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INSIDE We Make Our Own Future Now
Memories of Dr Hugh Shearman
National President's Annual Report
2020 Convention Programme, Melbourne

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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

Linda Oliveira



As is customary, this November issue includes various items of business which all members in Australia need to receive under the Section's Rules, prior to the Convention Business Meeting to be held in January in Melbourne.

The article on the following page reflects on how we shape our future, and was conceived by a respected TS member of seventy-seven years' standing who passed away some years ago. An item by one of our younger members is based on a talk she gave at this year's School of Theosophy. The programme for the January National Convention, which is the major event for the Section each year, promises a very interesting week together. There is still time for members to register and live in at St. Mary's College – see p.141. And among other inclusions, my annual report provides an overview of our numerous activities around the Section.

We are all artists or creators in some way, whether or not we know it. The following article mentions, 'With our thoughts we create our character. With our desires we create our opportunities.

With our actions we create our environment and circumstances.'

The same principle applies to humanity at large. The predominant collective thought patterns, or forms, are fed by numerous people and influence the keynote of humanity during each era. For example, we witness individual and group self-interest, reinforced by social media and the media generally. But fortunately, those very media also highlight many worthwhile causes, providing valuable information and inspiration if we care to look. Therefore, they also must influence collective thought constructively.

It is self-evident that cumulative human actions help to create our wider environment and circumstances; we are responsible, thinking beings. But equally, each of us has something worthwhile to contribute individually – whether through the power of our thoughts, or more tangible actions.

Comments of up to 200 words on items in this magazine are welcome and may be published.

We Make Our Own Future Now

Shirley Macpherson



Photo: Faye Cornish on Unsplash

Psychologically speaking, what we are today we shall be tomorrow – unless we change now. It is no good for me to say ‘I shall be happier tomorrow, I shall be a better person, less selfish’, and so on, if I don’t do something about it now. For everything we are today results from the experiences and knowledge of our yesterdays. We are the past!

In the Eternal Now, there is no time. Although we are living in a manifested world which does have time, there is a reflection of that Eternal Now in the world. If that is so then the present moment, the now, is most important. It is in fact beyond time, beyond thought, which is yesterday and constitutes memory. So when or if we realise this, we would live from our true centre where all life is One, where there is no conflict, separation, disorder or disharmony. Living in such a way would result in right thought, right feeling and right action – perfection!

Even though we may accept intellectually the concept of the Oneness of all life, and that the True Self of each one is a Divine reflection of the Eternal, most of us still oscillate between that true Centre and the circumference with our thoughts, feelings and actions. Thus we upset the harmony and create our tomorrows – for better or for worse.

How do we make our future, now?

What does it entail to make our future, now? Of course we might be happy with our lives as they are today and may want more of the same. If that is so, just carry on! But most of us, I imagine, have a picture of better things in many ways.

Since time began Theosophy, in whatever guise, has enunciated the Law of Reincarnation and its twin Law of Karma. Science has demonstrated the latter in the physical world through Newton’s Third Law of Motion: ‘For

every action there is an equal and opposite reaction.’ It is only a step, then, to the next idea – that our thoughts and feelings have their reactions; and that the Law works on those levels, too. For all matter, of whatever density, is vibration.

One reason why we cannot understand the application of this Law to human existence, is because we cannot see enough of our human pilgrimage; in other words, because of the time aspect. It would make no sense at all if the beginning of time was when the sun came up and all life and action ceased at the end of the day. However, we can understand that twenty-four hour cycle better when we use the vision of a lifetime. Similarly, we need to expand our vision of a lifetime to include our entire human pilgrimage. Then we can understand the important place the present time holds in the human cycle. With that greater scope I am suggesting that we are our own creations, that we build our future now.

With our thoughts we create our character. With our desires we create our opportunities. With our actions we create our environment and circumstances. In other words, nothing merely happens in physical law and nothing merely happens in moral law. C. Jinarajadasa stated that ‘The Law of Karma is the statement of cause and effect as we transform energy.’ (*First*

Principles of Theosophy).¹ It is said that energy and forces constitute the sum total of what *is*. Therefore, we are transformers of that energy. Until we understand and work with that energy, and not against it, there will be very little psychological change from life to life. For most of us still think of ourselves as individual units, separate from the One.

The Incessant Operation of Karma

The great Law of Karma, of action and reaction, is always acting, like gravitation. We are under its operation at every moment.

Each of us makes our own Karma. We create our capacities, our limitations, our characters, our opportunities. However, we are living, vibrant souls, Divine in essence. We can make these capacities and limitations greater, or else lessen them. We have made all the chains that bind us and we can break them, or else make them even stronger. We have built our own houses or personalities and we can rebuild them, improve them or else let them deteriorate. Our personalities are like plastic clay which we can shape as we will. But remember, the clay hardens and sets and keeps the shape that we give it.

We are all masters of our tomorrows, however much we are hampered today by the results of our yesterdays. We make our future now.

Fate or destiny is not absolutely rigid and immutable because there is always a large reserve of Karma to be called upon. Sometimes new opportunities are evoked. We perceive some great teaching, some new aspect of life, and we wake up. For all of us, troubles and losses will come, but it is the way we accept them that matters, which is our free will.

Worry is the worst impediment and an absolute bar to anything like further progress. Some of us worry about the past; others about the future, and by the time one worry has been dropped another has been picked to take its place. So as we read in *At the Feet of the Master*: ‘think rather of what you are doing now which will make the events of your next life, for that you *can* alter’.²

Of course, to understand this great Law of Karma in its fullest operation we would be Adepts. However, to understand the principle of Karma is to *revolutionise* our conception of life and of ourselves.

In our ordinary daily life we are sending out three classes of force – mental, astral or emotional, and physical. All of these set causes in motion which also affect others. The force of each works on its own plane, but also reacts on the other planes in proportion to its intensity.

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Thought Forms

Our aura is made up of our mental and desire bodies, which interpenetrate. The particles in our mental bodies are in rapid motion. Each thought of ours causes a set of correlated vibrations. The mental body then throws off a vibrating portion of itself shaped by the nature of the vibrations, which gathers from the surrounding atmosphere matter from the elemental essence of the mental world. We then have a thought form, a living entity of intense activity, animated by the one idea which generated it.

At the same time, because most of us think with desire and emotion, the astral body gives rise to a second type of entity similar to the thought form, animated by the elemental essence from the astral world and therefore limited

to the astral plane. These, we are told, are known as artificial elementals and are most common because few of us think without any desire, passion or emotion. The radiating vibration conveys the character of the thought, but not the subject.

A person who is meditating or concentrating on spiritual aspirations sends out vibrations which may stir similar thoughts in others. The form is a living entity, also an elemental. If it is directed at someone else, it moves towards that person and discharges itself in their astral/mental world.

If the thought form concerns the originator of the thought, it hovers nearby and is always there ready to react when the thinker is quiet or passive.

Each man travels through space enclosed within a cage of his own building, surrounded by a mass of the forms created by his habitual thoughts. Through this medium he looks out upon the world and naturally he sees everything tinged with its predominant colours, and all rates of vibration which reach him from without are more or less modified by its rate. Thus until a man learns complete control of thought and feeling, he sees nothing as it really is, since all his observations must be made through this medium which distorts and colours everything like badly made glass.

Thought Forms, pp.26 -27.³

The following general principles underlie the production of thought forms:

- 1.The quality of the thought determines the colour.
- 2.The nature of the thought determines the form.
- 3.The definiteness of the thought determines the clarity of its outline.

Thoughts as Creators of Karma

Thoughts are the most potent factors in our creation of Karma, being a class of energy. Their energy works both in finer mental matter which forms the body or vehicle of the true Self, and also in the denser matter which we are using continually in our everyday thinking. All our mental faculties are built up during our successive lives. No mental image is ever lost; but it may be weak and fade if it is given no further impetus. But if it is repeated it will grow stronger and stronger, thus building up our mental character. The old adage: ‘As he thinketh in his heart, so is he’ (*Proverbs 23:7*) is very true.

Death in no way halts this process; indeed, the work is facilitated because there is no longer a gross physical body to act as a hindrance. All our thought processes become characteristics or faculties in our next incarnation. And so the Law works: the building of our mental character is in our own hands, and we can start now. At the same time we also have the building of our moral character in our own hands.

Our thoughts set up vibrations which we send out consciously or unconsciously to those around us. These thought forms are usually tinged with emotion or desire. They stay with us, also creating magnetic ties because they also impact those people who are around us. And here we create that most important karmic link of all – our relationships. We make ties which draw us together happily, or not so happily – with our relatives, with our friends, and even our enemies. Have you ever wondered why you were born into your particular family or nation?

The second class of energy is our desires. Desires, being outgoing energies, also attach themselves to the objects or persons they desire. And so they always attract us towards the environment where they can be gratified, or where the opportunities for gratification are present. Many of our desires are for earthly things – money, power, fame, or recognition. So our souls are linked to this outer world and we find ourselves born into the place where those objects we desire are readily obtainable.

If we look at the place where we were born, we may wonder what brought us to our birthplace. We do not remember what we desired in our last life, or in a previous one. But we have sent out the energies and they must be ex-

pected, dissipated. So let us be careful now with our desires, because in the future the means will be at hand to gratify them. Any strong ties we make, be they on the side of love or hate, are made for all time. They play a great part in determining our human surroundings – our families, our friends, our associates, our society.

The third class of energy manifests physically, as actions. They are the effects of past thinking. If an action is repeated, again and again, it naturally sets up a habit. This limits in various ways the expression of the true Self in the outer world. The effect of our actions on others is very important because, in causing happiness or unhappiness, or in influencing those around us, we form links. And again, as with our desires and thoughts, we add another determining factor to our future relationships.

So we have seen that our environment and circumstances are the result of past actions. Our opportunities are the result of past desires. Our character is the result of past thoughts. But remember, we are whole people. We cannot really separate our thoughts, feelings, desires and actions. Although we say our characters are built by our thoughts, that character is portrayed in our actions. The nature of our true Selves is revealed in action.

As we act we are expressing all that we are, and have been.

It seems that we set in motion an endless cycle, doesn't it. So how can we break this? Is it by realising that we do build our future *now*? And by being willing to change? Perhaps we have to try to bypass our own usual thought/feeling process, and act from a higher level, the intuition. There we have no separateness and are acting from our true centre. We are living more selflessly, more spiritually.

Our Eternal North

The Eternal North for each will be different and we shall not find it through another. As we read in *Light on the Path*: 'Each man is to himself absolutely the way, the truth and the life.'

To live in the Eternal then, we first of all build our character now, so that those qualities of the Eternal will show forth in our actions. Before this building can take place there has to be some 'unbuilding' of whatever stands in the way from the past. We are still influenced by past creeds, past ideas of culture, education, nationality. All such conditionings need to be cleared away. The form we create through one of the arts, or by an act of love or devotion or sacrifice, allows the Eternal aspect of ourselves to enter as we act in time. Hence the future can be moulded by

the present. The Eternal is beyond time; therefore past, present and future are One.

We have done it, created it all ourselves. Each moment is all we have to break the pattern. We can do it. Now!

Endnotes

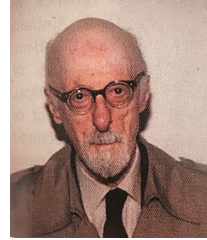
1. Jinarajadasa, C., *First Principles of Theosophy*, TPH, Adyar, 1938, p.91.
2. *At the Feet of the Master*, The Theosophist Office, Adyar, Madras 1912, pp. 28-29.
3. Besant, A. and Leadbeater, C.W.L., *Thought Forms*, The Theosophical Publishing Society, London, 1905, pp.26 -27.



Shirley Macpherson was a TS member for seventy-seven years until her passing in 2014. Originally a teacher, Shirley served Adelaide Lodge in several capacities, including the Lodge Presidency. She was a State Representative on the National Council, and also at one time Chair of the Council. Known for her ready sense of humour Shirley gave many lectures, attended TS events in Australia and overseas, and co-authored the book, *Devas and Men*.

Memories of Dr Hugh Shearman

Marie Harkness



One of the strongest, most inspiring and helpful influences on my earlier theosophical journey was Dr Hugh Shearman. We remained firm friends and colleagues from 1983, when I joined the Theosophical Society in Adyar, until his passing in 1999.

I later realised he had been a prolific writer of theosophical texts, non-theosophical books and also was a revered and much respected newspaper reporter for a Protestant paper, *The Newsletter*, during the troubles in Northern Ireland. For his own protection at that time, he wrote under a pseudonym.

Hugh was a Liberal Catholic Priest and performed the Mass at his home every Sunday morning. He had attended school at the prestigious Belfast Royal Academy. He studied at Queens University there and completed his Ph.D. in History at Trinity College, Dublin.

He joined the TS in Belfast as a youth.

Having read many spiritual texts over the years before deciding to join the TS, I decided to contact the General Secretary of the TS in England. Dr

Hugh Gray referred my letter to Dr Hugh Shearman, who was then President of Belfast Lodge, and who had previously for many years been the Regional Secretary for Northern Ireland. Hugh kept up regular contact with me for many months. There was such a power and strength in his letters, which inspired me so much, that I realised this was the journey I had to take for the rest of my earthly life and beyond.

It took me at least six months before I had the courage to drive all the way to Belfast to the Theosophical venue there, a one hundred and ten mile round trip. I was expecting to meet a strong and robust figure from the sheer strength of Dr Shearman's writings.

So, one Sunday I took the plunge and arrived at a building on the Antrim Road in Belfast. The TS members used to meet in a small dingy room with its own unique atmosphere. I went into the room and there were a number of elderly ladies sitting quietly on hard upright chairs, with hands on laps, not speaking, but I was greeted in silence with a nod and a smile from some.

Above their heads sepia photographs of C. Jinārajadāsa, G.S. Arundale, Annie Besant, J. Krishnamurti and Radha Burnier hung on faded wallpaper. Besides the speaker's chair was a small mahogany table with a little brass bell, for a call for silence, I presumed.

I did not dare think anything negative about the room, because from all the study I had done, I firmly believed that these experienced Theosophists had the power to read my mind at all times – so I had to be very careful! Suddenly amongst a few others arriving, a thin almost emaciated gentleman turned the corner and faced me. He could have been from C.W. Leadbeater's era. He was dressed in an ill-fitting brown suit, had a goatee beard and moustache, and piercing eyes. He doffed his jaunty brown hat at me and welcomed me to the Society – thus, my first meeting face to face with Dr Hugh Shearman.

Hugh frequently gave talks in England when invited to do so. He was also a member of the International Council at Adyar.

Hugh had great compassion and I experienced this in practice. In the late 1990s, shortly before he died, Helen Gething [from the English Section, daughter of Theosophist Wallace Slater – Ed.] arrived in Belfast to present the Subba Row Medal which Hugh had been awarded in recognition of his ser-

vices to Theosophy through his prolific writings. This was presented to his son Robert, who received it on his father's behalf.

I can truthfully say that at that time he was the most dedicated and inspiring person I had ever met. He never missed TS meetings except when he needed a short recuperation time. All meetings started right on time; he was very particular about this.

I have no doubt Hugh had an inner mission, was a very special person, and carried out his duties, as he saw them, with a calm energy and inner joy. This was infectious. He had the capacity to see behind things, see through people – he could read you! I still had to watch my thoughts.

When he passed away peacefully in 1999, I was happy for him but in my heart I missed my dear friend, teacher, and mentor.

Extract from *The Theosophist*, August 2019.



Mrs Marie Harkness is Organising Secretary of the Theosophical Society in Ireland.

The National President's Annual Report

1 SEPTEMBER 2018 TO 30 JUNE 2019

Preamble

This is my first annual report to coincide with the Section's new financial year. Therefore it spans ten months instead of twelve, and after another very active period around the Section, I am pleased to present the following report to members. Notable highlights during the year included:

- The tour in May of six states by International President Tim Boyd and his wife, Lily Boyd. Very positive feedback has been received from members around the country who have welcomed the opportunity to meet them both.
- The very successful National Convention in Sydney in late January, with the theme 'Divine Wisdom in Theory and Practice'.
- Active programmes during the first half of the year at our Lodges/Branches and Certified Groups which are now eighteen in number as a result of the certification of a new group in Logan, south-eastern Queensland, earlier in the year - the first group to be certified in this Section since 2000.
- A successful event on '*The Science of Yoga*' held at Canyonleigh in March, with accommodation at Bolitho House fully booked.
- The annual School of Theosophy at Springbrook in April on 'Seeking Out the Way', conducted for the first time by Per-

ry Coles from Perth Branch. Classes at the School were very well received.

- The award of the TS in Australia's first Perennial Philosophy prize to the University of Western Australia.
- The completion of our new and informative website at the beginning of the reporting period, with its shared platform for Lodges/Branches. This has been going from strength to strength with the training of several members interstate to administer local platforms on the site.
- The approval of a set of Notices of Motion to amend the Section's Rules under Rule 13, as announced at the January Convention Business Meeting, and their subsequent approval by the International President as required under Rule 29(3).

NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

National President

During the reporting period, my travels within Australia covered most of our TS centres in the Australian Section. In addition, I represented the TS in Australia at Adyar for the 2018 International Convention and the General Council meeting. Visits to the TS centres normally included presentations, but, as usual, provided a valuable opportunity to meet in person with members, Presidents and committee members to discuss any issues of concern. One extra trip was made specifically for the purposes of mediation, and two further

interstate trips during the year were also necessary additions to my original travel schedule in response to issues that had arisen, which proved very time consuming.

The following is a summary of my main duties within this Section during the reporting period: arranging and overseeing the Annual Convention in Sydney; developing presentations; reviewing National Council policies and drafting or co-drafting new policies as required; organising the comprehensive National Speakers' schedule comprising tours by several National Lecturers and the International President, Tim Boyd; organising and giving presentations at the annual School of Theosophy in Springbrook; arranging the production of two banners for the National Convention; overseeing an event at the Canyonleigh Centre; editing and production of four issues of *Theosophy in Australia* (*T in A*), in consultation with the Editorial Committee; member of the National Council; member and Chair of the national Executive Committee; Director and Chair of The Australian Section Theosophical Trust; Director of The Theosophical Foundation; reviewing a set of Notices of Motion to amend the Section's Rules which were voted on around the Section; membership of several working committees; ongoing liaison with TS centres around the Section; and the usual sizeable volume of correspondence.

National Council

The National Council met in January in Sydney, and during June at the National Headquarters in Surry Hills. As at 30 June 2019 the National Council comprised three ex officio members (the National

President, the National Secretary and the National Treasurer), along with six elected State Representatives, each of whom may serve up to three two-year terms:

Helen Steven – Tasmania

Sue Lee – Western Australia

Phillipa Rooke – Queensland

Gaynor Fraser – South Australia/
Northern Territory

Edward Sinclair – Victoria

Gerard Brennan – New South Wales/
Australian Capital Territory

Australian Capital Territory

Special appreciation is extended to the State Representatives for their voluntary service to the Council which included, among other things, several days of National Council meetings during the year under review, and much correspondence in between meetings. One of the important functions of the National Council is its regular review of the national Policies Document, which has stood us in good stead for many years as a guide to our work, in addition to the Rules.

The following appointments were made by the National Council for a 12 month period in January 2019:

Chair of the National Council and Vice-President until January 2020 – Helen Steven.

Executive Committee – see next item.

National Executive Committee

The national Executive Committee deals with the ongoing administration of the Section. It met bi-monthly during the year. As at 30 June its members included three ex officio members, the National President, National Secretary and National Treasurer, as well as the following members who were appointed by the Na-

tional Council in January: Dianne Kynaston and Cassandra Au (both from Sydney), as well as Denise Frost (Devonport), Harry Bayens (Perth) and Edward Sinclair (Melbourne), each of whom travelled to Sydney for these meetings.

The members of the national Executive Committee are also required to be Directors of The Australian Section Theosophical Trust, which is responsible for the Section's properties.

In February, the national Executive Committee appointed Linda Oliveira as the Editor of *Theosophy in Australia*. At the same meeting, the Executive Committee also appointed several working committees: Rules, Finance, and Electronic Media and Marketing.

Headquarters Staff and Volunteers

The following information provides members with a summary of the numerous tasks that are carried out by our dedicated members of staff at the National Headquarters, with whom it is a pleasure to work; and by the various dedicated volunteers who are part of our immediate and extended National Headquarters team. The main tasks performed by each during the year were:

Dara Tatray, National Secretary: Reporting to the national Executive Committee, the National Council, and The Australian Section Theosophical Trust on matters pertaining to the properties owned by the Trust, matters pertaining to the Rules and matters pertaining to administration and personnel; taking care of all routine business for these entities; writing and distributing their Minutes and Agendas; ensuring that their statutory requirements are met; and taking care of catering re-

quirements for their meetings. Reporting to the ACNC. Arranging for appropriate workers compensation cover. Overseeing the work of the Section's book keeper. Liaising with the Section's insurers on three claims, on behalf of the insured (a heavily time-consuming matter). Liaising with the Section's lawyers on several matters (also time-consuming). Advising Lodges/Branches on the interpretation of rules. Producing and distributing quarterly investment trust reports to seven investment partners with a beneficial interest in the Section's Maple-Brown Abbott portfolio. Overseeing arrangements for the national convention, especially regarding accommodation and meals. Dealing with Trust property issues as they arise. Answering queries from prospective accommodation hirers. Liaising with the developers regarding work to be done on the website; overseeing website training; creating new highlights for the website and sourcing new images for use on the website

Jennifer Hissey: Cataloguing collections of TS libraries around the Section; updating and maintaining the Online Public Access Catalogue; providing material to external researchers from the Campbell Research Library; accumulating resources for archival and website use; Convention Secretary; assisting with *T in A* mail outs.

Gil Murdoch: Webmaster for the website of this Section; adding and maintaining a large amount of material on the website and web pages of several Lodges, Branches and Certified Groups; substantial work on adding material to the Section's new website; maintaining AV, sound equipment and data projectors; formatting and emailing out e-Bulletins

and electronic versions of *Theosophy in Australia* magazine, updating the *Union Index of Theosophical Periodicals* and maintaining their search facilities; indexing the *Brahmavidya* journal and maintaining its search facility, and continuing work on a new index of *The Theosophist*; assisting in the Campbell Theosophical Research Library and Archives; preliminary work on rendering some important older theosophical texts into web format, suitable for smaller hand-held devices such as smart phones and computer tablets; assisting with *T in A* mail outs.

Pedro Oliveira, Education Coordinator: preparing and presenting classes at the annual School of Theosophy; research for presentations to several TS centres and the National Convention during the reporting period; preparing for and leading a study weekend at the Canyonleigh Centre; developing the script for the introductory video on the TS in Australia; research for and maintenance of the Section's Facebook page; communicating with National Members on educational resources; responding to DVD and CD orders; responsible for the Campbell Theosophical Research Library and Archives and ordering suitable new titles for its collection; overseeing the organisation of the second hand book collection; communicating with the Henry S. Olcott Library of the TS in America regarding the digital copies of several theosophical magazines; member of the Education and Training, and Electronic Media and Marketing committees; assistance to the National President; ordering and sale of books and study courses; processing leaflet and brochure orders for Lodges, Branches and Certified Groups;

proofreading four issues of *Theosophy in Australia*; organising *T in A* mail outs; answering educational enquiries from TS members as well as from members of the public.

Richard Larkin, Membership Secretary: preparing membership reports; maintaining the membership database; banking; general office duties; assistance to the National President, the National Secretary and the Education Coordinator; editorial assistance with articles for publication; OPAC data entry, cataloguing, downloading and editing material from other Libraries; creating new book items on OPAC; training on OPAC; editing and uploading OPAC items to Libraries Australia; assisting with *T in A* mail outs.

Rosanna Sheridan: assistance to the National President, the National Secretary and the Education Coordinator as required; assistance with arranging lecture tours; extensive typing and proofreading of articles from *The Theosophist* for uploading onto the website.

Kay Schiefelbein: Caretaker, Springbrook Centre.

Beatrice Malka: volunteer – National Treasurer; member of the national Executive Committee and Director of The Australian Section Theosophical Trust; Chair of The Theosophical Foundation Pty Ltd.

Marie McArdle: volunteer - member of Electronic Media and Marketing Committee, ex officio Director of The Theosophical Foundation Pty Ltd until October 2018.

Dianne Kynaston: volunteer – member of national Executive Committee and Director of The Australian Section Theosophical

ical Trust; Director of The Theosophical Foundation Pty Ltd., National Lecturer.

Denise Frost: volunteer – member of the national Executive Committee and Director of The Australian Section Theosophical Trust.

Phillipa Rooke: volunteer – State Representative Qld.

Sue Lee: volunteer - State Representative WA.

Helen Steven: volunteer – State Representative, re-elected as National Vice-President in January 2019.

Gaynor Fraser: volunteer – State Representative SA/NT.

Janice Scarabottolo, Olga Gostin, Patricia Ossenber and Ruth Holt: volunteers – members of Editorial Committee.

Barry Bowden, Simon O'Rourke and Skip Pry: volunteers – National Lecturers.

GENERAL COUNCIL

Since the Society's new Mission Statement was approved last year by the General Council, this statement has been published in the contents page of each issue of *Theosophy in Australia*. It reads as follows:

'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.'

The General Council continued its twice yearly meetings, with a mid-year meeting held in June at Naarden in the Netherlands, in addition to the usual December meeting in Adyar which I attended and reported on to the National Council in January. This

report included items such as the ongoing extensive renovations of several main buildings at Adyar; the pending inauguration of a new Theosophical Academy at Adyar (which took place subsequently in June), to be based on The Golden Link School in the Philippines; the revitalisation of the Adyar Animal Dispensary; plans to continue self-programmed Youth Conventions at Adyar; and a number of current General Council projects.

The draft resolution on 'The Freedom and Responsibility of Lodges and Branches', which underwent a number of drafts for a couple of years, was unanimously approved by the General Council at its December meeting for distribution and wide publication within Sections. This is now published towards the back of every issue of *Theosophy in Australia*. The aim is to further clarify the role of our Society in the world today and to provide a guide for Sections and the work of TS centres.

MEMBERSHIP

Statistics

As at 30 June 2019 the Section had 790 members, a loss of 3 members over the 10 month period from 1 September 2018 when this report begins. This was a distinct improvement on the loss of 18 members which was incurred during the previous 12 month period. Approximately half of our TS centres experienced a small gain in membership during the reporting period, with the major losses occurring in two large Lodges/Branches. See also the annual membership analysis at the end of this report.

National Members

As at 30 June, 94 National Members

were attached directly to the National Headquarters, an increase of 3 over the end of the previous year. We continued to welcome a number of these members from around the Section to national events during the period under review. We value each National Member, and all the more so considering the distances in this large country and the general difficulty for these members to attend TS meetings and events.

Letters to New Members

Newly joined members continued to receive the 22 monthly Letters to New Members from the National President. A number of expressions of appreciation were received for these letters, which cover a variety of topics. The full set was sent to Lodges/Branches previously; and some of these letters have been found useful for group study/discussion.

Exit Surveys

As usual, during the reporting period some former members, who had either resigned or else lapsed, completed and returned the optional exit surveys which were sent to them by the National Headquarters. The reasons given were usually fairly routine. However, on some occasions issues with a local TS centre were cited, and I notified the centres concerned for their action as appropriate.

Membership Forms Online

Membership application forms are now online at <https://theosophicalsociety.org.au/statics/membership> along with instructions for intending Lodge/Branch members, and the benefits of membership. This page will be developed. We also plan to provide an increasing number of items

for members' only access on the website as time permits.

Code of Conduct

As a result of the changes to the Section's Rules which were passed during the year, we now have a Code of Conduct in the Rules for the first time. The Rules can be viewed on the website under Education/ Other Resources at: <https://theosophical-society.org.au/resources>

Theosophy in Australia

Four issues of the national magazine were printed in September, November, March and June during the ten months under review. The magazine commenced in May 1921 as a continuation of *Theosophy in Australasia* which began in 1895. Therefore this publication will have its one hundredth birthday in less than two years' time. *Theosophy in Australia* is once again being received by all members in the Section as from March this year, after the approval around the Section of a relevant Rule change.

CONVENTIONS

2019 Convention

My sincere appreciation goes to the former President of Blavatsky Lodge, Sally Gray, the Lodge's Secretary, Pamela Peterson, Lodge committee member Peter Brereton and other Lodge members for the work done in hosting this year's National Convention which was held at Sancta Sophia College in Sydney; likewise, to our committed and willing team at the National Headquarters office who helped with the preliminary organisation of the Convention and during the Convention week. I received very positive feedback about the

2019 National Convention, both verbally and subsequently by email.

2020 and 2021 Conventions

Plans continued during the year for the 2020 Convention, due to be held at St. Mary's College, the University of Melbourne. The following Convention in 2021 will be held in Perth.

EDUCATION

Education and Training Committee/ Educational Resources

The Education and Training Committee comprises the National President, the Education Coordinator and the National Secretary. Information on their travels and presentations appears elsewhere in this report. The Committee met during the year and discussed future events, as well as a number of educational items to be dealt with as our schedules permit. These included, among other things:

- Future training packages based on grouped responses to the 2018 survey of Lodges/Branches. It can be noted that a number of these items are already dealt with, at least in part, in the Orientation Package to TS centres which I reinstated two years ago.
- A packaged, curated introductory course in Theosophy, to be supplemented eventually with medium and advanced level material.
- The script for an introductory video on Theosophy (on which work had commenced prior to the end of the period under review).

Campbell Theosophical Research Library and Archives

Jennifer Hissey and the Education Coord-

inator continued to respond to requests for assistance from researchers and enquirers during the period covered in this report.

A scholar from Heidelberg University, Germany, requested permission to publish a group photograph of the International Convention of the TS in Benares, in 1904, for a collected volume on 'Theosophy across Boundaries'.

Some of the books that have been added to the collection during the reporting period include: *The Adyar Library Bulletin – Brahmavidya*, v.81-82; *The Gnostic World*, edited by Garry Trompf and others; Pablo Sender's *Evolution of the Higher Consciousness*; Rupert Sheldrake's *Science and Spiritual Practices*; Scott Forbes' *Krishnamurti: Preparing to Leave*; *A Student's Guide to the Masters' Teachings*, by Dr A. Kannan; and *In the Presence of Krishnamurti – Mary's Unfinished Book*, by Mary Zimbalist.

In addition a researcher, who belongs to a group of Vietnamese Theosophists, conducted research in the Campbell Library for a number of months during this period in order to collect material for their website and magazine. She has found the resources in the Library very useful for her work and is grateful to the Australian Section for allowing her access to the Library.

National Speakers' Schedule

Apart from much administrative support, the National Speakers' Schedule is a further significant form of support provided by the National Headquarters to our TS centres and members around the Section. The schedule includes National Lecturers, the National President and the Education

Coordinator, as well as International Lecturers. During the ten months under review, a total of 35 such presentations were organised around the Section. This figure does not include the many additional presentations organised by the National Headquarters which were given at the National Convention, as well as the national events which were presented at the Springbrook and Canyonleigh Centres, and the Emmanuel Centre in Launceston, during the reporting period.

At its mid-year meeting the National Council appointed the following as National Lecturers for 2020 once again, subject to their agreement which was subsequently obtained: Barry Bowden, Dianne Kynaston, Simon O'Rourke, Skip Pry and Dara Tatray. Their willingness to travel and speak for the TS helps to enrich the Section.

International Lecturer

May 2019 saw the first tour of this Section by International President Tim Boyd and his wife, Lily. They visited six states. Feedback indicated that the tour was very successful. The opportunity for many members to connect directly with both of them was greatly appreciated; they also appreciated the care, accommodation and attention they had received at every stop. The tour included Tim Boyd's presentations at a weekend seminar at Launceston. (See also the relevant item under National Events.)

Book Depot, National Headquarters

Book sales from our special selection at the National Headquarters continued during the year, at cost recovery prices. Most sales are via the website.

Universities

University of Sydney

The Theosophical Society in Australia continues to award the John Cooper Memorial prize to Studies in Religion at the University of Sydney, for work on the Perennial Philosophy in its eastern and western traditions. This prize commenced in 2000. In May it was a pleasure to attend, once again, the Prizes and Awards Ceremony for The School of Literature, Art and Media (SLAM), with the opportunity to present the 2018 John Cooper Memorial Prize to Alana Bowden for her undergraduate essay on 'Hermeticism'.

University of Queensland

Since 2014 the TS in Australia has made available a prize for research into the Perennial Philosophy in its Eastern and Western traditions to Studies in Religion, the University of Queensland, with parameters identical to the University of Sydney prize. At the end of the reporting period three undergraduate papers for potential recipients of The Theosophical Society Perennial Philosophy prize were sent for our perusal. The Education and Training Committee agreed that the authors of the following two essays could share the 2019 undergraduate prize: 'A Comparative Analysis of some Key areas of Īśvarakṛṣṇa and Yogasūtra of Patanjali', and 'Christian and Jungian Approaches to Wholeness'. No postgraduate prize was proposed, or therefore awarded, in 2019. A subsequent letter from the Donor Relations Manager at the University of Queensland thanked the TS in Australia for its prize and noted that our generosity 'sends an extraordinary message of support to our students, researchers and academics as they strive

to create positive change in our community, Australia and the world.’

Offer of New Prize - WA

In November 2017 initial arrangements were completed for The Theosophical Society Perennial Philosophy Prize, to be awarded to selected students of an undergraduate course on ‘Philosophy East and West’ by Dr Miri Albahari at the University of Western Australia. No prize was awarded in 2018 as no essays were considered to be of a sufficient standard. However, the winner of the 2019 Theosophical Society Perennial Philosophy Prize at UWA was Mia Kelly, for her undergraduate essay on ‘“Brains in Vats” and Perennialism: An Epistemic Challenge’. The essay concerns the unitive mystical experience. The awards will take place in May 2020.

NATIONAL EVENTS

Springbrook Centre

This year’s April School of Theosophy on the theme ‘Seeking Out the Way’ was fruitful. The total class number was fifteen including Perry Coles from Perth, a long-time student of Theosophy who proved to be a popular teacher. Highly favourable feedback was received at the conclusion of the School. Also, it was especially encouraging to have some younger members in attendance; their input during sessions was appreciated.

Canyonleigh Centre

The event in March on the theme ‘The Science of Yoga’ led by the *Education Coordinator* proved popular, with participants from New South Wales and Victoria present. The venue was filled up,

with participants generally preferring the optional single rooms at the slightly higher nightly rate. One day visitor attended on the Saturday; and we welcomed one of our younger members who was a keen participant.

Launceston Seminar

In May a very worthwhile weekend seminar was held in Launceston. Two of the speakers, the International President, and National Lecturer Dianne Kynaston, were provided by the National Headquarters. National Vice-President and President of Hobart Branch, Helen Steven, also participated on the programme, as well as the President of Launceston Lodge, Franka Hughes. 21 members were in attendance. By all accounts the event was much appreciated by attendees. The attention to the practical organisation of the event by some Tasmanian members was appreciated.

PUBLICITY AND PROMOTION

Facebook Page

Members are encouraged to look at our Facebook page. You do not need to be a member of Facebook in order to browse our many and varied posts. Go to: <https://www.facebook.com/austtheos>

During the reporting period posts on the page included a quote from Madame Blavatsky on her own spiritual status, an article from *The Theosophist* (1887) on a ‘Self-levitated Lama’, a short video of Sir Martin Rees on ‘Earth in its Final Century?’, a poem by John Keats on Death, and an article by N. Sri Ram on ‘Initiation’. Other items included an article by Damodar K. Mavalankar on ‘Women Adepts’ and an excerpt from an article by

T. Subba Row on the same subject; a short video clip with J. Krishnamurti speaking on Yoga and the awakening of Kundalini; and the electronic version of the brochure *The Theosophical Society - What is it all about? Benefits of Membership*.

Other posts included photographs of Krishnamurti's visit to Adyar in 1980, a letter from the Mahatmas to H.P. Blavatsky's relatives, the video of Carolyn Harrod's talk at the 2018 Convention, the announcement about the Adyar Theosophical Academy, Col. Olcott and the Master's Turban, a quote from HPB on what a Theosophist ought not to do, and a silent film showing the highlights of the 40th Annual Convention of the American Theosophical Society in Chicago in 1926. Other posts included 'Oscar Wilde, Madame Blavatsky and Theosophy', and a quote from HPB on 'Occultism is not magic', an article on Alice Bailey and the TS, The Cambridge Declaration of Consciousness, and Alfred Deakin and the TS.

At the time of writing this report our Facebook page was followed by 1810 people. The posts during the reporting period were seen by 133,309 people, which is a rather impressive reach for a page which had its humble beginnings on 17 February 2014.

e-Bulletin

Our e-Bulletins continued to provide ongoing announcements about events, inspirational quotations and various items of information, typically resulting in a boost to registration numbers for our events. At the time of writing this report, 546 people were on the distribution list. Members who do not receive e-Bulletins, and who would like to do so, can contact Gil Mur-

doch at the National Headquarters: web@theosophicalsociety.org.au

OPAC

Electronic publicity for the holdings of TS libraries around the country continued during the year through the Section's Online Public Access Catalogue at: <https://austheos.softlinkhosting.com.au>

Total entries as at 30 June 2019 were:

Adelaide	3872
Blavatsky	2466
Brisbane	5779
Campbell	2789
Launceston	1870
Melbourne	7781
Perth	1993

The above web page and its specialist lists under 'Other searches', located on the side bar, are well worth exploring:

Adyar Popular Lectures	20
Blavatsky Lectures	62
Books for Children	78
Karma	85
Liberal Catholic Church	109
Meditation	409
Reincarnation	274
J. B. Rhine	7
S.D. Reference Series	32
Theosophical History	73
Theosophical Research Centre	
London	21
Yoga	556

Jennifer Hissey welcomes suggestions for further lists and can be contacted at: catalogue@theosophicalsociety.org.au

Marketing/Business Plan

The National Council resolved at its meeting in June to engage a consultant to develop a Business Plan out of the existing

business model. A suitable consultant will be sourced who has experience in the not-for-profit sector.

However, it can also be reported that the national Executive Committee made a shortlist of the priority items identified at a national business plan workshop. Of these, the new website was the top item. The site was launched during the reporting period, as previously mentioned. The drafting of a script for an introductory video about the TS was in its advanced stages at the time of writing this report. A number of other priority items which had been identified were either advancing, or else achieved, by 30 June, e.g. the filming of testimonials by several members with a view to their placement on the website, Convention workshops with committees, and new website training.

Our brochures are routinely given necessary updates and reprinted from time to time. During the reporting period I had the booklet ‘The Theosophical Society, What is it all About?’ reprinted, resulting in a very good uptake.

Website

The launch of the new website occurred in October after much preparatory work. There was an average of 13,155 page views per month. The largest usage from countries outside Australia came from the European Union, Germany, the Russian Federation and Non-Profit (org). Gil Murdoch, our Webmaster, besides his ongoing work of maintenance of the Section’s website, produced update No. 71 of the *Union Index of Theosophical Periodicals* on 21 March 2019, containing 224,063 entries. Gil has been particularly

busy transferring articles from the former website to the new website. He has also done extensive work on the contents of the online bookstore for the new site.

FINANCE/PROPERTIES

Change of Financial Year

As the result of a unanimous vote around the Section on the relevant Notice of Motion to change the national Rules, the Section’s financial year was changed from 1 September – 31 August, to 1 July – 30 June as from 2019.

Annual Fund

Appreciation is expressed to all those who have donated to the Annual Fund, no matter how small the contribution. This Fund was largely used up in contributing to the cost of our major project – the construction of the Section’s new website.

Properties.

The Launceston property, which had been held by The Australian Section Theosophical Trust for many years for occupation by Launceston Lodge, was sold late in 2018 as a result of a suggestion by Launceston Lodge, and after significant ongoing issues relating to the property. The Lodge is now renting a meeting room. Other than that, ongoing and sometimes time consuming administrative work is required in relation to the Section’s properties, the current property Administrator being the National Secretary.

SUPPORT

Support for TS Centres by the National Headquarters

In March I sent an annual letter, along with the Orientation Toolkit, to all newly

elected Lodge/Branch committee members. This toolkit is a useful guide to the TS and committee work and incorporates items such as: The Structure of the TS; the Australian Section's Code of Conduct; a Note on Committee Work from the National Secretary; Responsibilities of Lodge/Branch Officers; Tips for TS Committee Meetings; Explaining the TS and Theosophy to invited Speakers and at Public Meetings; Tips for Chairing Public and Members' Meetings; a Note on Educational Resources from the Education Coordinator; suggestions concerning difficult people and resolving conflict; and The TS, and Selected Similar and Other Organisations. This quite comprehensive package aims to help strengthen our committee work around the Section.

As usual, requests for assistance were received regularly from TS centres as well as members around the Section, which were responded to by members of staff at the National Headquarters.

The following items, dealt with elsewhere in this report, are additional forms of support from the National Society for our TS centres: Education and Training Committee, National Speakers' Schedule, International Lecturers, OPAC, and Publicity and Promotion.

See also Indo-Pacific Federation, last paragraph, below.

An International Society International Links

Our international links are important, particularly due to the interconnectedness of the Australian Section, and therefore all of our members, with our world-wide Soc-

iety. At our National Convention in January members were invited to sign postcards of greeting to Sections and smaller TS bodies around the world, as well as a number of members. These are always appreciated. I also sent a number of messages of greeting during the year, on request, to TS gatherings in other countries, on behalf of the members of our Section.

Adyar

Some Australian members attended the Society's 2018 International Convention in Adyar, as well as sessions of the School of the Wisdom (S of W), during the year under review. eNewsletters and S of W information from the International Headquarters were forwarded by me to TS centres around the Section, and advertised in *Theosophy in Australia*. The international TS website provides useful information at: www.ts-adyar.org

Adyar Security Fund

This Fund consists of accumulated donations from this Section over a period of time which have been held for the use of the International Headquarters. The Fund is used either as a contribution towards wages, or else to assist with building renovations in Adyar (the latter being a request from the International President).

Indo-Pacific Federation

Since 2016 Gerard Brennan has been the President of the Indo-Pacific Federation, of which our Section is a member.

The venue of the next Indo-Pacific Conference was changed from Malaysia to Manila, Phillipines, during the reporting period, with the dates set for 9-12 Novem-

ber 2019 on the theme ‘Let Your Light Shine’.

In September 2018 National Lecturer Dianne Kynaston visited Selangor Lodge, Kuala Lumpur, where she gave a number of talks with a view to helping strengthen the work of the Lodge. Various countries in the Indo-Pacific region where the TS has been weaker have not received many international visiting speakers. The Australian Section covered the travel costs concerned as part of its support of the Indo-Pacific Federation, at the request of Gerard Brennan, who also reports as follows:

As part of the work for the Indo-Pacific Federation it is important to travel to various Sections of the Theosophical Society around the region. On that basis I travelled to India in the December/January period to attend the International Convention. During the Convention an informal meeting of members of the IPF was convened to discuss the possibility of sending younger members of the TS to the Youth Forum in Adyar.

I also had the good fortune to travel to Sri Lanka in April with a TS member from Adyar, Prof. C.A. Shinde. He has been appointed as an official lecturer for the TS with a special focus on Sri Lanka. During that time we met with members there and gave talks on related Theosophical topics. The main purpose of our visit was to support the work there and rebuild links with the international organisation.

In July I was scheduled to go to Japan with Dianne Kynaston, a senior TS member, where we were planning to meet with other TS members and build further links

with the Japanese section. Unfortunately due to illness I was unable to undertake that trip, however given the opportunity we plan to return to Japan in 2020. It is important to rebuild links with the TS in that country and thereby reinforce the work of the IPF.

Various other trips are planned around the IPF region and plans for the triennial conference in Manila in November are well under way.

Gerard Brennan
President
Indo-Pacific Federation of the TS

RULES

Elections of State Representatives

Elections for State Representatives were carried out in 2018. As there was only one candidate for each of the Electoral States, the following were elected or re-elected unopposed: Edward Sinclair – Victoria, Sue Lee – Western Australia. Due to a casual vacancy in NSW/ACT, under Section Rule 18(3)(b) Gerard Brennan was appointed by the national Executive Committee as the State Representative for NSW/ACT. At the end of the reporting period nominations were called for the 2019 election of State Representatives for Tasmania, Queensland and South Australia/NT. Our State Representatives perform an important function, constituting two thirds of the membership of the National Council and representing every member in their Electoral State at the Council’s six monthly meetings.

Lodge/Branch Rules

Routine amendments to the Rules of TS centres around the Section were reviewed

by the Section's Rules Committee during the year, for consideration by the national Executive Committee.

Notices of Motion

17 Notices of Motion to amend the Section's Rules were all carried by a majority vote by Lodges/Branches at their Convention Business Meetings, with an updated set of Rules subsequently produced and circularised to Lodges/Branches.

At its meeting in June the National Council agreed that some Notices of Motion to amend the Section's Rules be put forward. These will be sent to all members of the Section, as required under the Section's Rules, with the November 2019 issue of *Theosophy in Australia*, with the results of voting announced at the 2020 Convention Business Meeting.

See also Code of Conduct, p.124.

LODGES/BRANCHES AND CERTIFIED GROUPS

Due acknowledgement must be made of the significant voluntary service to Lodges, Branches and Certified Groups which has been given during the year under review by many members around the Section.

The following is a summary of the Annual Reports received from all Lodges/Branches and Certified Groups:

Hobart Branch, TAS (chartered 1889)

Our southernmost Branch continued its weekly public meetings, along with occasional members' meetings and dinners with visiting guest speakers. These included the International President, the

National President, the Education Coordinator, Dianne Kynaston and Skip Pry. A social evening and supper commenced the year. The library continued to be opened to members and the public for two half days per week and before meetings. Some of the presentations given during the reporting period included: 'Ghosts, Spooks and Spirits', 'Australian Aboriginal Spirituality', 'Cracking the Cosmic Egg' and 'The Final Act of Grace'. Also, the Branch had a display table/information booth at a one day inter-faith festival in the Hobart Town Hall. A highlight for both Hobart Branch and Launceston Lodge was the participation by the International President in a Tasmanian weekend seminar in May, held in Launceston.

Melbourne Lodge, VIC (chartered 1890)

During the reporting period Melbourne Lodge held a series of well attended public meetings and a members' meeting. Much time and energy was spent on plans to fit out the new premises purchased by the Lodge in Flinders Lane, Melbourne CBD. At the time of writing this report, work was under way. Visiting speakers included International President Tim Boyd, National Lecturer Skip Pry and the National President. The TS bookshop held 5 'conversations' events. Some of the classes during the year were Yoga, a TheoSocial Discussion Group, a Sound Immersion Philip Glass Piano Meditation, an Astrology Class, a Mandala workshop, and *Ancient Wisdom Modern Insight*. Topics of two presentations during the reporting period were 'The Solution to all Problems' and 'Contemplative Living in the Modern World'. Also, the activities of

the Lodge's well stocked library and book shop continued.

Adelaide Lodge, SA (chartered 1891)

Adelaide Lodge had a full programme during the year under review. Regular members' meetings were held at the Lodge on Friday mornings, continuing a long-standing tradition. A number of public meetings were also held during the year. Study/discussion groups at Adelaide Lodge included some book study. Themes included: Introduction to Theosophy; *The Secret Doctrine*: Esoteric Insights and Spiritual Practice; *Ancient Wisdom Modern Insight*; *The Secret Gateway*; Living the Spiritual Life; Theosophy, Philosophy and Life; and Theosophy-Science (with guest speakers). Some of the seminars held during the year were 'Comets, Supervolcanos and Human History', 'The Concept of Brotherhood' and 'A Tour of the Mind and Field Connections'. Also, a number of TOS meetings took place at the Lodge.

Brisbane Lodge, QLD (chartered 1895)

Two silent meditation retreats were conducted by Brisbane Lodge during the year. Members' only shared dinners were provided for visiting speakers, always pleasant occasions. Weekly public meetings and monthly members' meetings took place during the reporting period. Visiting speakers included the International President, the National President, Peter Bruza from the University of Queensland and the Education Coordinator. Subjects of some of the talks were 'Overcoming Fear', 'Absolute Present, Zen and Schrödinger's One Mind', and 'The Self

and its Bodies'. Study/discussion groups included a Krishnamurti Study Group, *Ancient Wisdom Modern Insight*, Awakening through Theosophy, Introduction to Theosophy and a Meditation Group. A highlight was an end of year poetry night and Christmas party. The Lodge's Heritage building underwent some major maintenance. The second hand bookshop proved popular and the library continued its operations. Also the somewhat diminished TOS group remained committed and active, although activities were reduced due to less core workers.

Perth Branch, WA (chartered 1897)

Our largest TS centre held very well attended members' meetings as well as public meetings during the reporting period. The Branch's library was opened regularly from Tuesday to Saturday. The International President and the National President visited and spoke, and an annual Christmas party was held. Study/discussion groups included *The Voice of the Silence* and a discussion group which used Meetup to attract members of the public. Seminars/workshops included 'Bush Tucker', 'Spiritual Pathways', 'Listening to the Voice of Nature' and 'Aspects of Yoga'. Also, programme highlights included 'Hatha yoga', 'Twin Heart Meditation' and 'Open Heart Meditation'. Turning to administration, the Branch's Rules were revised, a Code of Conduct was introduced, and the Caretaker/Cleaner role was restructured. Also, the TOS held a fund raising night with a guest speaker every quarter.

Launceston Lodge, TAS (chartered 1901)

A dinner was held to farewell the Launceston property, which was sold late in 2018, after which the Lodge moved into hired premises. Weekly meetings were held on Wednesdays, with monthly Saturday meetings. Once the new premises were occupied, meetings were held twice a month. Visiting speakers during the reporting period included the National President, National Lecturer Skip Pry and the Education Coordinator. Topics of sessions included 'The Question of Evil', 'Buddhist Meditation', 'The Adept Tradition in Europe', 'What's on your mind?', 'Understanding Negative Emotions', 'Daily Life and Spiritual Practice', 'The Inner Life' and 'Understanding the Psychic World', among others.

A special highlight of the reporting period was the Tasmanian weekend TS seminar held in May at the Emmanuel Centre, Launceston. See the relevant item under National Events.

Blavatsky Lodge, NSW (chartered 1922)

Blavatsky Lodge in Sydney continued its full Wednesday programmes with weekly public meetings. Programme highlights included 'The Four Minds', 'Healing and the Healer', 'Climate Change and the Earth System' and a one day event, 'Getting in Touch with Your Soul'. Special speakers included the International President. Various classes held during the year included: 'The Astral Body', 'The Mahatma Letters', '7 Great Religions', 'Studies in Higher Consciousness', *The Bhagavad Gita*, 'Krishnamurti Dialogues', *The Secret Gateway*, 'What is Karma all About?' and a regular meditation class. Monthly members' meetings continued. Sec-

ond-hand books and other items were sold in the Lodge's foyer area, and the most popular subjects for library borrowings were Theosophy, Eastern and Western teachers, and Mysticism. The TOS held monthly meetings, followed by an open circle presentation by TS members and representatives of charitable organisations, with a good average attendance of 17. A new Office Assistant greatly facilitated the smooth running of the Lodge, and information placed on Meetup has attracted visitors, resulting in a couple of new members.

Newcastle Lodge, NSW (chartered 1941)

Newcastle Lodge continued to meet monthly. A social Christmas gathering was held in December. The Lodge's convenient proximity to Sydney meant that a number of Blavatsky Lodge members were able to give presentations, e.g. Julian Ochoa, Brian Parry, Gerard Brennan (State Representative), and Rosanna Sheridan, in addition to the National President. A number of members engage regularly with the wider TS community: Two members attended the TS World Congress in Singapore. Four members attended the 2019 National Convention in Sydney. One member attended the national TS event on *The Science of Yoga* at Canyonleigh and also spoke at the New York Lodge, USA. Also, a younger member was given financial assistance to attend this year's School of Theosophy.

Atherton Lodge, QLD (chartered 1950)

Monthly meetings continued during the year under review at our Northernmost

Lodge, where visitors are always made very welcome. This Lodge serves the area surrounding Atherton, with some members driving up to Atherton from Cairns for meetings. Highlights during the year included visits by the National President, Tina Hentisz (Perth Branch) and the Education Coordinator. Topics presented included 'Short Trips to Hell' (concerning human emotions), 'Are we hard-wired for negativity?', 'Techniques for a Positive Attitude', and 'Zen and the Ox-Herding Pictures'.

Canberra Branch, ACT (chartered 1971)

A summary of Canberra Branch's comprehensive report appears here. Twice monthly public meetings continued at the Australian National University (ANU) until December, monthly meetings continued at its other venue from September to December, with monthly meetings only at the ANU from February until June. Some of the study/discussion group subjects were 'The Divine Plan', 'The Soul and its Mechanism', 'What is the Soul?' and 'Soul Care'. White Lotus Day and Wesak were both marked at Branch meetings. Some of the programme highlights were 'Devic Realm, the Human Realm', 'My Art and my Spirituality', 'Chartres Cathedral', 'The Outer Planets' Effect on Human Consciousness', 'Contemplative Living in the Modern World' and 'Karma'. The State Representative and the National President were two of the visiting speakers. The small TOS group met twice during this period with study, short meditation, then discussion and focus on TOS projects. Donations were derived in several ways and went to TOS projects in

India, Pakistan, and humanitarian aid to Syrian refugees.

Sunshine Coast Lodge, QLD (chartered 2004)

The Sunshine Coast Lodge continued its weekly public meetings. In addition, study on an Introduction to Theosophy Course commenced with three different group leaders, with an encouraging attendance. This had resulted from a survey to members which indicated a need for more study groups. Some of the visiting speakers were the State Representative for Queensland, the National President, David Allan and Christine Gwin. Subjects of some of the talks by speakers included *The Bhagavad Gita* and 'Fake news'. White Lotus Day was celebrated with a vegetarian supper and a DVD of HPB's life, along with readings. The Lodge's publicity officer assisted greatly with the Facebook page, as well as advertising on local radio and in newspapers. A twice monthly library facility was provided. Also, the TOS was active in helping a school in Cambodia, as well as assisting a Refugee Support Group to buy phone cards.

REPORTS FROM CERTIFIED GROUPS

As can be seen below, a number of our Certified Groups have been running for around twenty years, helping to make the TS better known in their areas.

Blue Mountains Group, NSW (certified 1997)

This Group, West of Sydney, continued to meet weekly at a Cultural Centre in Katoomba, followed by afternoon tea at a lo-

cal cafe. Study/discussion groups included *The Secret Doctrine* and 'Ponder on This'. During the reporting period there was also a presentation on H.P. Blavatsky.

Gosford Group, NSW (certified 1997)

Monthly meetings were held except during January, with monthly book study continuing in members' homes. A highlight was a presentation on 'Gaia' by a previous Group member and scientist. Other presentations included 'The Teachings of Lao Tzu' and 'Remarkable Women of Influence'. Members brought a plate to share on lecture nights and for study meetings. A small library was available for the use of members and support was given to members in need. Visiting speakers included Dianne Kynaston, Gerard Brennan and Steven Broadbent, among others; in turn, some Group members travelled to Sydney to attend TS activities and the National Convention.

Logan Group, Qld (certified 2019)

Our newest group, located between Brisbane and the Gold Coast, was certified by the national Executive Committee in April after running for some time as an Informal Group. Two new members of the TS have been attracted through this Group, which met monthly during the reporting period in a hired meeting room. Meetings consisted of discussions on two books: *Introduction to Theosophy* and *Light on the Path* and advance plans were made for a visit by the Education Coordinator later in the year.

Mornington Peninsula Group, VIC (certified 2000)

This Group continued to meet monthly,

with a very good average attendance of 20. Visiting Speakers included among others National Lecturer Skip Pry. Also a Group of 10 enthusiastic members travelled to Melbourne to hear the International President speak at Melbourne Lodge, which was very well received. Some of the presentations during the reporting period were 'Everyone Dies but No-one is Dead', 'Karma and Reincarnation', '*The Bhagavad Gita* – Sacred Song of Life', and 'Hidden Patterns of Life – Carl Jung and the Red Book'. Attendees contributed BYO vegetarian food for a light lunch on meeting days, and an annual dinner was held as usual after the December meeting in a restaurant. Also, a member held a well-attended monthly mandala group at a local library to raise funds for the TOS.

Northern Beaches Group, NSW (certified 1996)

Monthly meetings continued at the Northern Beaches Group which moved from one members' home after several years, to the home of the new Coordinator. Attendance was not limited to TS members. Themes of presentations during the reporting period included: 'The Riddle of Reincarnation. What reincarnates, when, where, why?', 'Symbolism in Fairytales', 'The Power of Thought', and 'There is a Road'.

Toowoomba Group, QLD (certified 2007)

Public meetings were conducted twice a month, as well as meditation classes which were led by two of the Group's members. The National President visited, other speakers including Barry Bowden and a New Zealand member. Some of the

topics presented were 'Death, the Near-Death Experience and Spiritual Awakening', 'Man, Visible and Invisible: a Soul's Growth Through Reincarnation', 'Forces of Nature', 'Theosophical Questions for Today', 'Shankara' and 'The Angelic Kingdom of Nature'. Other activities included a potluck dinner and a private viewing of 'Deathgate', the work of an Australian artist.

Wodonga-Albury Group, VIC (certified 1996)

Dedicated members of this Group continued to open the Group's shopfront premises for a number of hours from Mondays to Fridays. An additional weekly evening meditation was led by the Group's Coordinator, as well as a weekly discussion and study group. The National President spoke during the reporting period on 'Death, the Near-Death Experience and Spiritual Awakening'. Visitors continue to be made very welcome.

THE THEOSOPHICAL ORDER OF SERVICE

The National Coordinator reports:

2019 has again been a year of great support by the local Australian TOS groups. Each state group engages in TOS work in their own way and they have once again provided a wide variety of local community service as well as raising significant funds in support of the national projects. The generous efforts of our TOS family have enabled the Australian TOS to donate a total of AUD \$20,200 to the following international projects:

Pakistan Home Schools	\$6,000
Pakistan student sponsorships	\$4,650
Golden Link College, Philippines	\$2,500

Syrian Refugees (via TOS-Italy)	\$4,000
India:	
Olcott Memorial School, Adyar	\$1,350
Animal Dispensary Adyar	\$320
Womens Welfare Centre Adyar	\$230
HPB Hostel	\$1,100
Odisha Girls' Home	\$50

Thanks go to Rhonda Phillips, our immediate past Coordinator, for her excellent hand over and also to Jean Carroll for her ongoing mentorship during this past year. A very heartfelt thanks is also given to the two other national officers. This year Geoff Harrod has given excellent support as the National TOS Secretary as well as continuing to provide essential Web administration support. Dianne Manning has continued to diligently execute the role of National Treasurer and we are indeed very grateful for her excellent service. Lastly and most importantly thank you to all the TOS members around Australia for your ongoing support for all this valuable work. Without you none of this would have been possible.

Love and Blessings to All,
George Wester
National Coordinator
tos.australia@gmail.com

CONCLUSION

This brings to a conclusion another report summarising the numerous activities around our Section, nationally and locally. I hope it has proved informative, and wish all TS centres around this country a most productive and fulfilling period ahead.

Linda Oliveira

**Annual Membership
Analysis of Lodge/Branch Membership as at
30/06/2019**

Lodge/Branch	Members 31-Aug-18	Trans in	New	Rejoin	Total in	Resign	Lapse	Dec Trans out	Total Out	Members 30-Jun-19	Diff
Adelaide	75	0	8	2	10	0	6	0	3	76	1
Atherton	17	0	1	1	2	1	6	0	0	12	-5
Blavatsky	152	0	11	4	15	5	18	2	2	140	-12
Brisbane	57	2	9	1	12	1	7	1	1	59	2
Canberra	17	2	1	0	3	1	0	0	0	19	2
Hobart	19	0	1	0	1	1	3	0	0	16	-3
Launceston	19	0	1	0	1	3	0	0	0	17	-2
Melbourne	102	1	30	4	35	1	4	0	0	132	30
Newcastle	11	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	13	2
Perth	188	1	27	3	31	13	28	3	0	175	-13
Sunshine Coast	45	0	2	0	2	0	10	0	0	37	-8
Sub Total	702	6	92	16	114	26	82	6	120	696	-6
National	91	2	8	7	17	2	9	1	2	94	3
Total	793	8	100	23	131	28	91	7	8	790	-3

The One Self and the Personal self

Liv Peven



There is a phrase from *The Growth of the Soul* by A.P. Sinnett that very well describes the attitude, and symbolises the position of the Soul, when it sees the work stretching in front of it. It is the phrase, ‘Allegiance to the Higher Self’. I think it is a very beautiful and useful expression. It means the deliberate decision that all that is temporary and belongs to the lower personality should be cast aside; life in this lower personality should be cast aside; that life at this level shall be devoted to the single purpose of gathering together material which is useful. This material will be handed to its permanent Self, to the Higher One, the essence of itself, who lives and grows out of that which the lower self gathers. The lower self realises that it is essentially one with the greater Self that is above it.

The allegiance to the Higher Self means the recognition of its source by the lower; the living of the lower is no longer for itself but for the purpose of serving that which lasts, which is Eternal.

Now, when we step onto this path, our personal self – the lower mind that was

probably the main pilot for a long time – may not want voluntarily to become the second pilot straight away. It might be trying to do anything to draw attention back to the ego, the personal self. For example, as our eyes start to open when we step on the path, we often become more and more sensitive to the sufferings of others and basically suffer with them.

Annie Besant says, in *The Doctrine of the Heart* (1938):

Try and realise the beauty of suffering. ... Surely, we can never crave for peace if, in strife, the world must be helped. Try and feel that though the darkness seems to be all around you, yet it is *not* real. Try and be as happy and contented as you can, because in joy is the real spiritual life, and sorrow is but a result of our ignorance and absence of clear vision. So you should resist, as much as you can, the feeling of sadness. And though you cannot entirely stop its coming, yet you should not altogether yield to it. For remember that at the very heart of the universe is Beatitude. p.34

I find this very inspiring and important to remember. We can learn a lot from suffering and help others if we become

a detached, equanimous observer by going within, meditating on it.

It is important not to run away in order to find an easy path and just be happy. Take the harder path instead. Do not listen to what your ego wants. Listen to your Higher Self. How do we recognise which one is which? I find that a message from the personal lower self is based on ego motive, past experience, memories, likes and dislikes. But a message that we get from our Higher Self is rather emotionless, it can be very subtle and not easy to hear. So it is important to quieten the mind, stay in peace within and look for inspiration when you need it most. It can be found in a book, music, movies, a TS lecture,

or perhaps your notes from this School. Maybe make a list of things that inspire you, and help to take refuge in the Higher Self.

I would like to finish with a quote from *The Wisdom of the Upanishads* by Annie Besant: ‘So long as we think of ourselves as the lower, we shall remain the lower. So, also, when we think of ourselves as the Self, we shall become the Self.’ The one Self.

Talk given at the
2019 School of
Theosophy by
Liv Peven,
Newcastle Lodge.



Some have tried to edit *The Secret Doctrine* down into an abbreviated and orderly form, making it the vehicle for the propounding of a system; or they have used it as a quarry from which material could be extracted for the purpose of building a system. But a major ingredient in the message of *The Secret Doctrine* is that life is not a system and cannot be contained within a system. The jungle quality of the book is part of its message. Whatever the mind may say or do, an intuitive perception of wholeness cannot be merely analytical or sequential.



Hugh Shearman
'A Message Ahead of its Time'
The Theosophist, May 1991

National Calendar of Events



2020 NATIONAL CONVENTION, TS IN AUSTRALIA for TS members

Dates: Sat 18 – Sat 25 January 2020

Venue: St. Mary's College, University of Melbourne

Theme: 'A Dialogue with the Universe: Science,
Wisdom and Creativity'

Featured Speaker: Professor Emeritus Richard Silberstein



Accommodation, cost recovery rates: \$700 for 7 nights, single rooms, shared bathrooms. Instalments, contact Dara Tatray: natsec@theosophicalsociety.org.au

Registration fee for both day and live-in registrants: \$40

Registration deadline: for guaranteed rooms, live-in registrants, **Fri 29 November**

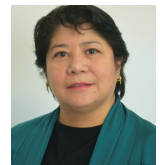
Enquiries: Jennifer Hissey, Convention Secretary catalogue@theosophicalsociety.org

2020 NATIONAL CONVENTION PROGRAMME - see page 142

SCHOOL OF THEOSOPHY, Springbrook Centre, Qld

Dates: Fri 24 April - Thurs 30 April 2020 **For TS Members**

**Theme: Key Concepts in *The Secret Doctrine*
and Their Relevance Today**



International Guest Presenter: Elena Dovalsantos, Ph.D, USA

The Secret Doctrine presents a vast panorama of existence based on the secret aphorisms of the ancient Stanzas of Dzyan. Topics will include: The Accumulated Wisdom of the Ages, The One Fundamental Law of Existence, Cosmic Symbolism in the Proem, The One Reality, Maya, Macrocosm and Microcosm, The Turning of the Wheel, and A Purpose and a Plan.

Cost: \$380 - includes accommodation, meals and tuition

Priority will be given to TS members who have not attended previous Schools.

Springbrook Centre, Qld, Fri 24 July - Sun 26 July 2020

Early notice: 'The *Bhagavad Gita*: a Yoga for the Mind and the Heart'

Presenter: Pedro Oliveira More information will be available in due course.

Next event, Canyonleigh Centre, New South Wales: TBA

Registration forms and further information for all events:

<https://theosophicalsociety.org.au/events#list>

2020 Convention Programme

**The Theosophical Society in Australia
18-25 January, St. Mary's College,
University of Melbourne**

**‘A Dialogue with the Universe:
Science, Wisdom and Creativity’
Featured Speaker: Dr Richard Silberstein**



Sat 18 January

7.30pm Welcome, Introduction – Featured Speaker, Workshops
Greetings to the Convention
Tea and Coffee

Sun 19 January

7.30am Morning Attunement
9.15am Official Opening of Convention
ANNUAL CONVENTION BUSINESS MEETING OF
THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN AUSTRALIA
Roll Call of Voting Delegates and Proxies
Confirmation of Minutes of 2019 Convention Business Meeting
National President's Report for Period Ended 30 June 2019
National Treasurer's Report for the Period Ended 30 June 2019
Financial Statements and Balance Sheet for the Period Ended 30 June 2019,
and
Auditor's Report thereon
Budget for the Year Ending 30 June 2020
Appointment of Auditor
Announcement of Newly Appointed Officers and National Council
Members
Announcement of Ballot Results:
- Tasmania, Queensland, South Australia/NT
Vote on Notices of Motion
Place and Time of Next Convention
Resolutions of Goodwill
Any Other Business
2.00pm The Theosophical Order of Service
4.00pm PUBLIC TALK – FEATURED SPEAKER, Richard Silberstein
‘Creativity, a Neuroscience and a Transpersonal Perspective’
7.30pm ‘HPB in Tibet’
- Pedro Oliveira

Mon 20 January

- 7.30am Morning Attunement
9.15am Short Talks:
TBA - Helen Steven
'Fundamentalism: The Great Impediment to Science, Wisdom and Creativity' - Pamela Peterson
11.00am 'The Australian landscape Re-Viewed: How Art and Science Reveal Indigenous Care for Country'
- Olga Gostin
4.00pm 'The Role of a Flower' - J. Krishnamurti documentary DVD
7.30pm 'In Wonder – Sulamith Wülfing's Visionary Realm'
- Isolde Sueltemeyer

Tues 21 January

- 7.30am Attunement
9.15am 'Lord Ganesh, Pallas Athena and the Pursuit of Wisdom'
- Linda Oliveira
11.00am 'The Electromagnetic Environment We Live In'
- Victor Gostin and Richard Silberstein
2.00pm Workshops
'What is Intuition? And How do I Develop it?': Shirley Ingham
'Mandala – Creative Expression of the Unconscious': Georgina Fode
2.00pm Workshop with Lodge/Branch Committee Members: Harry Bayens
4.00pm Short talks:
'The Science of Synchronicity' – Tina Hentisz
'Everything Old is New Again: The Ancient Wisdom and the New Paradigm' – Phillipa Rooke
7.30pm Reflections (meditative readings)
- Linda Oliveira and Lucille Crocker

Wed 22 January

- 7.30am Attunement
OUTING AND PICNIC LUNCH - morning tea at Arthur's Seat, lunch at Mornington, then return to College
7.30pm Classical Concert - piano and singing

Thurs 23 January

- 7.30am Attunement
9.15am 'Daily Life, the Crucible that Gives Birth to Wisdom' - Barry Bowden
11.00am Science Q and A
Victor Gostin, David Allan and Dara Tatray
1.30pm The Theosophical Order of Service: Annual General Meeting
FREE TIME for outings by own arrangement
7.30pm 'Inspirational Lives: Australian TS Members who have Helped to Shape Our Nation' - Dianne Kynaston

Fri 24 January

7.30am Attunement

9.15am 'The Road of Excess Leads to the Palace of Wisdom'
- Dara Tatray

11.00am Workshops
'Ways of Changing the World': Rosanna Sheridan
'Consciousness: the Holy Grail of the Universe': Edward Sinclair

2.15pm Q and A
Rosanna Sheridan (facilitator and participant), Ruth Holt, Carmen French,
Phillipa Rooke

4.00pm Perspectives on the Convention
Invitation to 2021 Convention, Perth
Closing of Convention (National President)

7.30pm Concert - trio

Sat 25 January

Departures

Results -

ELECTION OF STATE REPRESENTATIVES



Election of State Representatives for Queensland, Tasmania and South Australia/NT for two years from the declaration of the result

There being but one candidate in each state, a yes/no vote was held. The deadline for receipt of the YES/NO votes in the ballot for the aforementioned State Representatives was Monday 14 October. In Queensland, 105 were entitled to vote and 52 had returned votes: 49 in favour and 3 against. **Barry Bowden** is therefore the duly elected State Representative for Queensland.

In South Australia, 61 were eligible to vote and 29 returned votes: 25 in favour and 4 against. **Gaynor Fraser** is thus returned as the State Representative for South Australia/NT.

In Tasmania, 31 were eligible to vote and 15 returned their votes, all in favour. **Helen Steven** is thus returned as the State Representative for Tasmania.

In all, 3 votes were not counted: 2 that were returned minus the identification form, and one which arrived on 16 October and had thus missed the deadline.

The term of office for the State Representative is for a period of two years from the declaration of result on 16 October 2019.

Dara Tatray, National Secretary

ANNUAL CONVENTION BUSINESS MEETING OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN AUSTRALIA

The 2020 Convention Business Meeting of The Theosophical Society in Australia will take place at 9.15 a.m. on Sunday 19 January at St. Mary's College, The University of Melbourne, 871 Swanston Street, Parkville, VIC.

This notification is provided in accordance with Rules 12 and 13 of the Rules of The Theosophical Society in Australia. Note: The Section's change in financial year has resulted in a reporting period of 10 months instead of the usual 12 months.

AGENDA

Roll Call of Voting Delegates and Proxies
Confirmation of Minutes of 2019 Convention Business Meeting
National President's Report for the Period Ended 30 June 2019
National Treasurer's Report for the Period Ended 30 June 2019
Financial Statements and Balance Sheet for the Period Ended
30 June 2019, and Auditor's Report thereon
Budget for the Year Ending 30 June 2020
Appointment of Auditor
Announcement of Newly Appointed Officers and National Council Members,
and any Corresponding Retired Members
Announcement of Ballot Results:
- Tasmania, Queensland, South Australia/NT
Vote on Notices of Motion
Place and Time of Next Convention
Resolutions of Goodwill
Any Other Business



Thinner and thinner grows the moon,
and then it's gone.
The night is colder.

Against a gold screen,
radiantly splendid,
this flowering peony.

Ant on
white peony.
Contrast brilliant!

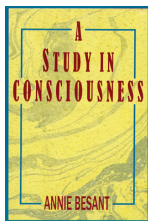
Haiku by Buson

Education

Pedro Oliveira, Education Coordinator



***A Study in Consciousness* by Annie Besant, TPH Adyar, 2014, 347 pp, pb. Available for purchase at the National Headquarters. \$8.00+postage**



Andrea E. Cavanna presents the current scientific view of consciousness in her review of the book, *The Origin of Consciousness and Beyond*, by Graham Little, editor (Northcote: Self Help Guides Limited), published in the online journal *Frontiers in Psychology*, in November 2014.

(<https://www.frontiersin.org>):

The 'I', i.e., the conceptualisation of the human spirit, is the core of the psyche, and as such holds a special and central place in our self-awareness. The remainder of the evolved structure of the psyche, including knowledge, emotions, and attitudes, is defined as mind. The attention mechanism of the

brain and the sense of self, embedded in the 'I', combine to create human consciousness. Therefore, consciousness is a function of the content of the brain, not the mechanism of the brain.

A Study in Consciousness, written by Annie Besant in 1902, is a profound study of the nature and evolution of consciousness from a Theosophical standpoint which goes beyond the mechanistic approach to the subject. She emphasises, among other things, the close identity between consciousness and life:

There is no life without consciousness; there is no consciousness without life. When we vaguely separate them in thought and analyse what we have done, we find that we have called consciousness turned inward by the name of life, and life turned outwards by the name of consciousness. When our attention is fixed on unity we say life; when it is fixed upon multiplicity we say consciousness; and we forget that the multiplicity is due to, is the essence of, matter, the reflecting surface in which the One becomes the Many. (pp. 25-26)

This book is well worth investigating.

Theosophical Order of Service

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



TOS National Projects

In August this year the funds raised by all the TOS activities around Australia during this last year were distributed. A total of \$20,200 was distributed this year for the Australian National Projects and various other international TOS supported work selected by local TOS groups. Full details will be presented at the TOS AGM in January. Well done every one.

A Brief report on the 4th TOS International Conference in Singapore – August 2018



The conference theme, 'TOS: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow', provided the backdrop for continuing events. Jean Carroll, previous Coordinator

of the TOS Australia, K. Sivaprasad, National Secretary of TOS India and Ananya Sri Ram Rajan, President of TOS-USA (via video), reported on the achievement of goals set at the last TOS Conference five years ago. Educational, enlightening and entertaining presentations made by Italy, Hungary, India, the Philippines, Pakistan and Singapore gave us detailed pictures of selected projects: Italian TOS aid to Syrian refugees, Hungary's assistance to the gypsy community, medical camps and mobility aids provided by the TOS India, strides towards the empowerment of women also in India, the Golden Link College in the Philippines, Qandeel home schools and other educational efforts in Pakistan and various projects initiated by the Singaporean TOS. Their presentations touched our hearts while instilling fresh ideas for service in our own countries. To summarise, it was a smashing success!

Cheers.

George Wester

National Coordinator

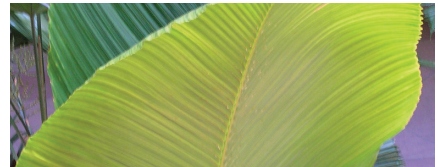
email: tos.australia@gmail.com

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News and Notes



2020 National Lecturers

The National Council has appointed the following members as National Lecturers for the Section during 2020: Dara Tatray, Dianne Kynaston, Barry Bowden, Simon O'Rourke and Skip Pry.

As all tours need to be coordinated, *please contact the National President if your TS centre requests a visit by one of these lecturers.* Requests will be accommodated as far as possible.

Visit to National Headquarters

During October we welcomed National Lecturer Skip Pry to the National Headquarters. He is pictured here with Jennifer Hissey:



Passing of Dr John Algeo



Dr John Algeo passed away on 13 October. The following message from the National President was subsequently posted on the Section's Facebook page:

On behalf of the Australian Section of the Theosophical Society, I express heartfelt condolences to Dr John Algeo's family on the occasion of his passing. Dr Algeo was the Guest

Speaker at the Centenary Convention of the TS in Australia, held in January 1995. Since that time his contributions to Theosophical literature have featured prominently in this Section, including his articles 'The Essentials of Theosophy' and 'Theosophy and the Zeitgeist' which have been printed as brochures for wide distribution. His study courses, 'Theosophy - An Introductory Course' and 'Getting Acquainted with *The Secret Doctrine*', are increasingly popular. John Algeo's services, both as National President of the American Section of the TS and international Vice-President, are equally also acknowledged with appreciation.

May he rest in Peace.

The use of one gender to cover both genders is avoided as far as possible in this magazine. However, quotations from writings in which one gender is used in this way are printed as originally written. This applies both to older writings and some contemporary ones.

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)

Section Directory

Australian Section National Headquarters

Level 2, 162 Goulburn Street,
Surry Hills NSW 2010
Ph: 02 9264 7056 / 9264 6404
Fax: 02 9264 5857
<https://theosophicalsociety.org.au>
Campbell Theosophical Research Library:
catalogue@theosophicalsociety.org.au

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)
Telephone: 02 9267 6955 Fax: 02 9283 3772
Email: contact@tssydney.org.au
<https://sydney.theosophicalsociety.org.au/>
Meet: 1.00pm Wednesdays
President: Stephen McDonald
Secretary: Pamela Peterson

Newcastle Lodge, Chartered 3/12/1941:
Meet: Morrison Room, 29 Highfield Street,
Mayfield NSW 2304
7.30pm 2nd Friday each month
President: Tony Buzek
Secretary: Dianne Kynaston
Tel: 0452 633 132
Email: diannedeva@gmail.com
<https://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
Meet: every Monday, 2.00 - 4.00pm
Coordinator: Jessica Gemmell
Tel: 02 4782 4269
email: PattieThompson,p.thompson12@bigpond.com

Gosford Group, Certified 11/11/1997
Meet: The Narara Community Centre,
Pandala Road, Narara NSW 2250
8.00pm 2nd Tuesday each month
Coordinator: Marianne Fraser
Tel: 02 4339 7118, 0400 713 273
email: marifraser256@gmail.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
2.00 pm normally 3rd Saturday each month
Please email to confirm meetings.
Coordinator: Nila Chambers
email: nilachambers@bigpond.com

Queensland

Atherton Lodge, Chartered 27/4/1950:
Postal Address: c/- National Headquarters,
Level 2, 162 Goulburn Street, Surry Hills NSW 2010
Meet: Meeting Room,
Community Services Tablelands,
rear of 38 Mabel Street, Atherton
2.00pm 2nd Saturday of month except Jan.
Please email National Headquarters
to confirm meetings: tshq@theosophicalsociety.org.au
President: Max Brandenberger
Secretary: position vacant
<https://atherton.theosophicalsociety.org.au/>

Brisbane Lodge, Chartered 21/1/1895:
355 Wickham Terrace, Brisbane QLD 4000
Tel: 07 3839 1453
email: brisbanelodge@theosophyqld.org.au
<https://brisbane.theosophicalsociety.org.au>
Meet: 7.30pm Wednesdays, bookshop
and library open 6.00-7.25pm
President: Phillipa Rooke
Secretary: Dianne Manning

Logan Group, Certified 9/4/2019:
Meet: Meeting Room 2, Logan Hyperdome Library,
Mandew Street, Loganholme, Qld.
1st Friday each month, 9.00am - midday
Coordinator: Christine Gwin
email: logantheosophy@gmail.com
Tel. 0418 755 496

Sunshine Coast Lodge, Chartered 1/4/2004:
Meet: Buderim Croquet Club,
Syd Lingard Drive, Buderim QLD 4556
Tel: 0417 873 481
7.00pm Thursdays
Email: theosophy.sunshinecoast@gmail.com
<https://sunshinecoast.theosophicalsociety.org.au/>
President: Joyce Thompson
Secretary: Jean Carroll

Toowoomba Group, Certified 10/7/2007:

Meet: Hospice Board Room, 57b O'Quinn Street,
Toowoomba QLD 4350.

Meetings on a Thursday evening once a fortnight at
6.30pm.

Annual Springbrook retreat each Winter

Coordinator: Gayle Thomas

Secretary: Barry Bowden

Tel: 0438 331 885

email: gaylethomas8@gmail.com

South Australia

Adelaide Lodge, Chartered 26/5/1891:

310 South Terrace, Adelaide SA 5000

Tel: 08 8223 1129

Email: president@tsadelaide.org.au

www.theosophical.org.au

Meet: Members Meeting 10.00am 4th Friday of
every month. Please contact Lodge for additional
meeting dates.

Acting President: Kevin Davey

Acting Secretary: Ann Pritchard

Tasmania

Hobart Branch, Chartered 7/6/1889:

13 Goulburn Street, Hobart TAS 7000

Tel. 03 6294 6195 (please leave message)

<https://hobart.theosophicalsociety.org.au/>

Meet: 7.30pm Mondays

President: Helen Steven

Secretary: Berry Dunston

Email: helen_steven@live.com

Launceston Lodge, Chartered 12/1/1901:

Meet: Scouts Hall, 1 St. Georges Square, East
Launceston,

1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month at 1.00pm

Postal address: 28 Teggs Road, Gravelly Beach, TAS
7276

email: launcestontheosophicalsociety@gmail.com

<https://launceston.theosophicalsociety.org.au/>

President/Treasurer: Franka Hughes

Secretary: Ruth Holt

Tel: 0418 346 526

Victoria

Melbourne Lodge, Chartered 9/12/1890:

126 Russell Street, Melbourne VIC 3000

Tel: 03 9650 2315 Fax: 03 9650 7624

email: info@melbournetheosophy.org

<https://melbourne.theosophicalsociety.org.au/>

Meet: usually 4th Saturday each month

President: Edward Sinclair

Secretary: Maria Jevic

Mornington Peninsula Group, Certified 8/2/2000:

Meet: Mount Eliza Neighbourhood House,

Canadian Bay Road, 1st Sunday

of the month

(12.00pm meditation - 12.30pm lunch + library -

1.30pm presenter + questions and comments)

Coordinator: Alice Oppen

Tel: 0439 563 313

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

Meet: Shop 6, Tower Place, High Street,

Wodonga VIC 3690

1st Tuesday each month

Library hours Mon-Fri 10.00am-2.00pm

Coordinator/Secretary: Denis Kovacs

Tel: 02 6024 2905

Western Australia

Perth Branch, Chartered 10/6/1897:

21 Glendower Street, Perth WA 6000

Tel/Fax: 08 9328 8104

Email: tsp Perth@iinet.net.au

<http://www.tsp Perth.com.au>

Meet: 7.30pm Tuesdays

President: Franco Guazzelli

Secretary: position vacant

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

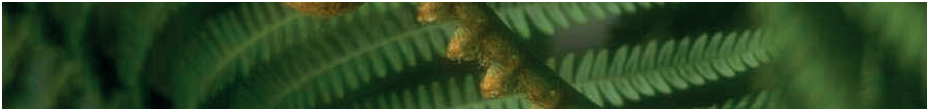
Caretaker: Kay Schiefelbein

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.

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

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