blocks at the Springbrook Education and Retreat Centre at Springbrook. In her early days she helped found the Brisbane branch of the Vegetarian Society, and oversaw the running of a stately Brisbane property, 'Hanworth', which was then a home for elderly women. She also ran study groups at the BTS.



Matthew Reid

Edna Jenks

*(This article was the group effort of Patricia Ossenberg, Phillipa Rooke and Geoff Dargie)*

## Hobart Branch Chartered 7 June 1889

From the Campbell Library Archives

The Hobart Lodge of the Theosophical Society was established in 1889 by author William Henry Dawson, John Beattie, a well-known colonial landscape photographer and Tasmanian historian and Edward Ivey, a political reformer and first President of the Hobart Lodge. Its Charter was issued by the President-Founder of the Theosophical Society, Henry. S. Olcott. Other early members included Henry Gill, parliamentarian and newspaper proprietor, R. Chick, a compositor perhaps for Gill's newspaper, L. Susman and J. Benjamin, both businessmen. In 1893 the first female joined the Society, Miss Octavia Susman, who was an active public figure especially in the National Council of Women. In the 1950's another female notable member was Beatrice Mackenzie who was an Education Reformer and Editor of the Tasmanian Education magazine.

Some points of historical interest include an article published in the Mercury Newspaper, as early as 1905, on a meeting held at the Lodge on the then little known topic of reincarnation. Of more contemporary relevance, and evidence of early humanitarian work, is a letter to Parliament in 1943, by the Lodge President, requesting the Federal Government to provide assistance to

European refugees escaping to England from the Nazi onslaught at the "rate of 800 a month".

The Lodge has been visited by many Theosophical dignitaries such as former International Presidents C. Jinarajadasa (in 1951), John Coats, and General Secretary Jack Bean who became President of the Lodge when he settled at Sandy Bay in the 1950's and used his home for meetings until permanent premises were established.

The Society originally operated out of various rented premises until 1994 when it established its present headquarters at 13 Goulburn Street. This building also houses an extensive library of theosophical, religious and philosophical books and publications. The official name was eventually changed to the Hobart Branch which currently offers free, informal discussion groups and talks for members and the general public on Monday evenings and hosts a guest speaker every month.

### *Sources*

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Hobart Founders with photos of Henry Steele Olcott and H.P.B.

## Launceston Lodge Chartered 12 January 1901

From the Campbell Library Archives

The Launceston Lodge was chartered in January 1901 and occupied 54 Elizabeth Street, which was one of the oldest buildings in the city. Smaller unchartered groups have operated periodically, such as the Devonport group. The Lodge nearly closed its doors in 1947 but managed to continue on and membership increased to 31 by 1960 when its meetings were conducted fortnightly, usually with tape recordings supplied by National Headquarters and the occasional guest speaker.

The first all-day seminar was organised in 1969 held at the historical Grange College with guest speakers Geoffrey and Sandra Hodson discussing “The Sublime Purposes for Human Existence”. Highlights for Launceston Lodge more recently were the National Convention held at the Australian Maritime College in the late 1990s and annual, live-in weekend seminars with Hobart Branch members since 2014.

At the last seminar held in May 2019 International President, Tim Boyd presented “The Challenges of Living in Today’s World”. Since the sale of



the Lodge building in 2017, the Lodge has been struggling with declining membership, but is still managing to meet twice per month. With a few dedicated workers, our hope is to gradually rebuild an active Theosophical centre in Launceston, once again.



## Melbourne Lodge Chartered 9 December 1890

Edward Sinclair

### The Melbourne Lodge – A Tale of Three Abodes

#### Collins Street

The Theosophical group in Melbourne first began in a building in Flinders Street and then in 1918 moved to a single-storey building called Queen’s Hall on Collins Street which was purchased in 1916 for 16,000 pounds — 1,000 of which was kindly donated by Sir Henry Hodges. This was then demolished and the impressive five-storey Theosophical Society Building was erected in 1936-37 on the original site. This building was later purchased (after many heated battles to save it), by the Melbourne City Council for \$1.9 million to develop its City Square. The City Square was never developed in that area of Melbourne, and the building stood vacant for 30 years, until it was finally renovated into apartments with an upmarket shop on the ground floor. Many rumours/stories regarding the circumstances surrounding the loss of the building circulated, and its loss was lamented for many years by some of the Melbourne TS members.

The building was awarded an “A” rating in 1985 by the Graeme Butler’s C.A.D. Conservation Study for its architectural

and historical importance, which saved the building from demolition. Its exterior is heritage listed and untouched for all to see on Melbourne’s premier Collins Street, with the TS Logo and Egyptian detail with



its tripartite façade linking Theosophical teachings to its ancient origins such as the temples of Luxor in Egypt.

### Russell Street

The Melbourne Theosophical Society (MTS) purchased a new building in 1972, which was located at 126-128 Russell Street in Melbourne CBD. The MTS again disseminated Theosophy from this location for another 47 years until 2019, during which time, the bookshop became a well-known and successful business. The lodge and library touched the lives of many people by holding presentations every Sunday afternoon and Tuesday evenings, with many activities throughout the week for most of this period.



### Flinders Lane

Due to the changing dynamics of Melbourne CBD, the lodge decided to find a more suitable premises for the times. The MTS Trustee scoured the Melbourne CBD for over one year to find an appropriate building. Finally, the Trustees decided to buy into part of a building. Consequently, the Russell Street building was sold and the new premises, Manchester House, at 234 Flinders Lane was purchased to house the lodge, library and bookshop on level 1. The ground floor shop and the whole of level 2 can be leased out to bring the lodge a useful, ongoing income. The renovations required were caught up in 2020 with the Covid-19 restrictions in Melbourne, and the lodge finally moved into the completed premises in March 2021. The challenge now is to blend the old and new emerging ways, into a living Theosophy and move confidently into the 21st Century.



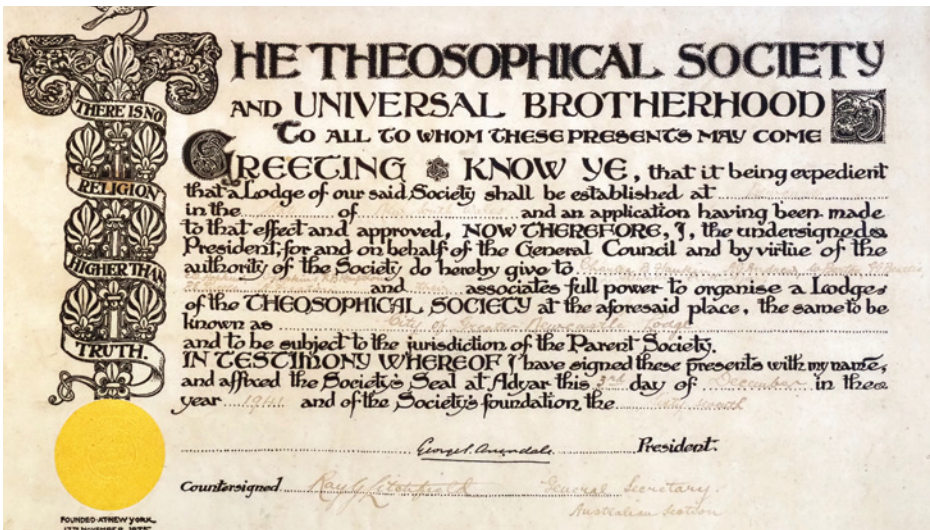
## Newcastle Lodge Chartered 3 December 1941

From the Campbell Library Archives



Newcastle Lodge was founded during the war years when that city was a hive of activity and of great importance in the war effort for steel manufacture and coal production. The Lodge was founded in 1941 by Charles Hankin (father of well-known Blavatsky Lodge member, Norman Hankin), who worked tirelessly for the Society in Sydney, Melbourne and Newcastle from 1927. Other active founding members were Mrs Jennie Hopkins, Mr Charles Hopkins, Mr Wally Barton and Pearl Lyttle. The Lyttle family – Reg (Pearl's son) together with his wife Peggy were members from

1957 and their four children were raised under Theosophical guidelines and also became members of the Lodge. Mrs Joy McKenzie joined the Lodge in 1972 and became an active member until her death in 1985. Monthly meetings were conducted from the W.E.A. in Cooks Hill for many years. Until her death recently, Dianne Kynaston was a mainstay of the group for many years, looking after much of the administration and programming. Her dedicated input is greatly missed by our members. Currently monthly talks are held in Mayfield, a suburb of Newcastle City.



## Perth Lodge Chartered 10 June 1897

Excerpts from a brief history of the Perth Lodge 1897-1976 (compiled by Clare and Keith Thompson)

The gold rush attracted many people to Perth and among them were the Lodge founders, Mr & Mrs Patterson. Together, they drew many people to theosophy and on 10th June 1897 the Perth Lodge charter was signed. One of their youngest applicants was D.B. Ewart who was too young to join at that time but came of age in 1889. He became a lifetime member of the Lodge, and eventually a bishop of the Liberal Catholic Church. The Lodge was very active with weekly classes and public talks held in the Mechanics (later Literary) Institute and a book depot became the foundations for the later bookshop and library.

In 1905 Miss Florence Fuller sublet her rooms in West Australia Chambers, St Georges Tc. (now Terrace Arcade) for 5 shillings per week and in 1907 the Lodge took over the tenancy. In 1909 the Lotus Circle was started for children. This grew into the Order of the Round Table, which continued to run for many years. By 1909 the membership of the Lodge was 54, with meetings being held six days per week. In 1910 Mr Stanway Tapp and his wife Gertrude became members. Gertrude



Arundale Hall, Perth Lodge

worked in the Women's Service Guild, which campaigned for the improved status and welfare of women and children nationally, and with other overseas organisations. Mr Tapp was a talented artist and an illustrator for *The West Australian* newspaper, an outstanding lecturer and original thinker. He was very popular and became President of the Lodge for many years until his death in 1950. Many other well-known and influential people were members of Perth Lodge, such as Mrs Muriel Chase who started the Silver Chain Movement, Mrs Joyner who started the Little Citizens League, Edith Cowan who became the first member of Parliament in Australia and whose face is on the Australian \$50



note. The lodge and its members had a sizeable impact on the community and public works including the beginnings of the King Edward Memorial Hospital. By 1911 many Theosophical dignitaries came to Perth to speak, such as C.W. Leadbeater, C. Jinarajadasa, Dr. Arundale and N. Sri Ram.

The Lodge made many attempts to find a permanent home, but due to WWI this was not possible. In 1919 they rented premises above a shop on the corner of Lake and James Streets and then moved to 192 St Georges Terrace. Numbers 188 and 190 were owned by a group of theosophists consisting of Miss Clare Nicholas, Mr Chas Wicks (later Bishop Wicks of Adelaide), and Reg and Alf Bennet, who later formed the 2GB radio broadcasting station in Sydney. Interestingly, “GB” stood for Giordano Bruno, who was said to have been a previous incarnation of Annie Besant who also came to visit the Lodge in 1908. By 1924 the members managed to buy out the ownership of 192, which was very old and run down. In 1927 that building was sold and land was purchased at the corner of James and Museum streets to build a new Lodge. By 1929 the newly built Perth Lodge was officially opened. During this time the Lodge’s first magazine the “Beacon” was started, which was the forerunner of the present “Link” magazine.

Between 1930 and 1954 the Lodge had its ups and downs with diminished finances and membership due to the impact of WWII and the Great Depression; at one point in 1931 there was only 4 pounds in

the bank account! In 1941 the government demanded to rent the lodge building for military officers which ended in 1943, but the government retained the building for other uses until 1954. During this exiled period the TS members operated out of St. Georges Terrace again. In 1956 the Annual Convention was held in Perth for the first time. It was attended by 104 members at the Arundale Hall with the theme being “Shaping the Future of Australia”.

From 1966 to 1968 the President, Keith Thompson made considerable improvements to the Lodge with Arundale Hall becoming the Lodge room and upgrades being made to the bookshop and library. Phil Harris, Lodge President from 1972 to 1973, also made considerable improvements, especially to the library. In 1972 Lal White and Margaret Brown became the first salaried part-time staff to be employed to run the book shop and library. At that time, the government advised they intended to resume the Lodge properties in James and Museum Streets to develop a Cultural Centre and, once again, the committee had to search for new premises. They eventually found some land in Glendower Street which was purchased and became the beautiful home of the current Perth Lodge (now called Perth Branch). In 1972, under the leadership of Phil Harris, the lodge also purchased a nine-hectare piece of land at Mt Helena, some 43 kms west of Perth, to develop a retreat centre which is now known as the Mt Helena Retreat Centre of Theosophy.



## Sunshine Coast Lodge Chartered 14 October 2003

Jean Carroll

### Greetings from Australia's newest lodge - Sunshine Coast Lodge

We were chartered as a lodge on the 14th of October in 2003. Looking back on our short history, it would appear that like many other groups we have been through a cycle within a cycle. Whilst we do not have as many younger individuals or as many people filling our hall like earlier days, our lodge continues building a strong core of committed members focusing on two levels of study to build a nucleus of universal brotherhood.

We were fortunate in our earlier days to have Michael & Falu Eyre as role models. Michael's business skills and energy brought us from a certified group to a lodge. Falu inspired us to live Theosophy, encouraging us all to study and play together to build a compassionate and strong base for our new lodge. At this historical milestone it is with gratitude that we acknowledge them and also many others in our lodge that have followed their example of living a life of altruism.

Looking to the future - this year we have introduced a different strategy for attracting new people. Once a month we hold a day-time meeting on a Sunday in

two different locations on the coast. This is something quite new and there are encouraging signs that we may be on the right path. Some folks that once upon a time were members are coming along reconnecting with these noble teachings.



A Sunshine Coast Lodge Meeting

## Blue Mountains Group Certified 13 May 1997

From the Campbell Library Archives



Image by Wallula from Pixabay

The Blue Mountains Group began in May 1961 as a discussion group held at various homes facilitated by the then General Secretary in Australia and international speaker, Helen V. Zahara. The meetings were on such topics as the Three Objects, the significance of the world crisis and “The Common Sense of Theosophy”. At that time there were 15 members. In October 1961 Helen gave the first public talk on Reincarnation – Fact or Fanc y held at the R.S.L. Hall in Lawson.

The group was formally inaugurated in April 1985 by Markita Honinger of Wentworth Falls and Dianne Kynaston (then General Secretary) with Peter Berthon being elected Chairman. This meeting took place in the home of Elliston Campbell – a T.S. member since 1914. Elliston contributed a wonderful short comment at the April 1988 meeting on “Meditation and the Personality” about the personal efforts and spiritual progress of his wife Phyllis who “followed the mode of meditation of the great mystics: self-purification, concentration, meditation, contemplation, spiritual communion”. He commented how Phyllis would review incidents in her daily living since her previous meditation and would always strive to find ways to improve how kindly she could have treated people with subsequent improvement in her character. “Character being an aspect of the soul”. He recorded a poem written by Phyllis indicating her spiritual “breakthrough” through her constant, ongoing personal efforts:

Seek not His gifts, the more to be  
Made one with Him who gives to thee;  
No gift can fill the heart as He.

And when no light illumines prayer,  
Then through the darkness grope and dare  
Unseeingl y to find Him there.

Elliston was prominent as a social activist being involved with the Theosophical Order of Service (TOS) in England during World War I when he worked as an Australian Government Munition Worker, and assisted Arthur Burgess, the head of the TOS in the U.K. The Campbell Theosophical Research Library and Archive was established as the result of the 1992 bequest from Elliston Campbell for a Research and Reference Library. When Elliston died in 1990 in his 100th year, his home was sold and the group moved to the Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade H.Q. at which time Ray James became Chairman, followed by Jennie Rogers in 1992. In 1994 the group moved to the Red Cross Centre in Springbrook. Members travelled from as far as Bathurst and Penrith to attend ongoing monthly meetings as well as special occasions which were held at Jennie Roger’s home in Winmalee.

Under the guidance of members such as Jessica Gemmell, The Blue Mountains group continues to meet every Monday 2-4 pm at the Blue Mountains Cultural Centre, 30 Parke Street, Katoomba.

## Canberra Group Certified 16 November 2019

Janice Scarrabotolo



In 1927 Canberra was a fledgling city, with a population of under 6,000 and many skilled engineers employed by the Federal Capital Commission in the construction of the city. One of those engineers was Clive Sands, who, together with his wife Sylvia Sands, and John Ambrose McDowell, started a TS study group in his home.

In April 1927 they wrote to the General Secretary of the TS in Sydney requesting “to be regarded and registered as a Centre of the Australian Section in Canberra Federal Capital Territory”. A reply from the General Secretary acknowledged the important steps taken in laying the seeds of theosophy in Canberra but no further action was taken.

A second letter from Mr Sands requesting that a submission be made to have a TS building in Canberra was also unsuccessful. Notwithstanding, the unofficial Centre appears to have gained sufficient formal recognition to be mentioned in the General Report presented at the 52nd Anniversary and Convention in Adyar in December 1927, indicating ... “a new Centre has been formed at Canberra, the Federal Capital of Australia, which promises to be an important influence in the future.”

By 1930 Mr and Mrs Sands had left Canberra to live in Sydney and no

information on theosophical events appears until 1965 when Victor Gostin arrived in Canberra to take up a PhD scholarship. By mid-1965 Victor had made contact with interested persons and organised regular meetings in the Friends’ Meeting House. David and Joyce Wilson (parents of Linda Oliveira) moved from Melbourne to Canberra in 1967 and joined the small group, drumming up support and enthusiasm to keep it going – and applying for permission to form a Lodge. This was granted and the Canberra Theosophical Society was constituted on 17 July 1971. The inaugural meeting at the Friends’ Meeting House was held in October 1971 when the Charter was presented by James Perkins, International Vice-President, to David Wilson, the President of the newly formed Lodge. Among the ten original members at the granting of the Charter, was Peter Fokker who is still a member of Canberra TS. In attendance was Ruth Beringer, General Secretary of the Australian Section, and an audience of about 40 including ten members from Blavatsky Lodge.

Unfortunately we no longer have a Lodge/Branch in the nation’s capital. The Canberra group, however, meets regularly at the Friend’s Meeting House.

## Northern Beaches Group Certified 2 April 1996

Nila Chambers

The Theosophical Society has had a presence on Sydney's northern beaches since the early 1900's when a study group was held at Mrs Furner's home in Manly. Mrs Millar, a member of this group then held her own study group from 1922-1927. In August 1927, about 25 people met to discuss the formation of a formal TS lodge. The group was granted a charter as Warringah Lodge on Oct 1st 1927. Meetings were held at the Literary Institute in Manly, three times a week. Quarterly dues were two shillings and nine pence. A separate study group was chartered at Harbord in 1933 and it met initially in the house of Mrs. Garrard with Earnest Hanson as Secretary. Over the next 19 years Warringah Lodge met in various locations including private homes and public halls. World War II disrupted the Warringah Lodge and it was disbanded in 1946, after the war ended.

Sporadic activity continued on the northern beaches after that time including in the short-lived Olcott Lodge, which eventually moved to the Northern Rivers of NSW. The group was attended by members, such as Mina Bhatra Singh, Patricia Witts, the Theosophical artist, Rona Scott, and former TS Australia General Secretary, Dianne Kynaston, among others. Philip and

Wilma Grier started an informal group in the 1990's which met in Mosman. After the Griers moved to Queensland, Diane Kynaston continued to facilitate and develop the small group, which was officially certified as the Sydney Northern Beaches group in 1996. Dianne worked tirelessly as its facilitator for 23 years. The group met in private homes in Manly Vale, Balgowlah and Terry Hills. Nila Chambers took over as host in 2017 and was appointed Coordinator in 2019. The group (currently around 14-15 regulars) now meets monthly in Avalon.

### **The Rona Scott Gallery No. 28**

(A Poetic Interpretation based on Stanza 5 of *The Stanzas of Dzyan* by H.P. Blavatsky)

*The SEEN and unseen cosmic energies,  
Now aggregates the elemental atoms  
Into their fiery whirlpools, thus conveying  
The primary impulse to coagulate  
Into the shining spheres and wheeling orbs  
Whose inward harmony projects itself  
In ordered sequence round a paternal sun.*



## **EXPRESSION OF INTEREST - POSITION OF NATIONAL SECRETARY**

We are looking for someone to fill the position of National Secretary when it becomes vacant. This is a National Council appointment which will be advertised in *Theosophy in Australia* when it does become vacant. Meanwhile, if you think you would be interested, and if you think you have the relevant skills and knowledge then now might be the time to let us know.

The duties of the National Secretary are outlined in the Rules of The TS in Australia. These include, but are not restricted to, the following:

- To take charge of the administrative functions of the national headquarters;
- To supervise the work of the staff of the national headquarters and payment of wages;
- Supervision of accounts and bookkeeping;
- To prepare agendas and take minutes for the various governing bodies/management committees of the National Society;
- Conduct elections in accordance with the Rules of the Society;
- To obtain legal advice on behalf of the National Society and liaise with the Section's lawyers as and when required;
- Draft an annual budget;
- Review legislation and governance requirements applicable to The Theosophical Society in Australia;
- Renew insurance policies in consultation with the National Treasurer, and manage claims on behalf of the TS in Australia and its Lodges/Branches and Groups;
- Ensure compliance with the Rules of the Theosophical Society and be responsible for all statutory obligations.

### **Selection Criteria:**

- The National Secretary must have been a member of the Theosophical Society in Good standing for the last five years at the time of his or her appointment and must reside within commuting distance of the national headquarters (there is scope for some limited discretion by the National Council related to the minimum years of good standing);
- Proficiency in Microsoft office and MYOB;
- Good communication skills;
- Flexibility and adaptability;
- Good analytical, critical thinking and problem solving ability;
- Qualifications and/or prior experience in business administration is desirable.

Any suitable member may apply for this position when it becomes vacant. However, for various operational reasons, and due to the fact that it is in the Rules of the Association, an applicant would need to be a resident of NSW or be prepared to move to NSW.

If you think you might fit the bill and be interested let us know. The office of National Secretary is a great way to serve the TS in a position of considerable responsibility and variety. In responding to this EOI you could be offered immediate part-time work, in which case you would be gaining experience related to the work of the National Secretary. For further information or to discuss options, please email [natsec@theosophicalsociety.org.au](mailto:natsec@theosophicalsociety.org.au)



## **Call for Nominations - State Representatives**

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In accordance with Rules 19(1)(c) and 21, the current terms of office of the State Representatives for Queensland (Barry Bowden), Tasmania (Helen Steven), and South Australia/NT (Gaynor Fraser) will expire at the appointment of new State Representatives towards the end of 2021. Accordingly, nominations are invited for the election of one State Representative for each of the named states. All sitting State Representatives are eligible for re-election this year as none have yet served three consecutive terms.

Nominations may be made by a Lodge/Branch in the relevant Electoral State, or by any two Members resident in the relevant Electoral State who have been Members in Good Standing for the two years immediately prior to the nomination. To be eligible for election as State Representative, the candidate must be resident in the Electoral State, must have been a Member in Good Standing for the last three years, and have served for at least one year on the Executive Committee of a Lodge (Branch) by the time of the election.

The State Representative elected in each State will represent the Lodges (Branches), Groups and Members in that 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.

A photograph of the candidate, curriculum vitae, relevant biographical data, and a personal statement by the candidate, which may, for purposes of distribution, be edited in consultation with the candidate, must accompany all nominations. All nominations should be on Form 8, endorsed with the consent of the Nominee, and reach the National Secretary no later than 5 pm (AEST) on Friday 6 August.

Joining the National Council is a great way of learning about the Theosophical Society from a perspective not necessarily afforded at Lodge (Branch) committee level, which can benefit all our Lodges/Branches.

Copies of Form 8 may be obtained from the National Secretary.

## VACANCY – POSITION OF EDUCATION COORDINATOR

The National Council is looking for someone to fill the position of Education Coordinator. Applications are sought from members who have the relevant knowledge of Theosophy and the Theosophical Society, and preferably, the relevant skills and knowledge in education. The duties of the Education Coordinator are outlined in the Rules of the TS in Australia. These include, but are not restricted to the following.

- Responsibility for ensuring that appropriate study and training courses are made available and offered to Lodges (Branches) and National Members. This responsibility shall include development, procurement, assessment, updating, production, marketing and supply of such courses;
- Assisting the National President with the annual convention and other educational and promotional events;
- Reporting to the National Council and the national Executive for each of their regular meetings.

### Selection Criteria

- The Education Coordinator must have been a member of the Theosophical Society in Good Standing for the last three years at the time of his or her appointment;
- You must have a reasonable degree of computer literacy such as would be expected of most employees in Australia;
- Very good communication skills, as well as flexibility and adaptability;
- Ability to work in a team environment, especially as part of the Education and Training committee;
- Prior experience in teaching or academic work is desirable, and/or relevant studies in learning and teaching, which would enable the applicant to be in a strong position to develop courses and other content for the TS in Australia.

Any eligible member may apply for this position. However, for various operational reasons, it is desirable (though not necessarily essential) that the Education Coordinator lives within commuting distance of the national headquarters or is prepared to move to this location.

The application, including relevant biodata, your CV, a sample or samples of your work, and a statement addressing the selection criteria should be sent to [natsec@theosophicalsociety.org.au](mailto:natsec@theosophicalsociety.org.au) and must reach the National Secretary by 5 pm (AEST) on Monday 9 August 2021. Please feel free to email the National Secretary with any questions before submitting your application. Applicants will be interviewed by a panel selected by the National Council.

## National Calendar of Events



St Catherine's On Park

### 2022 NATIONAL CONVENTION THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN AUSTRALIA - FOR TS MEMBERS

Dates: Tues 18 – Tues 25 January 2022

Venue: St. Catherine's On Park,  
2 Park Road, Crawley,

Theme: 'The Vision and The Way'

Public Lecture: Andrew Milne, (Philosophy, University  
of Western Australia), "Nietzsche as Egoist and Mystic"



#### Accommodation and Meals for Seven Nights:

Single Room (Standing Fan/Shared Bathroom) \$763

Student Studio Room One Person (Ceiling Fan & Air Conditioning/ Ensuite Bathroom)  
\$1,043

Student Studio Room Two Persons (Double Bed/Ceiling Fan & Air Conditioning/  
Ensuite Bathroom) \$1,358

**Registration fee:** \$20 if received by Friday 27 August 2021

Registration fee after 27 August: \$40

**Registration Deadline:** For live-in registrants Friday 15 October 2021

**Registration Form:** Available online at <https://theosophicalsociety.org.au/> or by contacting the Convention Secretary at [catalogue@theosophicalsociety.org.au](mailto:catalogue@theosophicalsociety.org.au)

**Full Payment Deadline:** If registrations are low we may not be able to proceed with this event, therefore we are obliged to request payment in full by Friday 19 November. This will enable the organisers to determine whether or not to cancel in time to obtain a refund from the College.

We trust that you understand the difficulties of arranging events under the present circumstances.

**Covid-19:** Unfortunately, the TS in Australia cannot take responsibility for expenses incurred due to any Covid-19 complications you might experience in relation to your attendance or planned attendance at this event. Please check with your insurer regarding the terms of your travel cover.

Fees paid to the TS for accommodation and meals will be refunded in the event that either the TS or the College cancels the event

**We hope to see you in Perth after far too long an absence.**

## Theosophical Order of Service

*A Union of those who Love  
- in the Service of All that suffers.*



Theosophical Order of Service

### The TOS Australia - May 2021 Update -Project Reports:

TOS Italy - has indicated that the support for the Bab Al Salam camp clinic is still continuing but difficult. Any support we can provide is still needed.

TOS Pakistan –the Pakistan home schools are ongoing and sponsored student visit reports are being regularly received.

TOS India – the support is ongoing in very difficult times.

Golden Link College – continues its great work with online innovations in conjunction with the school development program.



### Local Australian News:

A TOS Aust. AGM Report will be circulated for local discussion and an email Q &A before voting on accepting the report. This is currently in process so you may be hearing from your local coordinators about this soon.

Vale – last December we lost the services of Geoff Harrod on the earth plane as TOS National Secretary and then in May, Henny Fokker (TOS Canberra member) also passed on to higher service. Both were long time members of the society and great assets to their local communities. Their wonderful presence will be missed by many.

With Geoff's passing a new National Secretary for the TOS was sought. A volunteer was found in Queensland. "Min Chen" has been a member of the Brisbane TS for several years and is also the secretary for TOS Brisbane. Welcome Min.

A New IT Coordinator is required. Volunteers are welcome.

Donations have been sparse this year, but will still be required to support the National Projects. Please be creative in your options to fund raise and forward the monies to Dianne our National TOS Treasurer. We will be dispersing funds in August.

Loving best wishes to ALL. Be Safe, Be Well, Be HAPPY.

Cheers, George Wester

National Coordinator

Email: [tos.australia@gmail.com](mailto:tos.australia@gmail.com)



## New and Notes



### Opening of a New Premises for Melbourne Lodge

On 8 May 2021, White Lotus Day, the National Secretary, Dara Tatray and I had the pleasure of speaking at the opening of the new premises of Melbourne Lodge. After almost 50 years at their Russell Street building, the centre for T S activity in Melbourne has moved to 234 Flinders Lane.

On ascending one flight of stairs, the new TS bookshop opens on the left of the corridor (pictured above). After passing through an automatic door, the vestibule opens to a wide, welcoming space with high ceilings and a warm ambience. The library has a comfortable and cosy feel to it, yet there is ample space to read and relax. Along the corridor is a good-sized auditorium where I gave a talk entitled *The White Lotus and the Life of a Lodge*, discussing the significance of a Lodge in the Theosophical Society by using the symbolism of the lotus as an analogy. Dara Tatray then gave a short presentation entitled *The Buddhism and Brahmanism of H.P. Blavatsky* in which she explored the transcendent unity of Buddhism and

Vedānta, as understood by H.P. Blavatsky and her teachers. After our talks, members of Melbourne Lodge gave readings from *The Bhagavad-gītā*, *The Light of Asia* and *The Voice of the Silence*, as is traditional on White Lotus Day.

The auditorium was packed with members and guests and more chairs had to be found as people arrived. After the proceedings, Dara and I presented Melbourne Lodge with a framed copy of images of two exquisite paintings by Clarice Beckett entitled *Bathing Boxes, Brighton* and *Luna Park, St Kilda*. Beckett was greatly influenced by theosophical thought in the early 20th century and had painted many scenes of life around Melbourne and Victoria. The afternoon was concluded with a high tea and a festive atmosphere. After a long and profound lockdown in Victoria in response to the Covid crisis, Melbourne Lodge is emerging with a bright new face and a promising future ahead.

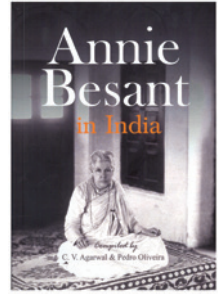
Stephen McDonald



## Review

### Annie Besant in India

by C.V. Agarwal & Pedro Oliveira,  
Olive Tree Publishing, 2021



Whenever I travelled around India and mentioned the Theosophical Society, I would mostly get a blank stare. I would then mention the name of Annie Besant and the light would go on immediately. Her impact on India and the course of Indian history was taught to every school child. Her name was on street signs in numerous towns and cities throughout the country. The production of a book about her life in India is a welcome contribution to the historical record for the Theosophical Society and for the people of India.

This volume includes a wealth of information in the form of documents and historical accounts about the prolific effect that Besant had throughout the world, especially in India. The project of compiling this book was started at the request of J. Krishnamurti, who suggested the idea to Radha Burnier. Mrs Burnier was always too busy to take up the work and requested C.V. Agarwal to commence the task of researching materials for the book, which he did before he passed away in 2009. Pedro Oliveira then offered to use the materials and prepare a manuscript in his spare time, which Mrs Burnier agreed to. He consulted with her on a number of occasions about the contents of the book until she passed away in 2013. Subsequently, whenever he had time, Pedro continued to complete the work until it was ready for publication.

At almost 600 pages, the book feels more like several books under one cover. Many of the chapters are self-contained and the reader could feel satisfied by selecting any one that takes their interest. When I first

picked up the book, I expected it to be a tome mostly about Indian politics. While the later part of the book does document Besant's important involvement in the Indian independence movement, a large part describes her work in the Theosophical Society throughout the world after becoming International President. Especially interesting (and sometimes amusing), were reading her accounts of travelling in Australia and her appreciation, both good and bad, of the Australian character. Needless to say, her comments about a "white Australia" were full of ridicule and contempt (p.188).

After being recognised for her plan for India's renaissance, Mrs Besant was elected as President of the Indian National Congress in 1917. Although she later fell out with Gandhi and others in the independence movement, largely because of her disagreement of using civil disobedience as a means to political reform, she was certainly revered by those whose lives she touched. When Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first Prime Minister, met her as a boy, he described how he was awestruck: "her personality, the legends that already surrounded her heroic career, and her oratory overwhelmed me." (p.459).

Apart from some missing words and typos (which I am sure will be edited out on its reprint), this book is a well-crafted tribute to a Theosophist and one of the great figures in world history. If you wish to obtain a copy, please email [tshq@theosophicalociety.org.au](mailto:tshq@theosophicalociety.org.au)

Stephen McDonald

## Section Directory

It is advisable to check in advance to confirm resumption of meetings.

### Australian Section National Headquarters

Level 2, 162 Goulburn Street,  
Surry Hills NSW 2010  
Ph: 02 9264 7056 / 9264 6404  
Fax: 02 9264 5857  
Email: [tshq@theosophicalsociety.org.au](mailto:tshq@theosophicalsociety.org.au)  
Web: [theosophicalsociety.org.au](http://theosophicalsociety.org.au)  
Campbell Theosophical Research Library:  
Email: [catalogue@theosophicalsociety.org.au](mailto:catalogue@theosophicalsociety.org.au)  
[www.facebook.com/Austheos/](http://www.facebook.com/Austheos/)

### Australian Capital Territory

*Canberra Group, Certified 16/11/2019*  
Meet: Friends Meeting House, Crn. Bent and  
Condamine Streets, Turner  
2- 4 pm, 3rd Saturday of the month  
Coordinator: Gordon Herbert  
Tel: 0466 464 064  
Email: [canberratheosophicalsociety@gmail.com](mailto:canberratheosophicalsociety@gmail.com)  
Secretary: Barbara Harrod  
Tel: 02 6254 1415

### New South Wales

*Blavatsky Lodge, Chartered 22/5/1922:*  
Postal Address: PO Box 319, St Leonards NSW 1590  
Meet: Suite 8, 599 Pacific Highway, St. Leonards  
NSW 2065 (entrance in Albany Street)  
1.00pm Wednesdays + many others activities (see  
website for full program)  
Telephone: Reception: 02 9267 6955  
Email: [contact@tssydney.org.au](mailto:contact@tssydney.org.au)  
Web: [sydney.theosophicalsociety.org.au/](http://sydney.theosophicalsociety.org.au/)  
President: Rosanna Sheridan  
Secretary: Pamela Peterson

*Newcastle Lodge, Chartered 3/12/1941:*  
Meet: Uniting Church Morrison Room, 29 Highfield  
Street, Mayfield NSW 2304  
7.30pm 2nd Friday of the month  
Please call before attending:  
President: Howard Gregg  
Secretary: Tony Buzek/Tel: 0452 633 132  
Email: [anthonybuzek61@bigpond.com](mailto:anthonybuzek61@bigpond.com)  
Web: [newcastle.theosophicalsociety.org.au/](http://newcastle.theosophicalsociety.org.au/)

*Blue Mountains Group, Certified 13/5/1997:*  
Meet: Members' Lounge, Blue Mountains  
Cultural Centre, 30 Parke Street (above Coles),  
Katoomba NSW 2780  
2.00 - 4.00 pm every Monday  
Acting Coordinator: Jessica Gemmill  
Email: [tsbluemountains@gmail.com](mailto:tsbluemountains@gmail.com)  
Jasmine de Vimes  
Tel: 0415 535 525 (please phone before attending)

### *Gosford Group, Certified 11/11/1997*

Meet: The Narara Community Centre,  
Pandala Road, Narara NSW 2250  
8.00pm 2nd Tuesday of the month  
Coordinator: Vivien Wareing  
Tel: 0487 196 654  
Email: [vivienwareing@hotmail.com](mailto:vivienwareing@hotmail.com)  
Secretary: Roni Ostergaard  
Telephone: 02 4358 1413

### *Northern Beaches Group, Certified 2/4/1996:*

Postal address and meeting address:  
c/- 31 Riviera Street, Avalon NSW 2107  
1.30 pm 1st Saturday of the month  
Please email to confirm meetings  
Coordinator: Nila Chambers  
Email: [nilachambers@bigpond.com](mailto:nilachambers@bigpond.com)

### Queensland

*Brisbane Lodge, Chartered 21/1/1895:*  
355 Wickham Terrace, Brisbane QLD 4000  
Tel: 07 3839 1453  
Email: [brisbanelodge@theosophyqld.org.au](mailto:brisbanelodge@theosophyqld.org.au)  
[brisbane.theosophicalsociety.org.au](http://brisbane.theosophicalsociety.org.au)  
Meet: 7.30 pm Wednesdays, bookshop  
and library open Monday and Friday 10.30 am - 2.30  
pm and Wednesdays 6 - 7.15 pm (see website for other  
events)

President: Michael Morton  
Secretary: Dianne Manning

### *Logan Group, Certified 9/4/2019:*

Meet: Please contact Coordinator for venue  
Monthly 1st Friday 9.30-12 md + 1st Thursday  
5.30-7.30 pm  
Tel: 0418 755 496  
Coordinator: Christine Gwin  
Email: [logantheosophy@gmail.com](mailto:logantheosophy@gmail.com)

*Sunshine Coast Lodge, Chartered 14/10/2003:*

Meet: Buderim Croquet Club,  
 Syd Lingard Drive, Buderim QLD 4556  
 Meetings: 7.00 pm Thursdays except last Sunday of  
 the month at 2 pm there is a guest speaker (various  
 venue)  
 Email: theosophy.sunshinecoast@gmail.com  
 President Joyce Thompson/0417 873 481  
 Secretary: Jean Carroll/0402 805 127

*Toowoomba Group, Certified 10/7/2007:*

Meet: East Creek Community Centre, 43 Kitchener  
 Street, Toowoomba QLD 4350  
 Thursday 6.30 pm once a fortnight.  
 Annual Springbrook retreat each Spring  
 Coordinator: Gayle Thomas  
 Tel: 0438 331 885

**South Australia***Adelaide Lodge, Chartered 26/5/1891:*

310 South Terrace, Adelaide SA 5000  
 Tel: 08 8223 1129  
 Email: president@tsadelaide.org.au  
 Web: adelaide.theosophicalsociety.org.au/  
 Meet: 10.30am 4th Saturday. Science Group 7-9  
 pm every 2nd Thursday. (Please contact Lodge for  
 additional meeting dates.)  
 President: Gaynor Fraser  
 Acting Secretary: Valrae Jays

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

13 Goulburn Street, Hobart TAS 7000  
 Tel. 03 6294 6195 (please leave message)  
 Email: helen\_steven@live.com  
 Web: hobart.theosophicalsociety.org.au/  
 Meet: 7.30pm Mondays  
 President: Helen Steven  
 Secretary: Berry Dunston

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

Meet: Salvation Army, 111 Elizabeth Street,  
 Launceston  
 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month at 1.00pm  
 Postal address: 28 Teggs Road, Gravelly Beach,  
 TAS 7276  
 Email: launcestontheosophicalsociety@gmail.com  
 Web: launceston.theosophicalsociety.org.au/  
 President/Secretary: Ruth Holt  
 Tel: 0418 346 526

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

Meet: 1st Flr., 234 Flinders' Lane,  
 Melbourne VIC 3000  
 Tel: 03 9650 2315 Fax: 03 9650 7624  
 Email: info@melbournetheosophy.org  
 Web: melbourne.theosophicalsociety.org.au/  
 Meetings: every Saturday from 1.30 pm  
 President: Edward Sinclair  
 Secretary: Robert Mullaney

*Mornington Peninsula Group, Certified 8/2/2000:*

Meet: Mount Eliza Neighbourhood House,  
 Canadian Bay Road, 1st Sunday  
 of the month, (12.00pm meditation + library - 1.30pm  
 presenter + questions and comments)  
 Coordinator: Georgina Fode  
 Tel: 0476 516 778  
 Secretary: Elizabeth Ramirez

*Wodonga-Albury Group, Certified 9/7/1996:*

Meet: Shop 6, Tower Place, High Street,  
 Wodonga VIC 3690  
 For talks & library, please contact: Coordinator/  
 Secretary: Denis Kovacs  
 Tel: 02 6024 2905

**Western Australia***Perth Branch, Chartered 10/6/1897:*

21 Glendower Street, Perth WA 6000  
 Tel/Fax: 08 9328 8104  
 Email: tsperth@iinet.net.au  
 Web: tsperth.com.au  
 Meet: 7.30pm Tuesdays  
 Due to Covid please check before attending.  
 President: Tina Hentisz  
 Secretary: Sue Lee

*Mount Helena Retreat Centre:*

1540 Bunning Road, Mt Helena WA 6082  
 All enquiries to Perth Branch  
 Tel: 08 9328 8104

**Theosophical Education and  
 Retreat Centre, Springbrook, QLD**

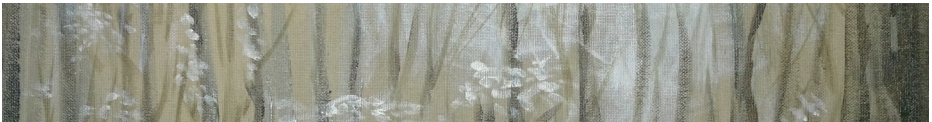
2184 Springbrook Road,  
 Springbrook QLD 4213  
 Tel: Office/Hall 07 5533 5211  
 Email: info@tsretreat.com.au  
 Caretaker: Kay Schiefelbein

## ***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)*



## **The Three Objects of the Theosophical Society**

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

~

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

~

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