

# *Theosophy* IN AUSTRALIA

ISSN No. 1038-1139

November 2018

volume 82, number 4



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***Subscriptions: non-members \$25 p.a. within Australia, \$30 p.a. overseas***

**We invite articles or other items of no more than 2,300 words**

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*Cover photo:* Shutterstock - orange eucalyptus blossom

*Photos in this issue by:* Dr Helen Lambert, Pedro Oliveira, Dr T. Alaganantham.

*Photos also sourced from Wikimedia Commons, Unsplash and Art Explosion 600,000 with the authority of Nova Development Corporation, USA.*

*Printer:* Kwik Kopy, 320 Pitt St, Sydney. Recycled paper.

*The Society is not responsible for any statement in this magazine unless made in an official notice.*

***Published quarterly by: The Theosophical Society in Australia.***





**November 2018**

**Volume 82 no. 4**

**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



Whenever a year draws towards a close it seems natural to pause and reflect upon the year just past, what might lie ahead, and perhaps also upon the state of the world.

Fittingly, this final issue for 2018 includes an overview of the most recent one-year cycle of the TS in Australia in my Annual Report. Among other items, we also journey into the history of the TS through an article which reviews the contributions of the Society's International Presidents, each of whom has introduced a unique keynote to the evolution of our worldwide organisation. Those members who have joined more recently should find this interesting reading; equally, members of longer standing.

During a recent meeting at my Lodge, we delved into the state of the world today, and what we could each do personally to help promote brotherhood. Discussion was wide-ranging. It was difficult not to be reminded of the teaching of the Yugas from Indian philosophy, large cycles of four Yugas that repeat themselves over aeons of time, and notably, the teaching of Kali-yuga. This particular Kali-yuga is said to last 423,000 years, HPB mentioning that only the first five thousand years had been completed in the late nineteenth century. One cannot prove these figures,

but it is salutary to consider whether there is truth in the teachings concerned.

For example, it is said that only one quarter of truth remains in the world during this Yuga, compared with the previous three Yugas. Proportions aside, the heart of this idea is that untruth prevails, and truth is far less prevalent, during this very long moment in human history. Think about it. Much information which comes before our gaze is inaccurate or slanted, in order to persuade us about something or other – essentially, fake news. Think of white collar crime, terrorism, deceit by various politicians and the use of dubious means by many people to get ahead in life, to give a few examples. Even telling a seemingly innocuous lie is living in untruth.

As TS members, our common aspiration is invested in the search for Truth. Therefore it behoves us to become aware of not just everyday truths, but also higher Truth – along with the Good and the Beautiful, both held by Plato to be synonymous with the True. On the one hand, during Kali-yuga, paradoxically there is said to be a greater opportunity for spiritual advancement in just a few lives. Indeed, if will and genuine interest are applied then one can work constructively against such forces – this is both our greatest challenge, and our greatest opportunity.

## The TS Stream: Keynotes of International Presidents

Pedro Oliveira



The Rules of the Theosophical Society, as a democratic organisation, determine that the President shall be elected by its members worldwide. From its very inception, the TS refused allegiance to a spiritual authority, an official teacher or institutional guru. The members decide who will lead the Society and the eight individuals who were elected, and sometimes re-elected, since 1875, were responsible for maintaining the TS loyal to its original intent, which is also the source of its robust spiritual vitality. Quotations from the International Presidents below appear in italics for emphasis.<sup>1</sup>

**Henry Steel Olcott (1875-1907)**



In his inaugural address, Colonel Olcott said that in the future the impartial historian would not be able to ignore

the formation of the Theosophical Society. A number of authors have recognised the positive influence the Society has had on the cultural and spiritual progress of the world. Olcott was a journalist, a lawyer, an agriculturalist, an investigator of psychic phenomena, and a man of absolute integrity. He was a healer and helped thousands with his gift. His contribution to the revival of Buddhism in Sri Lanka (formerly Ceylon) was outstanding and is remembered to this day in that country. He also had a deep interest in the education of the underprivileged children in India and Ceylon. One of his most enduring contributions was the purchase of the International Headquarters at Adyar in 1882. Here he established the Adyar Library and Research Centre in 1886, which is patterned after the ancient and legendary Library at Alexandria.

*We are of our age, and yet some strides ahead of it, albeit some journals and pamphleteers more glib than truthful, have already charged us with being*

*reactionists who turn from modern light (!) to medieval and ancient darkness! We seek, inquire, reject nothing without cause, accept nothing without proof: we are students, not teachers.* (Inaugural Address, November 1875)

**Annie  
Besant  
(1907-1933)**



Annie Besant was a warrior spirit and fought for many causes. Before joining the TS, she was a prominent worker in the field of social and educational reform in England. She had an exceptional mind, and her early book, *The Building of the Kosmos* (1894), is a deep presentation of Theosophy.

In 1908, she formed the Theosophical Order of Service (TOS), which aims at applying the theosophical worldview in every department of life. She had a global vision. In her inaugural address as President of the TS, she encouraged the ‘perfect toleration of all differences’. Her contribution to India’s political freedom and cultural regeneration was crucial and thousands came to listen to her speak. She was also one of the keynote speakers at the 1893 Parliament of World Religions in Chicago.

In the introduction to *The Secret Doctrine*, HPB had mentioned that a more

advanced student would come in the twentieth century to further expand the teaching of the Wisdom Tradition. In 1909, Besant’s colleague, C.W. Leadbeater, discovered the young J. Krishnamurti on the Adyar beach in Madras (now Chennai). In 1911, Besant and Leadbeater formed The Order of the Star in the East around him. Annie Besant nurtured Krishnamurti, who held a deep love for her to the end of his life. She maintained that ‘diversity enriches the movement, as long as love rules and charity judges’.

*For the Society as a whole, by its very name, affirms the existence of the Divine Wisdom, and the affirmation would be futile if that Wisdom were beyond human attainment. Moreover, the Society would be without a reason for its being if it did not, as a whole, spread the Teachings which lead up to the attainment of the Wisdom, while leaving to its members as individuals the fullest freedom to give to any of those teachings any form which expresses their own thinking, and even to deny any one of them.*

(Presidential Address, August 1907)

**George  
Sydney  
Arundale  
(1934-1945)**



George Arundale was like a son to Annie Besant. He worked very closely

with her on her educational and cultural programmes in India.

As a boy in London, young George had contact with HPB, and she gave him a box of chocolates. In turn, Arundale became committed later on to helping young people. He had a commanding presence which was felt throughout the Society as well as an enduring sense of humour. For him, Theosophy was a living reality and very practical.

Arundale was President of the TS during the war years (1934-1945). He encouraged young people to help the millions who died in the war by working with the dead on the subtler planes of existence. His motto was: 'Together, though differently!' and he advocated a non-dogmatic presentation of Theosophy.

*The Society is in no way concerned with the beliefs or opinions of those who seek membership, any more than it is concerned with the beliefs and opinions of those who are already members. These, whether private or public, are their own affair exclusively. But the Society is surely concerned that each member shall be a source of goodwill, understanding and solidarity, and not a source of constant discord. In the interests of its own self-preservation the Society has the duty to expect that members will so live that all outer differences of belief and opinion and mode of living, which naturally and rightly separate them, shall*

*tend to strengthen and not to weaken the inner and indissoluble tie of the One Life which all share, and which is the very heart itself both of Theosophy and of the Theosophical Society. ('To the Fellow-Members of the Theosophical Society – From the New President', July 1934)*

### Curupumullage Jinarājādāsa (1946-1953)



C. Jinarājādāsa, or Brother Raja, as he was affectionately known, was a transitional president. A remarkable person and well-known as a lecturer and writer, Jinarājādāsa emphasised the aesthetic side of Theosophy.

Discovered by Leadbeater in Ceylon at the end of the nineteenth century, Brother Raja was educated at Cambridge and became a linguist. He lectured in Spanish as well as Portuguese in many South American countries.

Jinarājādāsa led the reconstruction work of the TS in Europe after the war. He was a great supporter of the United Nations, and during his presidency the Society was briefly affiliated with the UN, as a Non-Government Organisation.

Brother Raja had a special interest in theosophical history and was a great

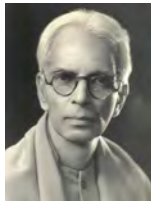
archivist, having edited *The Golden Book of the Theosophical Society*. His book, *The New Humanity of the Intuition*, presented his view of the future development of humanity.

Jinarājādāsa was a talent scout. He brought many young members from different parts of the world into contact with each other. He also conceived the Ritual of the Mystic Star, which celebrates the essential unity of all religions. Theosophy was for him a 'joyous experience'.

*Suppose in addition, every Theosophist in every Theosophical Lodge were to say softly to himself [or herself] as he [or she] meets friend or stranger, 'THAT art thou, the Vision of God that I seek, the goal of Mukti which I long for, art thou.'*

(*'The Work Ahead for Theosophists'*, Inaugural Address, February 1946)

### **Nilakanta Sri Ram (1953-1973)**



N. Sri Ram pointed to a different dimension of Theosophy. His contribution represented a new perception – the awakening of consciousness to the Buddhist (intuitional) level. For Sri Ram, Theosophy was Wisdom in action.

In her comments about his first visit to the United States in 1948, Joy Mills observed: 'A most remarkable person. A presence of gentleness, a quiet power.' N. Sri Ram presided over the 1966 World Congress in Salzburg, Austria, with calm, inherent dignity, and a quiet authority. During his presidency the current building for the Adyar Library and Research Centre was erected.

N. Sri Ram was a world traveller, a scholar, and a real Theosophist. He had an aphoristic quality to his thought and writings, and a deep regard for Krishnamurti and his teachings. The writings of N. Sri Ram emphasised the possibility that consciousness can unfold its own essential nature into a state of wisdom and love. All those who came in contact with him were deeply affected by his gentleness, wisdom, and selflessness.

*If our Society and its Lodges are ever to become mere respectable clubs for the practice of social affability, though I do not decry the value of any such club, they will fail of their dynamic purpose. Nor will the purpose be any the better served by intellectual disquisitions and formal argument. One of those Beings, to whom we refer as the Adepts or the Masters of the Wisdom, was reported in the early days of the Society to have commented on the uncertainties of its aims at that time: 'Rather perish the T.S. with both its hapless founders than that we should*



*permit it to become no less than an academy of magic, a hall of occultism.*  
(Inaugural Address, February 1953)

**John  
Balfour  
Symington  
Coats  
(1973-1979)**



John Coats was very much loved by young people and he encouraged them in their work for the Society. He presided over the World Congress in New York City in November 1975, which commemorated the centenary of the Theosophical Society, inviting Boris de Zirkoff to be the keynote speaker.

Joy Mills reminisced that at the official banquet on that occasion, John wanted an empty chair at the centre of the table, ‘dedicated to the Great Ones’. ‘There was presence, a silence’, Joy recalls, ‘that those of us who were there will never forget’.

Coats was an extrovert who embraced everybody – literally. He was a passionate speaker, had a tremendous love for humanity, and toured the theosophical world many times.

In the centenary issue of *The Theosophist* (October 1979), Coats wrote: ‘Throughout the world, let the love of power be replaced by the Power of Love.’

*Although the principles of the Wisdom must remain inviolate and unchanging, the manner in which they are presented and the level at which they are understood must and should rightly vary not only in each generation but probably also in each succeeding decade. It becomes, therefore, of the very greatest importance that we hold our present understanding of Theosophy lightly, knowing that tomorrow may bring new knowledge.*

(Inaugural Address, November 1973)

**Radha  
Burnier  
(1980-2013)**



Elected in 1980, Radha Burnier was re-elected three times. The daughter of N. Sri Ram, she was born in Adyar and was a Sanskrit scholar, with a M.A. degree from the Benares Hindu University.

She emphasised the Wisdom aspect of the theosophical teachings and her keynote was Human Regeneration. She saw Theosophy as the Wisdom Religion, an expression used by HPB in her writings. Radha led a life of disciplined simplicity and loved animals. She enjoyed the presence of many furry friends in her house (including dogs). Radha also toured the TS world several times over and shared with mem-

bers and the public her insight into the human condition and how the human mind can come out of its predicament.

*As time passes, generations change. Every generation faces the basic problems of the human being in terms of a changing environment. No teaching, no philosophy can be of adequate aid to any generation if it is converted into a mere idiom or tradition. But the Wisdom of a truly religious mind can speak the tongue of any generation and communicate its own quality of significance.*

(Inaugural Address, July 1980)

### **Tim Boyd** (2014 - )



Tim Boyd was born in New York City in 1953 and went to college at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island. He later transferred to the University of Chicago, where he was an honours graduate with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Public Affairs.

In Chicago Tim was first introduced to Theosophy and the Theosophical Society through Bill Lawrence, a TS member who was a mentor for many young people in the area, inspiring Tim to join the TS in America in 1974. With Bill and others he founded a Theosophical spiritual community in Chicago's inner city. The group held classes on

the Ageless Wisdom, meditation, and healing. They worked with at-risk and disadvantaged youth, transformed vacant lots into award-winning organic food gardens, and placed beehives on the roofs of local buildings.

In 2011 Tim Boyd was elected as National President of the American Section. Subsequently he was elected International President in 2014.

*There is a problem for us ... the world today, with its deep yearning for some connection with something that is 'real', something that speaks to the inner beauty, the inner calling that is in every person – that world – is not beating a path to our door. Perhaps the question that would be more valuable to us is: Are we beating a path to the door of those in need? This work that lies before us is the same work that lay before the Founders; it has not changed. It is the work of becoming open to a world in need.*

(Inaugural Address, May 2014)

### **Endnote:**

1. Based on the article 'When You Are One With Every Heart that Beats: The TS International Presidents in History' by Linda Oliveira and Pedro Oliveira, *The Quest*, July-August 2007, TS in America.



**Pedro Oliveira is Education Coordinator of the Australian Section and a former International Secretary of the TS.**

## How does Mysticism differ from Esotericism?

Jean Carroll

I begin with a message from one of the Founders of the theosophical society, Madame Blavatsky (HPB). In 1888, HPB wrote to the American Section on the occasion of their annual convention:

‘All serious students of theosophy need to be aware of two new cycles returning in the 20th Century.’

- The return of the Mystic
- Gross materialism/  
consumerism as we know it.

She went on to say, ‘If we opt for a social life, a foul social life, our soul would take several incarnations to recover from this choice.’ I put this question to you all: How can we, knowing of this daunting message, ignore what we have learnt this week? This is surely something to think about.

Let’s look at what the mystic and the esoteric student have in common:

- Both are inner journeys.
- Each require living an ethical and moral life.
- They have the same goal i.e. their soul’s longing to return to its source.
- Science is very sceptical of both,

because as yet science is unable to measure anything past the mind.

And what is the difference between these two approaches?

A mystic seeks for a direct union with the Divine, which relies on spiritual intuition. This comes about by emptying the mind or bypassing everything through the power of contemplation or prayer – thus allowing intuition to flow inwards. In summary, this could be described as obtaining spiritual wisdom which is inaccessible via the intellect.

The esoteric approach is slightly more robust than the mystical slant. The esoteric method also leads to the heart, but through a more mental perspective via study. By teasing the words apart the essence of the teachings may be revealed, and hopefully internalised. However, the aspirant’s weaknesses may also be revealed, giving the student the opportunity to work on the lower personality.

Until recent years, the esoteric method was a well-guarded secret, with



students selected on their individual merit, examples being the Mystery Schools of Europe during the middle ages, students of Vedanta, the Hermetic philosophy, the Rosicrucians, the Masons and other philosophies in Asia. Today these teachings are readily available to anyone who has the desire to be a co-worker and help humanity.

In summary, the goal is the same, one using the heart – the mystic, whereas the esoteric student begins with the mind and evolves to the heart. Both follow their souls' longing to return to its source.

During the past week we have heard many significant ideas about how to live the teachings that HPB presented to us:

- Always be focused on the purpose of living a higher life of altruism. Hence, continually remind ourselves mentally of the purpose of our teachings and assimilate these teachings, enabling them to be part of our life as we endeavour to live in a brotherly way.
- Be aware of our incredible heritage which was handed to us 'on a platter'. Additionally, be aware that our teachings include a long history of the world's great religions and philosophies.
- As we journey on the spiritual path there will be obstacles for us to work through. Tensions will arise. This is

when we must stay focused and be aware that mental tension is part of evolution – nothing evolves without tension.

In my opinion it is our dharma as members of this great Society to preserve these teachings. We simply cannot fail those great ones who came before us.

Can we abide in what HPB said to the American Section in 1888 or do we go backwards, living the life of the status quo?

I finish my talk with these inspiring words, equally as valid to us as they were to Vincent van Gogh: 'The road to normality is a paved path, a paved path is easy to walk on, but no flowers grow there.'



Jean Carroll is a former President of Sunshine Coast Lodge and a past National Coordinator of the Theosophical Order of Service in Australia.

This talk was given at the 2018 School of Theosophy which had the theme 'HPB's Esoteric Instructions', with morning study classes led by Michael Gomes, USA.

## The National President's Annual Report

1 SEPTEMBER 2017 TO 31 AUGUST 2018

### Preamble

After another very active year around the Section, I am pleased to present the following report to members. Notable highlights during the year included:

- The very successful annual Convention held in Brisbane with long-time member and featured speaker Professor Emeritus Richard Silberstein.
- Excellent progress on the construction of the Section's new website which was nearing completion at the time of writing this report.
- The well-received Australian tour of the Section by Michael Gomes, from the USA, including the popular School of Theosophy in April.
- Many presentations around the Section by our National Lecturers, along with presentations by the National President, an International Lecturer and the Education Coordinator.
- The identification of a shortlist of top priority and high priority items as a result of a business plan workshop held after the January National Council meeting.
- A survey of all TS Lodges/Branches to obtain information on their training needs and their suggestions for the planned introductory training video.
- The commencement of an annual TS prize at the University of Western Australia.

- The restoration of the access road to our Canyonleigh property, providing a much improved drive up to the house from Tug-along Road.

More about each of these items appears further on in this report.

### NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

#### National President

My travels for the Section during the year covered nearly all TS centres around Australia, a trip to Singapore in August for the Indo-Pacific Conference, and a trip to Adyar for the 2017 International Convention and the General Council meeting. Presentations are always given when I visit TS centres, and these occasions inevitably provide a valuable opportunity to meet in person with members, Presidents and committee members, and discuss any issues of concern.

In addition, the following is a summary of my main duties within this Section during the year under review: arranging and overseeing the Annual Convention in Brisbane; developing and giving presentations to nearly all Lodges, Branches and Certified Groups; reviewing National Council policies and drafting or co-drafting new policies as required; developing the comprehensive National Speakers' schedule with several National Lecturers and one International Lecturer; organising and

giving presentations at the annual School of Theosophy in Springbrook; editing and production of four issues of *Theosophy in Australia (T in A)*, in consultation with the Editorial Committee; writing e-Bulletins for email distribution; 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; membership of several working committees; ongoing liaison with TS centres around the Section; meeting with a Lodge committee during the year; and a sizeable volume of correspondence. (Information about additional General Council work appears further on.)

### National Council

The National Council met in January in Brisbane, and during June at the National Headquarters in Surry Hills. As at 31 August 2018 the National Council comprised three ex officio members (the National President, the National Secretary and the National Treasurer), along with five elected State Representatives, each of whom may serve up to three two-year terms:

Helen Steven – Tasmania  
 Franco Guazzelli – Western Australia  
 Phillipa Rooke – Queensland  
 Gaynor Fraser – South Australia/Northern Territory  
 Kari Torgersen - Victoria

Great 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; also to Gloria Yiangou who resigned as State Representative in July due to family

and personal reasons, after serving on the Council for almost two years.

The following appointments were made by the National Council for a 12 month period in January 2018:

Chair of the National Council and Vice-President until January 2019 – Helen Steven.

Executive Committee – see next item.

### National Executive Committee

The national Executive Committee deals with the ongoing administration of the Section. It met two monthly during the year. As at 31 August 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 National Council in January: Dianne Kynaston and Cassandra Au (both from Sydney), as well as Denise Frost (Devonport), Harry Bayens (Perth) and Edward Sinclair (Melbourne) who 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 Dara Tatrav as Assistant Treasurer and 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

Once again, much appreciation must be expressed to the members of staff at the

National Headquarters, with whom it is a pleasure to work, and to 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 specifically to administration and personnel; taking care of all routine business for these entities; writing and distributing their Minutes and Agendas; ensuring that all their statutory requirements are met. Assisting the National Treasurer. Liaising with Ichiban Commercial regarding a Rules and Policies document review to ensure that both documents conform to current legislation (in process). Conducting the annual renewal of the Section's several insurance policies, including building and contents, group personal accident and public liability for all the Lodges/Branches and Groups comprising the Australian Section; ensuring that premiums are at an appropriate level for all Lodges/Branches. Overseeing the annual audit and preparing for the audit. Overseeing the payment of wages, and paying all bills for the National Headquarters, The Australian Section Theosophical Trust and the Springbrook Education and Retreat Centre. Producing and distributing quarterly investment trust reports to the seven investment partners with a beneficial interest in our Maple-Brown Abbott portfolio. Working on the Budget and end of year financial

statements with the National Treasurer. Overseeing arrangements for the national convention, especially regarding accommodation and any other matters not taken care of by the National President. Dealing with various Trust property issues. Updating the Section's business plan (a work in progress). Presentation of a series of six webinars given for the Theosophical Society in America and available for use by any Lodges/Branches or Groups for study. Supervision of National Headquarters' staff. Project managing the creation of the new website, including liaising with the developers at Brave Vision, and with our Lodges/Branches. With Gil Murdoch, uploading all Lodge/Branch programmes onto the new website. Sourcing scores of copyright free quality images for use on the website (innumerable hours spent on this), and re-writing text to conform to the new design. Creating a number of new items of interest for the website.

Jennifer Hissey: Entering data for the Online Public Access Catalogue; handling enquiries for material in the Campbell Theosophical Research Library and Archives as well as cataloguing work; networking with other libraries in Australia; liaising with Softlink in order to improve OPAC; Convention Secretary; researching artists who have been influenced by Theosophy for the Section's Archives; building up research material for potential use on the Section's new website and elsewhere; assisting with *T in A* mail outs.

Gil Murdoch: Webmaster for the Australian Section's website; 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 *Brahmavidyā* 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; assisting with *T in A* mail outs.

Pedro Oliveira, Education Coordinator: preparing and presenting classes at the annual School of Theosophy; organising two events at the Springbrook Centre and preparing/presenting classes for both; research for presentations to several TS centres and the National Convention; development of a new Educational Resources catalogue for the use of Lodges, Branches and Certified Groups; research for and maintenance of the Section's Facebook page; responding to requests for educational material and general educational matters; communicating with National Members on educational resources; responding to DVD and CD orders; responsible for the Campbell Theosophical Research Library and Archives; 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; proofreading four issues of *Theosophy in Australia*; organising *T in A* mail outs.

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 general editing of OPAC; assisting with *T in A* mail outs.

Rosanna Sheridan: assistance to the National President, the National Secretary and the Education Coordinator as required.

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.

Dai Trandang: volunteer – organising the quarterly mail out of *Theosophy in Australia*; work on the *Union Index of Theosophical Periodicals*, member of the national Executive Committee and Director of The Australian Section Theosophical Trust; Director of The Theosophical Foundation Pty Ltd. He continued in this capacity until November, prior to an interstate move. Special acknowledgement is due to Dai Trandang for his many years of dedicated service to the TS at the national level in various respects.

Gloria Yiangou: volunteer – assistance in the Campbell Theosophical Research Library and Archives until October, State Representative until July 2018.

Marie McArdle: volunteer - member of national Executive Committee and Director of The Australian Section Theosophical Trust until January 2018, member of Electronic Media and Marketing Commit-



tee, ex officio Director of The Theosophical Foundation Pty Ltd.

Dianne Kynaston: volunteer – member of national Executive Committee and Director of The Australian Section Theosophical 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, National Vice-President until January.

Franco Guazzelli: volunteer - State Representative.

Helen Steven: volunteer – State Representative, National Vice-President since January.

Travis James: volunteer – State Representative until September.

Gaynor Fraser – State Representative as from September.

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

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

## GENERAL COUNCIL

The General Council continued its twice yearly meetings, with a mid-year meeting held in July at Naarden in the Netherlands, in addition to the usual December meeting in Adyar. At the request of the General Council in December John Vorstermans, the National President of the New Zealand Section, and I, were asked to redraft a resolution on the purpose and scope of the TS for consideration by the General Council at its December meeting this year. The aim is to further clarify the role of our

Society in the world today and, if passed, this resolution has the potential to serve as a useful guide for Section and Lodge/Branch work.

Our International President, Tim Boyd, has requested the worldwide publication of a significant TS document, 'Implementing the Ageless Wisdom', resulting from the mid-year meeting in Naarden. The General Council has been meeting at length around the middle of the last two years with a view to making long range plans for the TS. This year, special attention was given to some priority projects. The full article by Tim Boyd was published in the June issue of *Theosophy in Australia* and is well worth a read, to help understand new global TS initiatives. The magazine can also be accessed online on the Section's website.

## Official TS Mission Statement

Of special note is the Society's new Mission Statement, which was formally adopted by the General Council at its mid-year meeting:

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

Sections have been requested to include the Mission Statement in all TS publications, which therefore also applies to the national magazine of a Section such as ours, as well as local newsletters of our Lodges, Branches and Groups.

## MEMBERSHIP

### Statistics

Membership declined by a total of 18 during the year, bringing the number of members in the Section to 793 as at 31 August

2018. (See also the annual membership analysis.) There was a decline of 10 in the number of National Members, the remainder of the losses being spread around six of our eleven Lodges/Branches.

### National Members

As at 31 August, 91 National Members were attached directly to the National Headquarters. We welcomed a number of these members from around the Section to national events during the year under review. The Education Coordinator communicated with all National Members in March, announcing the mid-year event at Springbrook; and in July regarding a new addition to the Media Library which, along with the National Members' Lending Library, is a special lending service provided to these Members. Our National Members are greatly valued.

### 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. As a result of a request, sets of these letters were also sent during the year to all Lodges/Branches for their information. From time to time some of them have been used as a basis for group study/discussion.

### Exit Surveys

Some former members who either resigned or lapsed completed and returned the optional exit surveys which were sent to them by the National Headquarters. Usually the reasons given were of a routine nature, but sometimes issues with a local TS centre were cited, in which case

centres concerned were notified for action as appropriate.

### Membership Forms Online

At the time of writing this report plans were continuing for application forms for national membership to be placed on the Section's website, designed to make joining the TS easier. There are similar plans for Lodge/Branch membership application forms in due course. (See also item on new website.)

### Code of Conduct

At its meeting in June the National Council resolved that a Code of Conduct for the Section be developed by the national Executive Committee, with a view to adoption by the National Council. This would replace the Guidelines for Conduct which have been in place since 2003 and would be more comprehensive. Work on this was yet to commence at the time of writing this report.

### *Theosophy in Australia*

*Theosophy in Australia* has been in publication since May 1921, being a continuation at that time of *Theosophy in Australasia*, which in turn commenced publication in 1895. Therefore it has a long, and not insignificant, history. Four issues of the national magazine were printed in September, November, March and June during the year under review. The November issue was posted to every member as usual, including a number of items that all members are required to receive under the Section's Rules. The remaining three issues of the magazine were posted throughout the year to those members who paid slightly higher annual dues in order to receive four print copies. Some

additional copies continued to be posted to Lodges, Branches and Certified Groups for members to browse. Each issue of the magazine was placed on the Section's website at the same time as print copies were posted, with all TS centres advised accordingly. Those who chose to receive direct notification when the magazine is online were sent an email from the National Headquarters. Members who are interested in receiving these notifications are welcome to email Gil Murdoch, National Headquarters office, at: [web@theosophicalsociety.org.au](mailto:web@theosophicalsociety.org.au)

## **CONVENTIONS**

### **2018 Convention**

Much appreciation is due to the President of Brisbane Lodge, John Harris, and those local members who supported him in the hosting of the Convention at St. John's College, located within the picturesque campus of the University of Queensland; also, to the several members of staff at the National Headquarters office who assisted with the considerable preparation work involved. As always, keynote speaker Richard Silberstein's talks were particularly well received. Our annual Convention, being the main event of the year for this Section, is a great opportunity to explore a theme together, and spend quality time with old and new friends. It also provides a larger view of the Society and its diversity. Members are encouraged to attend Conventions; quite a few members participate enthusiastically every year.

### **2019 and 2020 Conventions**

Plans continued during the year for the 2019 Convention, due to be held at Sancta Sophia College, the University of Sydney. Also, after a visit to the University of Mel-

bourne by the National Secretary and me in July, a venue was selected by the national Executive Committee for the 2020 Convention.

## **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.

This Committee met a few times during the year to discuss business plan priorities, Canyonleigh events, Springbrook events, and some proposed new courses. As a result of other priority work, development of the first new course will most likely commence in 2019. A reminder also that our study courses are available for purchase on the national website.

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

The Library received the visit of a Sydney researcher who perused the periodicals collection for information on the Star Amphitheatre at Balmoral. We received a number of articles selected by Dianne Kynaston on the following subjects: Anagarika Dharmapala, Henry S. Olcott, Adyar Library and Research Centre and Rukmini Devi Arundale, among others. A research fellow of the Presbyterian Theological Centre, Burwood, NSW, wrote requesting specific information regarding the contact between Col. Olcott and Prof. John Smith of the University of Sydney. He was referred to the TS Archives at Adyar. Jennifer Hissey, our Librarian, is

collating/systematising a great deal of information on Australian artists who were influenced by the TS. Material has been supplied by Dianne Kynaston.

The most recent issue of *The Campbell Library Newsletter* was distributed in early July. The focus was the history and development of the *Union Index of Theosophical Periodicals*, an idea originally conceived by Gladney Oakley, a National Member of the TS in Australia. A number of messages of appreciation were received. The *Union Index* has become an important research tool for students and researchers around the world. Dianne Kynaston has kindly sent to the Library a copy of an article on the late Chief Justice Sir Lawrence Street which includes a mention of Annie Besant.

### National Speakers' Schedule

The National Speakers' Schedule remains an important form of support provided by the National Headquarters to TS centres and members around the Section. It includes National Lecturers, the National President and the Education Coordinator, as well as International Lecturers. During the year under review, a total of 62 such presentations were organised around the Section. This figure excludes the additional presentations which were given at the National Convention, as well as the national events which were presented at the Springbrook and Canyonleigh Centres during the year.

At its mid-year meeting the National Council appointed the following as National Lecturers for 2018, subject to their agreement which was subsequently obtained:

Barry Bowden, Dianne Kynaston, Simon

O'Rourke, Skip Pry and Dara Tatrav.

### International Lecturer

It was a pleasure to arrange a tour by Michael Gomes from the USA in April/early May this year which was generally well received. This included presentations at five Lodges/Branches, his study classes at the School of Theosophy at Springbrook and his weekend seminar at Launceston. (See also relevant items under National Events.)

### Book Depot, National Headquarters

Sales from our depot of specially selected books at the National Headquarters continued during the year, at cost recovery prices.

### Universities

#### University of Sydney

Since 2000 The Theosophical Society in Australia has awarded 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. The winners of the 2017 prize, awarded in April 2018, were Judith Howard: 'What is the role attributed to Ancient Egypt by Western Esoteric traditions? Discuss with reference to Freemasonry'; Adam Smith: 'What is the role attributed to ancient Egypt by Western Esoteric traditions? Discuss with reference to The Theosophical Society.'; and a funding proposal for a Ph.D. on Theosophy by Tara Smith (who had commenced a PhD in Studies in Religion in 2018), as part of her Honours course work. This was an original and well thought out piece, being a hypothetical proposal for research into the original 2GB recordings, which have not received much academic attention.

## University of Queensland

Since 2014 the TS in Australia has made available a prize for work on 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 time of writing this report, advice on the selection of possible prize winners for 2017 was awaited.

## 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. She had indicated that no students reached her required standard for a prize during the first year, but hoped there would be some deserving students in the following year.

## NATIONAL EVENTS

### Springbrook Centre

An event on 'Science and the Ancient Wisdom' was organised in October by the Education Coordinator, speakers including Dara Tatray, Pedro Oliveira, and Drs Victor Gostin, David Allan and Brian Harding. The 2018 School of Theosophy with Michael Gomes, held in April/early May, had as its theme 'HPB's Esoteric Instructions'. It proved very popular, with attendance by members from many parts of Australia, as well as a student from New Zealand. The high number of registrations for the July event run by the Education Coordinator on 'The Science of Yoga' exceeded expectations. Prior to the end of the year under review, the Education and Training Committee decided not

to hold a third national event at Springbrook at the end of October this year, two well attended events at Springbrook being considered sufficient for the 2018 calendar year. During the year advance plans were also put into place for the 2019 School of Theosophy, with study classes to be given by Perth Branch member Perry Coles.

### Canyonleigh Centre

Dianne Kynaston ran a successful one-day seminar at the Canyonleigh Centre on 12 November, on the theme 'Pearls of the Orient'. Members attended from Blavatsky Lodge, Canberra Branch and Newcastle castle Lodge, as well as one National Member. Presenters included Heather Fisher, Marie Bertelle, Vicky Kapatos, Isolde Sueltemeyer and Dr Grahame Crookham. A smaller yet worthwhile event was held in March on 'Towards Stress Free Living: Cultivating Stillness'. Presenters were the National President, the Education Coordinator, national member and meditation teacher Marie Bertelle, and former National Lecturer Brian Parry.

## PUBLICITY & PROMOTION

### Facebook Page

Posts during the period under review included an ad for the public talk by Dr Richard Silberstein at the 2018 Brisbane Convention; a brief report on Annie Besant's translation of *The Bhagavad Gita*; a quote from *The Voice of the Silence*; the March 2018 issue of *Theosophy in Australia*; the flyer for the July 2018 event at Springbrook; and an ad for the 16-week Introduction to Theosophy at Blavatsky Lodge, based on Pablo Sender's webinar.

Other posts included a quote from a December 1904 talk by Annie Besant in

Benares; a link to a BBC radio programme on Annie Besant, with the participation of a number of English scholars; an ad for a talk by Michael Gomes at Blavatsky Lodge on 'As Above So Below: Principles of Hermetic Wisdom'; a photo of Michael Gomes with the National Headquarters staff; a group photo of the 2018 School of Theosophy; possible similarities between a scene in *The Last Jedi* and the writings of Madame Blavatsky; a post about the historical background of the White Lotus Day commemoration; and a PowerPoint slide show on the *Mahatma Letters*.

The above-mentioned posts reached 32,160 people and 1,456 people now follow the page.

### e-Bulletin

Five e-Bulletins were emailed to our distribution list during the year under review, providing ongoing announcements about events, inspirational quotations and various items of information. Registration numbers for our events are boosted through these Bulletins. At the time of writing this report, 558 people were on the distribution list. Members who do not receive e-Bulletins, and who would like to do so, can contact Gil Murdoch at the National Headquarters: [web@theosophicalsociety.org.au](mailto:web@theosophicalsociety.org.au)

### OPAC

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

The number of entered holdings of Lodges/Branches at the time of writing this report was as follows:

|            |      |
|------------|------|
| Adelaide   | 3732 |
| Blavatsky  | 2051 |
| Brisbane   | 5780 |
| Campbell   | 2775 |
| Launceston | 2114 |
| Melbourne  | 7248 |
| Perth      | 1614 |

Updated specialised lists found on the left hand side of the OPAC search page under the heading 'Other Searches' include:

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Adyar Popular Lectures                        | 20 |
| Blavatsky Lectures                            | 62 |
| Books for children                            | 79 |
| Rhine, J.B. (Joseph Banks)                    | 7  |
| <i>Secret Doctrine</i> reference series       | 32 |
| Theosophical History                          | 45 |
| Theosophical Research Centre London 1931-1968 | 21 |

Jennifer Hissey welcomes suggestions for further lists and can be contacted at: [catalogue@theosophicalsociety.org.au](mailto:catalogue@theosophicalsociety.org.au)

### Marketing/Business Plan

At the close of the January National Council meeting, it was agreed that the national Executive Committee would make a shortlist of the priority items identified at our business plan workshop. A sample is provided below from the list that was subsequently compiled, with the status of each at the time of writing this report indicated in brackets:

Top priorities:

- New website [almost ready for launch]
- Introductory video about the TS [outline completed, script to be written]

High priority:

- Members' only section on the new website, including page for committees [members' only access area being developed as part of new website]
- Podcasts [pending]

- Testimonials by members [several were filmed during the School of Theosophy at Springbrook, awaiting editing and uploading].
- Interview with Michael Gomes during the School of Theosophy [filmed, awaiting editing and uploading]
- Convention workshops with committees [already commenced at 2018 Convention]
- Training package [survey was conducted by National President, responses to be considered further with a number of suggestions taken up]
- New website training, partly in-house and partly by David Nye of Brave Vision [some initial training has commenced]

The business plan will be further refined, with costings. See also item on New Website below.

In addition, in February the National President sent a survey with three questions to Lodges and Branches, all related to our evolving business plan: information on what type of training would be useful, suggestions for the content of the TS introductory video, and an indication whether each TS centre could use a vertical banner provided by the Section (the latter offer was answered affirmatively, almost without exception).

### **Website**

There was an average of 38,000 visits to the site during the year. 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. 68, 28 June 2018, containing 223,299 entries. Gil has been particularly busy transferring

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

### **New Website**

The development of the Section's new website, part of our business plan, has proved very time consuming, partly because it has been built from the ground up and not with standard Web development software. This enables significant flexibility. Information on the existing site has been re-worked, with much new material included for a different look. At the time of writing this report the site was set for an October launch.

### **ANNUAL FUND**

Gratitude is expressed to all those who have donated to the Annual Fund, no matter how small the contribution. This Fund has been used for our major project, the construction of the Section's new website.

### **SUPPORT**

#### **Support for TS Centres by the National Headquarters**

In December I sent an annual letter to Lodge/Branch Presidents to remind them of the types of support available from the National Headquarters.

I also reinstated and revised a previous orientation package, known now as the Orientation Toolkit, which was sent out in December to all newly elected Lodge/Branch committee members to help serve as a guide to the TS and committee work. This included material on items such as: The Structure of the TS; the Australian Section's Guidelines for 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; The TS, and Selected Similar and Other Organisations. The aim of this package is to help strengthen our committee work around the Section.

Requests for assistance are received regularly from TS centres around the country and responded to by members of staff at the National Headquarters. See also the following items which indicate additional forms of support from the National Society for our TS centres: Education and Training Committee, National Speakers' Schedule, International Lecturers, OPAC, Marketing, Lodge/Branches (first two paragraphs).

## **OUR INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY**

### **International Links**

A reminder, once more, of our international links as a worldwide Society. During the year a number of our members attended TS conferences in other countries and sessions of the School of the Wisdom at Adyar. At each of our National Conventions members were able to sign post-cards of greeting to Sections and smaller TS bodies around the world, as well as a number of members. These always result in a number of messages of appreciation. I also sent several messages of greeting during the year, on request, to TS gatherings in other countries, on behalf of the members of our Section.

### **TS World Congress**

The Society's successful 11th World Congress was held in early August in Singapore, on the theme 'Contemplation, Consciousness, Commitment: the Future is Now'. 173 members from around the world were in attendance, 11 from Australia. The programme included an interesting mix of talks, workshops and cultural sessions. International President Tim Boyd was in attendance of course, as well as the three other international officers. The President of Singapore Lodge, Sanne Chong, and the members of the Lodge, did an excellent job of organising the Congress and made all concerned feel very welcome in Singapore.

### **Adyar**

A number of members of our Section attended the Society's 2017 International Convention in Adyar, as well as sessions of the School of the Wisdom, during the year under review. eNewsletters from the International Headquarters which provide information about these are routinely forwarded to TS centres around the Section, and advertised in *Theosophy in Australia*. Members are encouraged to check the international TS website, which provides regular information: [www.ts-adyar.org](http://www.ts-adyar.org)

### **Adyar Security Fund**

This Fund consists of accumulated donations from this Section over a period of time, which are held for the use of the International Headquarters.

### **Indo-Pacific Federation**

In 2016 Australian member, Gerard Brennan, was elected President of the Indo-Pacific Federation, of which our Section is a member. He has already travelled to a number of countries within the region



endeavouring to strengthen the TS work across the Federation, with the emphasis on renewing the work in places that require extra assistance. During the year under review Gerard visited:

- India in December/January, attending the International Convention, convening an informal meeting of the IPF Committee and helping to plan a Youth Convention at Adyar.
- Singapore in March, meeting with Singapore Lodge's Executive Committee and discussing how the Lodge could help neighbouring Lodges, especially in Indonesia and Malaysia.
- Singapore in August for the TS World Congress, during which he convened a further informal meeting of the IPF Executive Committee

In August, as a result of a request by the President of the Federation, the Australian Section paid the air fare of National Lecturer Dianne Kynaston to travel to Malaysia in order to help strengthen the work in that country, which only has one active Lodge, Selangor Lodge in Kuala Lumpur. At the time of writing this report negotiations were still under way with the Malaysian government authorities about holding the next Indo-Pacific Conference in Kuala Lumpur from 1-6 November 2019. As soon as confirmation is received about the location of the conference, this information will be announced.

For a number of years the Australian and New Zealand Sections have had a reciprocal arrangement which enables a deserving and committed member of each Section to attend the other's annual School of Theosophy. This year, once again, we welcomed a New Zealand member to our

School, and one of our members attended the New Zealand School. This arrangement has also enriched relationships between members of both Sections over the years.

## **RULES**

### **Elections of State Representatives**

Elections for State Representatives were carried out during the year. As there was only one candidate for each of the Electoral States the following were elected or re-elected unopposed: Phillipa Rooke – Queensland, Gaynor Fraser – South Australia/NT, and Helen Steven – Tasmania. Our State Representatives perform an important function, representing every member in their Electoral State at the six monthly meetings of the Section's National Council.

### **Lodge/Branch Rules**

A number of amendments to Rules of TS centres around the Section were checked by the Section's Rules Committee during the year, for referral to the national Executive Committee for discussion and a decision. To give one example, Perth Branch received approval to present to its AGM some fairly substantial changes to its Rules, due to specific requirements of the relevant Western Australian legislation.

### **Notices of Motion**

33 Notices of Motion to amend the Section's Rules, recommended by the national Executive Committee and the National Council, and 1 Notice of Motion from Canberra Branch, were voted on at the 2017 Lodge/Branch Convention Meetings and passed. The Notices of Motion had been sent to all members of the Section, as

required under the Section's Rules, with the November 2017 issue of *Theosophy in Australia*. The results were announced at the 2018 Convention Business Meeting. A substantial amount of work was carried out by the national Rules Committee, which reviewed the Section's Rules prior to making recommendations for any changes considered necessary, in addition to the preparation by Canberra Branch for its Notice of Motion.

### **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 National Secretary and I met with one Lodge committee during the year. Also, I sent a summary of a very successful workshop with Lodge/Branch committees which took place at the 2018 National Convention to all Lodges and Branches. Participants from around the Section had dealt with various questions, including two suggested programmes of 12 sessions. The workshop was conducted by Denise Frost and Harry Bayens.

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

#### **Hobart Branch, TAS (chartered 1889)**

Visiting speakers to our southernmost TS centre during the year included National Lecturers Barry Bowden and Simon O'Rourke who spoke respectively on 'The Science of Self Knowledge' and

'The Concept of Karma in Shakespeare's "The Merchant of Venice"'. The Branch's library was opened prior to the regular weekly public meetings, and also for two afternoons per week. Some members attended the annual Tasmanian weekend seminar in Launceston, which has become a regular fixture in this state (see also item on Launceston Lodge).

#### **Melbourne Lodge, VIC (chartered 1890)**

Melbourne Lodge's premises have been sold and at the time of writing this report the Lodge was continuing the major task of searching for new premises. Seminars during the year included 'The Heart Sutra', 'Homer's Odyssey' and 'Rediscovering the Beautiful'. Saturday activities were well patronised, with an average attendance of 35 at public meetings. Some members' meetings were held. Study/discussion groups included 'Meditation', 'Mandala Healing Art' and 'TheoSocial' Fridays – a new casual discussion group. The bookshop hosted monthly 'Conversations at the TS Bookshop'. Assistance was given to the Mornington Peninsula Group through preparation of flyers, which were then sent to the National Headquarters for placement on the Section's website. The TOS hosted two Saturday afternoon events at the Lodge, as well as a picnic in Melbourne's Botanic Gardens.

#### **Adelaide Lodge, SA (chartered 1891)**

Adelaide Lodge can now contact over 700 non-members electronically through Facebook and Mailchimp. Monthly members' meetings continued on themes including 'Spiritual Encounters', 'A Common Aspiration for Truth' and 'The Voice

*of the Silence*'. Members' study groups were held on *'The Secret Doctrine'* and *'The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett'*, as well as regular public study and discussion groups. Monthly Theosophy Science Group meetings took place, as well as a discussion on 'Theosophy, Philosophy and Life'. Visitors included the Education Coordinator, National Lecturers Dianne Kynaston and Simon O'Rourke, and International Lecturer Michael Gomes. The Lodge's bookshop facilitated a gathering to introduce three local authors, and its quarterly newsletter helped draw attention to the Lodge. The library included a group of volunteers, having been managed by a dedicated member for twelve years. Also, the TOS met fortnightly with two of its fundraising events targeting Indigenous Community Volunteers and Skylight.

### **Brisbane Lodge, QLD (chartered 1895)**

Brisbane Lodge's home is a charming heritage building near the centre of Brisbane. Some timber work was renewed during the year. Weekly public meetings continued at the Lodge during the year under review as well as monthly members' meetings. Study/discussion groups included *'The Science of Yoga'*, *'The Secret Doctrine'* and a meditation group. Second hand books were sold in the bookshop as a result of donations, and the Lodge reports a steady trickle of visiting library members during the year. A number of TOS activities also took place.

### **Perth Branch, WA (chartered 1897)**

Our largest TS centre held 32 members' meetings and 25 public meetings this year. New members have been drawn to the Branch through its introductory courses

on Theosophy. During the period under review, in addition to an Introduction to Theosophy course, other study/discussion groups included 'Galaxies and Solar Systems' and *'At the Feet of the Master'*. Three of the seminars held were 'Learning to love the Law' – the theme of the Branch's Easter weekend seminar, 'Classics of Modern Theosophy' and 'Spiritual Pathways'. Visiting speakers included International Lecturer Michael Gomes, the Education Coordinator and two National Lecturers. Perth Branch's Meetup group continued. Considerable preparatory work took place towards the adoption of a new set of Rules, as well as a Code of Conduct. Also, a TOS night took place every 3 months, preceded by a dinner.

### **Launceston Lodge, TAS (chartered 1901)**

Launceston Lodge met on Wednesdays, one meeting per month being replaced by a Saturday meeting. Study and discussions were worked into the weekly programme, with different members facilitating in turn. The year's focus was 'An Introduction to Theosophy' by John Algeo, using course notes and DVDs from resources provided by the National Headquarters. Visitors included National Lecturers Barry Bowden and Simon O'Rourke. Social activities included evening meals with visiting speakers, and an annual Christmas picnic. The Lodge's programme included 'Gems from the Library', with a member periodically selecting a book and providing a synopsis or else quotations for discussion. Steps towards a move from the Lodge's current premises were commenced, due to a decision to sell the Launceston property following an approach by the Lodge.

Also, the April Tasmanian weekend workshop held in Launceston had as its theme ‘Search for the Inner Self’, conducted by National Lecturer Barry Bowden, along with National Vice-President and President of Hobart Branch, Helen Steven.

### **Blavatsky Lodge, Sydney, NSW (chartered 1922)**

Reported highlights included ‘All Day Saturday’ events, the White Lotus Day Celebration in May and a presentation on ‘Altruism – the Buddhist Perspective’ by an Australian Buddhist nun. Weekly public meetings and monthly members’ meetings continued. Book study/discussion groups included ‘*The Key to Theosophy*’, ‘*The Astral Body*’, ‘*Seven Great Religions*’ and ‘*The Mahatma Letters*’. Courses included Dr Pablo Sender’s ‘Birth of Humanity’, ‘*The Bhagavad Gita*’, ‘The Krishnamurti Experience’ and Ed Abdill’s ‘*The Secret Gateway*’. Michael Gomes, USA, gave two talks. Donated second hand books were available for sale. Borrowing from the Adyar Lending Library was restricted to TS members, library only membership having ceased. Monthly TOS meetings included an open presentation by TS members and leaders of charitable organisations.

### **Newcastle Lodge, NSW (chartered 1941)**

The City of Greater Newcastle Lodge continued to hold monthly public meetings during the year at a church hall. The monthly member/discussion group was discontinued for the time being after December. Visiting speakers included the National President, Education Coordinator Pedro Oliveira, and former National Lecturer Brian Parry. Two mem-

bers attended the National Convention in January and one attended the School of Theosophy with Michael Gomes in April. The Lodge’s meeting details were placed on Meetup, which has drawn a number of new enquirers to recent meetings. In fact, Meetup seems to have proved particularly successful as a way of attracting newcomers to some smaller TS centres.

### **Atherton Lodge, QLD (chartered 1950)**

Our most Northern Lodge continued its regular monthly meetings, preceded by a shared vegetarian lunch and also a dinner when guest speakers visited. Guest speakers during the year included Michael Gomes, USA, and National Lecturer, Skip Pry. Titles of presentations included ‘Kundalini – Playing with Fire’, ‘The Legend of Shangri-La’, ‘The Book of Nature’ and ‘Ethics and Morality’.

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

Some items are presented here from Canberra Branch’s comprehensive report. Advertising using Meet-Up commenced in February. Discussions commenced on the future of the Branch’s library, currently housed in a private home. There were several study/discussion groups. Seminars included ‘Review of One’s Personal Map of Reality’ and ‘Clarification of One’s Values’. Some members attended the national Canyonleigh event on ‘Pearls of the Orient’. Visitors included National Lecturer Dianne Kynaston and the National President. A Notice of Motion from the Branch to amend the Section’s Rules was passed. Three Newsletters were distributed widely, with very positive feedback. Also, the small TOS group met three

times for study/meditation/discussion on TOS projects, and donations were raised through social brunches and two TOS stalls.

### **Sunshine Coast Lodge, QLD (chartered 2004)**

Our most recently Chartered Lodge held monthly members' meetings as from April, also continuing its weekly public meetings. A monthly meditation was held, and monthly study on 'Theosophy – an Introductory Study Course' by Dr John Algeo. A library night took place once a month and two pot luck dinners were held. Visiting speakers included the National President, National Lecturer Skip Pry and National Lecturer Barry Bowden. State Representative, Phillipa Rooke, also visited. Presentations included 'From Human to Superhuman – Kingdoms of Nature', and 'Death, the Near-Death Experience and Spiritual Awakening'.

## **CERTIFIED GROUP REPORTS**

### **Blue Mountains Group, NSW**

The Blue Mountains Group, to the West of Sydney, continued to meet weekly on Mondays, with study centred on *The Secret Doctrine*. Meetings were followed by an afternoon tea. The National President spoke to the group during the year. Other presentations included 'Dances of Universal Peace' and 'Bah'ai Faith - Teachings and Philosophy'.

### **Gosford Group, NSW**

Gosford Group met monthly, excluding January. Monthly book discussion at members' homes focussed on 'Your Sacred Path'. Phone calls and visits continued to be provided to members who need support, as well as cards; our First

Object in action. Visiting speakers included, among others, the National President, the President of the Indo-Pacific Federation Gerard Brennan, National Lecturer Dianne Kynaston and Suzanne May from Sydney. Presentations included 'Good Reasons to be a Vegetarian', 'Unity and Diversity – Possibility or Paradox' and 'Ahimsā – a Chain of Inspiration'. Some members attended Blavatsky Lodge in Sydney and the National Convention.

### **Mornington Peninsula Group, VIC**

This Group met monthly except during January. Meeting formats consisted of a meditation given by the presenter and a shared vegetarian lunch, followed by the presentation. Speakers included Edward Sinclair, Georgina Fode and Nina Mazurek, among others. Some of the programme titles were 'Karma and Reincarnation', 'Journey Towards Enlightenment' and 'Dream Power'. Also, TOS activities continued with monthly 'Mandala Healing Art' sessions, donations being put towards Australian TOS projects.

### **Northern Beaches Group, NSW**

This group met monthly in the home of a TS member on Sydney's Northern Beaches. Topics of some of the discussions held were HPB's 'Diagram of Meditation' and 'There is a Road, Steep and Thorny ...', 'The Purpose of Life' and 'The Challenge of Being a Member of the TS'. Several DVDs were borrowed from the National Headquarters. Also, the Group decided to change its meeting day to a weekend, this being more convenient than a weekday meeting for all concerned.

### **Toowoomba Group, QLD**

The Toowoomba Group met fortnightly

during the year. Social activities included the Wivenhoe Dam camp muster – Theosophy around the fire pit under the stars. Speakers included National Lecturer Barry Bowden and the National President, among others. Fortnightly meditations were held in addition to presentations which included ‘Man Visible and Invisible, a Soul’s Growth through Reincarnation’, ‘Devachan’, ‘Death, the Near-Death Experience and Spiritual Awakening’, and ‘An Introduction to the Baha’i Principles’. Some members attended the Springbrook event on ‘The Science of Yoga’ organised by the Education Coordinator.

### **Wodonga-Albury Group, VIC**

We turn now to the Wodonga-Albury Group on the New South Wales/Victorian border. The library of this small but dedicated group was opened by volunteers for four hours, five days per week, which is an impressive effort. The National President visited during the year. The members of the Group include one member of Melbourne Lodge, along with four of our National Members. One National Member attended the School of Theosophy in April and is a regular supporter of national TS events.

### **INFORMAL GROUPS**

One Informal Group (a group which is recognised by the TS in Australia but is not an officially Certified Group) continued in Logan, south-eastern Queensland; the other Informal Group in Sydney City ceased to hold this status due to a decline in attendance.

### **THE THEOSOPHICAL ORDER OF SERVICE**

The National Coordinator reports:

This year has seen the continuation of great grass roots support by the local TOS communities. Each group has embraced the TOS journey in a way that suits their community and during the process have once again raised funds for the TOS projects. The generous efforts of the TOS family enabled the Australian TOS to donate AUD \$25,225 to the following international projects.

|                                   |         |
|-----------------------------------|---------|
| Pakistan Home schools             | \$6,000 |
| Pakistan Educational sponsorships | \$4,650 |
| Philippines Golden Link College   | \$2,580 |
| Syrian Refugees via TOS Italy     | \$8,575 |
| India :                           |         |
| Adyar Olcott Memorial School      | \$1,160 |
| Adyar Animal Dispensary           | \$1,750 |
| Adyar Women’s Welfare Centre      | \$510   |

My personal thanks to Jean Carroll, our immediate past Coordinator, for her willing and generous mentoring during the leadership change. Carolyn Harrod, the previous Treasurer, also provided invaluable guidance and information, while Geoff Harrod has continued to provide the essential Web administration and advice. We thank George Wester in his role of Secretary. Lastly, and most importantly, we thank Dianne Manning, who has stepped into the busy role of Treasurer and we are grateful for her diligence.

Rhonda Phillips, National Coordinator  
 tos.australia@gmail.com

### **CONCLUSION**

The above report summarises another year of numerous activities around our Section, nationally and locally. I hope it has proved an interesting read, and wish all TS centres around this country a productive and fulfilling period ahead.

Linda Oliveira

**Annual Membership**  
**Analysis of Lodge/Branch Membership as at**  
**31/08/2018**

| Lodge/Branch   | Members<br>31-Aug-17 | Trans In | New        | Rejoin    | Total/In   | Resign    | Lapse      | Dec Trans out | Total/Out | Members<br>31-Aug-18 | Diff       |
|----------------|----------------------|----------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|---------------|-----------|----------------------|------------|
| Adelaide       | 72                   | 0        | 8          | 2         | 10         | 5         | 0          | 1             | 1         | 75                   | 3          |
| Atherton       | 15                   | 0        | 2          | 1         | 3          | 1         | 0          | 0             | 1         | 17                   | 2          |
| Blavatksy      | 150                  | 1        | 16         | 4         | 21         | 0         | 14         | 2             | 3         | 152                  | 2          |
| Brisbane       | 58                   | 0        | 9          | 2         | 11         | 5         | 4          | 2             | 1         | 12                   | -1         |
| Canberra       | 20                   | 0        | 0          | 0         | 0          | 2         | 1          | 0             | 0         | 3                    | -3         |
| Hobart         | 21                   | 0        | 1          | 1         | 2          | 3         | 1          | 0             | 0         | 4                    | -2         |
| Launceston     | 24                   | 1        | 1          | 0         | 1          | 4         | 2          | 0             | 0         | 6                    | -5         |
| Melbourne      | 100                  | 1        | 20         | 2         | 23         | 2         | 17         | 2             | 0         | 21                   | 2          |
| Newcastle      | 9                    | 0        | 2          | 1         | 3          | 1         | 0          | 0             | 1         | 11                   | 2          |
| Perth          | 193                  | 2        | 44         | 6         | 52         | 13        | 41         | 2             | 1         | 57                   | -5         |
| Sunshine Coast | 48                   | 0        | 6          | 0         | 6          | 0         | 8          | 1             | 0         | 9                    | -3         |
| Sub Total      | 710                  | 4        | 109        | 19        | 132        | 36        | 88         | 10            | 6         | 140                  | -8         |
| National       | 101                  | 3        | 9          | 1         | 13         | 2         | 17         | 3             | 1         | 23                   | -10        |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>811</b>           | <b>7</b> | <b>118</b> | <b>20</b> | <b>145</b> | <b>38</b> | <b>105</b> | <b>13</b>     | <b>7</b>  | <b>163</b>           | <b>-18</b> |

## 2019 Convention Programme

**The Theosophical Society in Australia  
19-26 January, Sancta Sophia College,  
University of Sydney**

**‘Divine Wisdom in Theory and Practice’  
Featured Speaker: Dr Julian Droogan**



*This programme will be subject to some further minor changes.*

**Important: access to the College for day registrants- see p. 143**

### Sat 19 January

7.30pm Welcome, Introduction – Key Speakers, Workshops  
Greetings to the Convention  
Tea and Coffee

### Sun 20 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 2018 Convention Business Meeting  
National President’s Report for the Year Ended 31 August 2018  
National Treasurer’s Report for the Year Ended 31 August 2018  
Financial Statements and Balance Sheet for the Year Ended 31 August  
2018, and Auditor’s Report thereon  
Budget for the Year Ending 31 August 2019  
Appointment of Auditor  
Announcement of Newly Appointed Officers and National Council  
Members  
Announcement of Ballot Results:  
- New South Wales/ACT, Western Australia, Victoria  
Vote on Notices of Motion  
Place and Time of Next Convention  
Resolutions of Goodwill  
Any Other Business  
2.00pm The Theosophical Order of Service – Dr Keith Suter  
‘Progress in the Search for Social Justice’  
4.00pm TALK - FOR MEMBERS ACCOMPANIED BY FRIENDS (see page 143)  
KEY SPEAKER, Dr Julian Droogan  
‘Religion in the Ancient World’  
7.30pm An Interview: Linda Oliveira with Gerard Brennan,  
President of the Indo-Pacific Federation



### Mon 21 January

- 7.30am Morning Attunement  
9.15am ‘Gnosis - from the Known to the Unknown’  
– Linda Oliveira  
11.00am Short talks:  
‘The Alchemy of Inspiration’ – Denise Frost  
‘A Practical View of Nondualism and Conventional Methods’ – Barry Bowden  
2.00pm TS Websites and Marketing - all welcome  
- David Nye (Brave Vision) and Dara Tatray  
4.00pm ‘The Power of Negative Thinking’  
– Dara Tatray  
7.30pm DVD ‘Hindu Nectar’

### Tues 22 January

- 7.30am Attunement  
9.15am ‘The First Object and the Politics of Multiculturalism’  
– Olga Gostin  
11.00am ‘Seeing the Invisible: Thought Forms’  
– Pedro Oliveira  
2.00pm Workshops  
‘What is Good Conduct? Hints from Theosophical Writings’: Harry Bayens  
‘An Introduction to *The Secret Doctrine*’: Simon O’Rourke  
2.00pm Recent Developments – Session with Lodge/Branch Committee Members  
Linda Oliveira and Dara Tatray  
4.00pm Theosophy-Science Session  
Victor Gostin, additional participants TBA  
7.30pm Listening and Reflecting (meditative readings and silent periods)  
– Linda Oliveira and Phillipa Rooke

### Wed 23 January

- 7.30am Attunement  
OUTING AND PICNIC LUNCH  
Parkland at Botany Bay – Nan Tien Buddhist Temple, Wollongong – return  
via Mt. Ousley  
7.30pm Classical Concert: ‘Divas’ Duel’

### Thurs 24 January

- 7.30am Attunement  
9.15am ‘G.I. Gurdjieff: An Approach to Divine Wisdom’  
– David Allan  
11.00am short talk:  
‘The Unity of Theory and Practice’ – Gerard Brennan  
1.30pm The Theosophical Order of Service: Annual General Meeting  
FREE TIME for outings by own arrangement  
7.30pm ‘Beauty and Beyond: the Life and Art of Sulamith Wülfing’  
– Isolde Sueltemeyer

## Fri 25 January

- 7.30am Attunement  
 9.15am 'Women of Spiritual Integrity: Practitioners of Wisdom'  
 – Dianne Kynaston  
 11.00am Workshops  
 'An Introduction to *The Secret Doctrine*' – Simon O'Rourke  
 'The Power of Thought' – Cassandra Au  
 'Qigong' – Marianne Fraser  
 2.30pm Q and A  
 Jean Carroll (facilitator and participant), Pamela Peterson,  
 Edward Sinclair, Rosanna Sheridan, Tina Hentisz  
 4.00pm Perspectives on the Convention  
 Invitation to 2020 Convention, Melbourne  
 Closing of Convention (National President)  
 7.30pm Concert – Sydney Gay and Lesbian Choir Ensemble

## Sat 26 January

Departures

## Results -

## ELECTION OF STATE REPRESENTATIVES



### Election of State Representatives for Victoria, New South Wales/ACT and Western Australia for two years from the declaration of the result

The deadline for receipt of nominations in these elections was Friday 10 August. As there was only one Candidate in the state of Victoria, in accordance with Rule 19(5), **Edward Sinclair** was elected unopposed, subject to a favourable Yes/No vote. The votes in that ballot were counted by Richard Larkin and Dara Tatray. Of the 91 eligible voters, 39 members returned the voting slip. All voted FOR Edward Sinclair as the State Representative for Victoria. There was 1 invalid vote.

As no nomination was received for NSW/ACT the national Executive was asked to fill the casual vacancy by appointing an eligible member in the electoral state. Under Section Rule 18(3)(b) it was unanimously resolved to appoint **Gerard Brennan** as the State Representative for NSW/ACT.

As two valid nominations were received for Western Australia, a ballot was held in accordance with Rule 19(5). The votes were counted by Beatrice Malka and Dara Tatray. 119 members were entitled to vote, and 68 valid votes were received. There were 3 invalid votes. Votes for Sue Lee - 45. Votes for Vivienne Ward - 23. **Sue Lee** is therefore declared elected.

Dara Tatray, National Secretary

## National Calendar of Events



**Canyonleigh Centre, Bolitho House, 1070 Tugalong Road, Canyonleigh, NSW For TS members and non-members**

**Theme: 'The Science of Yoga'**

**arrivals Fri 29 March - departures Sun 31 March 2019**

**Presenter:** Pedro Oliveira,  
Education Coordinator

**About:** An interactive exploration of some of the key aphorisms of the *Yoga-Sūtras* of Patañjali, including the process of *Samyama* that leads to an unconditioned awareness of consciousness in its essential nature. *Priority will be given to those who did not attend this event at Springbrook in July 2018.*

**Cost:** members \$125 (twin share) or \$150 (single room guaranteed)  
non-members \$150 (twin share) or \$210 (single room guaranteed)  
- includes sessions, accommodation and catering.

**Enquiries to:** Pedro Oliveira, [education@theosophicalsociety.org.au](mailto:education@theosophicalsociety.org.au)  
tel. 02 9264 7056 (Mon-Thurs)



**Springbrook Centre, 2184 Springbrook Road, Springbrook, QLD  
2019 SCHOOL OF THEOSOPHY For TS members  
arrivals Fri 26 April – departures Thurs 2 May**

**Theme: 'Seeking Out the Way'**

**Presenter:** Perry Coles, long-time TS member  
and student of Theosophy, Perth

**About:** Classes will include reference to The Pilgrim and the Three Halls, Freedom and Discipline, Psychic and Spiritual, and Discipleship and Daily life.

**Cost:** \$360 - includes tuition, accommodation, catering, train/airport transfers

**Enquiries to:** National President [pres@theosophicalsociety.org.au](mailto:pres@theosophicalsociety.org.au)  
tel. 02 9264 7056 (Mon-Thurs)



**2019 NATIONAL CONVENTION PROGRAMME - see page 138**

**Registration forms and further information for all events:**

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

## Education

Pedro Oliveira



The Campbell Theosophical Research Library

**:: Links to Theosophical Texts Online ::**

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Online Periodicals and Series

Online Theosophical Libraries: Books, Pamphlets, Articles

Glossaries, Sanskrit Pronunciation, Search Facilities, Theosophedia

Appendix: Reader and Browser Programs



One of the important services that the Campbell Theosophical Research Library renders to students and researchers, in Australia and around the world, is *Links to Theosophical Texts Online*. Presently there are 1,555 links to theosophical texts available.

‘Theosophical’ is used in a broad and eclectic sense. ‘Texts’ includes books, booklets, pamphlets, collections of articles, as well as significant individual articles.

Authors with a widely representative collection of online texts include Annie Besant, H.P. Blavatsky, Gottfried de Purucker,

William Quan Judge, C.W. Leadbeater and Henry S. Olcott. Many more authors are included on this web page. It also includes glossaries, Sanskrit pronunciation, search facilities and Theosophedia, the online Theosophical Encyclopaedia. The TS in Australia is not responsible for opinions expressed on the web sites to which links are provided in the *Links to Theosophical Texts Online* web pages.

To access *Links to Theosophical Texts Online* go to:

<http://www.austheos.org.au/clibrary/bin-dex-0.html>

## **ANNUAL CONVENTION BUSINESS MEETING OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN AUSTRALIA**

The 2019 Convention Business Meeting of The Theosophical Society in Australia will take place at 9.30 a.m. on Sunday 20 January at Sancta Sophia College, 8 Missenden Road, Camperdown, NSW.

This notification is provided in accordance with Rules 12 and 13 of the Rules of The Theosophical Society in Australia.

### **AGENDA**

Roll Call of Voting Delegates and Proxies  
Confirmation of Minutes of 2018 Convention Business Meeting  
National President's Report for the Year Ended 31 August 2018  
National Treasurer's Report for the Year Ended 31 August 2018  
Financial Statements and Balance Sheet for the Year Ended  
31 August 2018, and Auditor's Report thereon  
Budget for the Year Ending 31 August 2019  
Appointment of Auditor  
Announcement of Newly Appointed Officers and National Council Members,  
and any Corresponding Retired Members  
Announcement of Ballot Results:  
- Victoria, Western Australia, New South Wales/ACT  
Vote on Notices of Motion  
Place and Time of Next Convention  
Resolutions of Goodwill  
Any Other Business

### **IMPORTANT NOTE TO ALL DAY REGISTRANTS FOR THE 2019 NATIONAL CONVENTION, SYDNEY:**

**Entry to Sancta Sophia College, 8 Missenden Road, Camperdown, is through a gate on Missenden Road via an access code on a pinpad. This will be provided prior to the Convention to all day registrants.**

**email: [natsec@theosophicalsociety.org.au](mailto:natsec@theosophicalsociety.org.au)**

**Members in Sydney may wish to bring a friend for the special presentation for members and friends at 4.00pm, Sunday 20 January, by featured speaker Dr Julian Droogan. Subject: 'Religion in the Ancient World'  
Please note that unaccompanied guests cannot be admitted.**

## Theosophical Order of Service



During January 2018 the Australian TOS Sacred Sights tour travelled in Southern India. One of the highlights was our journey through the state of Kerala. Kerala is lush and green. It is known for its wonderful canal country and we were fortunate to spend a day floating down those peaceful waters. Recently, Kerala has been devastated by major flooding. Those picturesque canals must have turned into great torrents that spread out over the flat country side.

The initial emergency rescue and relief efforts have been handled by the Indian government and larger agencies such as The Red Cross. The TOS gives assistance during the 2nd phase of such disasters, when victims need help putting their lives back together. The International TOS community has been invited to assist. We Australians may wish to join the fundraising efforts.

### The 4th TOS International Conference – Singapore, 9-10 August 2018 ‘Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow’

This is an extract from Jean Carroll’s report:

Every five years TOS members from around the world gather together to formulate an Action Plan for the next five years for their respective countries. This year we met following the Theosophical World Congress held in Singapore. We were all inspired by the variety of excellent talks at the Congress focusing on the One Life and the need to live out our teachings. Consequently, we were all well prepared to bring these seeds into our action blueprint for the next five years.

We thank Jean for representing the Australian TOS.

Rhonda Phillips  
tos.australia@gmail.com

a student drying out  
rescued school books



## Review

***Krishnamurti:  
Preparing to Leave,*  
Scott H. Forbes,  
SHF Publications,  
2018, pb, 304pp,  
USD\$29.95 + shipping**



Jiddu Krishnamurti was born in India during the reign of Queen Victoria, when India was regarded as the jewel in the crown of the British Empire. He was discovered by members of the Theosophical Society and groomed to be the World Teacher, in accordance with the belief system of the Theosophists who influenced major social trends in Edwardian England and Imperial India in the first half of the 20th century. He remains today one of the most mysterious, enigmatic and controversial characters ever to emerge from the river of Masters, gurus, spiritual leaders and philosophers.

Krishnamurti died in Ojai, California in 1986 of pancreatic cancer having left a treasure trove of insights on a par with those of the Buddha. These insights are referred to as ‘The Teachings’ and represent a priceless perspective on what is possible if human beings will



dare to be free from their conditioning. Various biographers have attempted to record his journey through life. Those sanctioned by Krishnamurti include the three volumes by Mary Lutyens, who was a lifelong friend; and the *Memoirs and Unfinished Book* by his devoted assistant, Mary Zimbalist.

But the best has been left to last. It is the book *Krishnamurti: Preparing to Leave* by Scott H. Forbes, a priceless account of the last months of Krishnamurti’s life from approximately 25 May 1985 until 17 February 1986. Scott Forbes became an intimate of Krishnamurti after he went to work at the Brockwood Park Krishnamurti Educational Centre in 1974; and an intimate member of the family group which comprised Krishnamurti, Mary Zimbalist, Dr. Parchure, and Scott and his wife.

During this period, Scott spent six to eight hours a day caring for Krishnaji – as he was affectionately called – and he wrote his account while it was fresh in his mind. He was only thirty-seven years of age, the youngest man ever to be so intimately connected with the mature aged World Teacher.

Everything about the book, from the quality of the paper, to the photographs, to the fast paced descriptions within, strives for excellence. Biographies, even of famous men, can be boring – but not this one.

In an age of visual communication it is an almost insurmountable challenge to make the truth critically relevant and compelling. Scott H. Forbes succeeds where many before him have failed. It is his unpretentious style which is so engaging. He has an unadulterated love for Krishnaji and this shines through his writing without sensationalism or any kind of spiritual mumbo jumbo. His account is a moving experience to read. He describes events exactly as they occurred. He does not attempt to mystify, glorify, or interpret.

Long years ago, Krishnamurti described his relationship with Scott in terms of ‘cooking him’. This was a term he coined for ‘preparing the ground’. When the time was right, Krishnamurti trusted that Scott would flower and use his talents and energy to help him sow the seeds for generations who would come after.

There are many incidents in Scott’s account which have parallels with the actions of a loving father towards his son, though Scott in no way pursues this line of enquiry. He tells the story of an incredible man, faced with

the seemingly insurmountable task of putting his affairs in order, prior to his earthly departure and in such a way that his lifelong mission of ‘setting humanity free’ would continue until his final breath and more importantly, beyond. To this end he was confronted with the task of resolving divisions, conflicts and clashes of ego in the organisational structure of his Schools and Foundations in India, England and America. He worked tirelessly and to the very end to reconcile the disparate forces.

This is not a book of pain and suffering, though these dimensions are certainly present. Rather it is a tale of endurance, faithfulness, and compassion.

No one interested in Krishnamurti’s life and Teaching should miss reading this book. It reveals a side of Krishnaji which is arguably missing from other books about him.

Scott’s book is important for one final reason. I believe that it will have great appeal and relevance for young people, who are faced with the conflict and divisions in society in the 21st century. More than anything else, Scott tells the final chapter of a momentous time in human evolution, when a single human being dared to challenge humanity to be different, to be self aware, and to examine what it means to be truly human.  
- Trisha English, Western Australia



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## NAMASTE SERIES 2 : 36 Phases within Hindu Myths

**K**now this space and world through the heart,  
its times delusions and discords.

**A**cknowledge dark places which come,  
yet go far beyond them, ... into the Light.

**L**ink mindless myriads of self-interest within,  
to current colosseums of distraction.

**I**ntone within quiet gentle moments ...  
a nurtured place to become and be.

**Y**earn for that yolk which nourishes  
the journey of return to the whole.

**U**nderstand that wherever one is, ...  
from there one may start to

**G**row and see.

Ever be within the flames of reflection.

**A**long a walk within, on a way to be,  
we ride white horses to clearly see.



Replica of a Gujhyakali idol worshipped in a Nepalese Temple, Kolkata. Arnab Dutta, 2011, Wikimedia Commons.

Dr Helen Lambert

## News and Notes



### School of the Wisdom, Adyar

Information about all three School of the Wisdom sessions to be held at our International Headquarters in Adyar later this year and early next year is listed below:

#### Higher Consciousness - its Nature and Awakening

Dr Pablo Sender

19-30 November 2018

#### Living Theosophy in the 21st Century

Jacque Mahnich

3-15 December 2018

#### Meditation in

#### the Light of Theosophy

by Ms Trân-Thi-Kim-Diêu, France

10 - 26 January 2019

These classes are specifically intended for members of the TS. More information is available at:

<http://www.ts-adyar.org/content/school-wisdom>

Click on the theme of each session to obtain more detailed information and a link to an application form. Please note that *application forms also need to be*

*signed by the National President* before being submitted to the International Secretary's office.

### 2019 National Lecturers

The National Council has appointed the following members as National Lecturers for the Section during 2019: Dara Tatray, Dianne Kynaston, Barry Bowden, Simon O'Rourke and Skip Pry. As tours by National Lecturers and others need to be coordinated, *please contact the National President if your TS centre is interested in a visit by one of these lecturers*. Requests will be accommodated as far as possible.

### A New Look Website

The Section's new website is now online at: <https://theosophicalsociety.org.au/> This is a shared platform with several ways of navigating to your Lodge/Branch. The most direct way is to go to Change Location on the top right of the masthead and select your Lodge/Branch. From now on you can use that URL on publicity material and access your part of the platform directly. More information will be provided in the next e-Bulletin.

## Why are all Australian Members Receiving this Issue?

Each year, under the relevant Section Rule, every member must be provided with a number of items of information prior to the January Convention Business Meeting, e.g. the National President's annual report, the annual accounts and other material required under the Section's Rules such as Notices of Motion. Some of these items are included in this magazine, and some are accompanying enclosures.

### Vale Carolyn Harrod 29 August 1945 -14 October 2018



The Theosophical Order of Service (TOS) and the Theosophical Society (TS) lost one of its selfless workers last month in the passing of Carolyn Harrod from Brisbane. Carolyn and her husband Geoffrey were holidaying in Scandinavia when Carolyn was called home. I had worked closely with Carolyn for six joyful years following her retirement as TOS National Coordinator. At the same time she stayed on working with TOS international with her close friend, Diana Dunningham-Chapotin.

Her achievements were many, she used the information age to connect us all nationally and internationally. Carolyn and Geoff developed and managed a database of email contacts, a TOS Australia website and an international quarterly TOS newsletter. She revamped our national TOS By-Laws, Rules and Regulations and produced a widely used TOS Handbook.

I saw first-hand what a wonder woman Carolyn was at the TOS international conference at Wheaton in 2013, with her multi-skilled personality and her work ethic. When speaking she always looked upwards, smiling, as if contacting a higher source. She worked with joy, this attitude being a gift from a greater source.

Carolyn was a true role model, being aware of how we build on one another. Her amazing vitality, combined with her willingness to share her management skills, are her legacy to us. Let us celebrate her life as a role model, and for the joy that she spread amongst us.

Jean Carroll

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.

## 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](mailto:catalogue@theosophicalsociety.org.au)

### Australian Capital Territory

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

Postal Address: c/- P.O. Box 760, Rozelle NSW 2039

Meet: Friends Meeting House, cnr Bent

& Condamine Streets, Turner ACT 2612

7.30pm 1st Monday of month (Feb - May, Sep - Dec)

Emeritus Faculty ANU: 2.00pm 1st Saturday of

month (June - Aug), discussion group 2.00pm

3rd Saturday of month

President: Marie McArdle

Secretary: Barbara Harrod

Tel: 0402 530 859

email: [vibrationalbalance@gmail.com](mailto:vibrationalbalance@gmail.com)

<https://canberra.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 92676955 Fax: 02 9283 3772

Email: [contact@tssydney.org.au](mailto:contact@tssydney.org.au)

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

Meet: 1.00pm Wednesdays

President: Sally Gray

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

Acting Secretary: Dianne Kynaston

Tel: 0452 633 132

Email: [diannedeva@gmail.com](mailto:diannedeva@gmail.com)

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

*Blue Mountains Group:*

Meet: Members' Lounge, Blue Mountains

Cultural Centre, 30 Parke Street (above Coles),

Katoomba NSW 2780

Meetings every Monday, 2.00 - 4.00pm

Coordinator: Jessica Gemmill

Tel: 02 4782 4269

email: [pattie.thompson12@bigpond.com](mailto:pattie.thompson12@bigpond.com)

*Gosford Group:*

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](mailto:marifraser256@gmail.com)

Secretary: Roni Ostergaard

Telephone: 02 4358 1413

*Northern Beaches Group:*

Postal address: c/- The Manor,

2 Iluka Road, Mosman NSW 2088

Meet: c/- 31 Riviera Street

Avalon NSW 2107

2.00 pm 3rd Friday each month

Coordinator: Dianne Kynaston

email: [diannedeva@gmail.com](mailto:diannedeva@gmail.com)

### Queensland

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

Postal Address: 14 Herberton Rd,

Atherton QLD 4883

Meet: Meeting Room, Community Services

Tablelands, 38 Mabel Street, Atherton

otherwise 30 Mabel Street, shop 1

2.00pm 2nd Saturday of month except Jan.

President: Max Brandenberger

Secretary: Chris Pang Way

Tel: 07 4091 5156

<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](mailto:brisbanelodge@theosophyqld.org.au)

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

Meet: 7.30pm Wednesdays, library open 6.30-7.30pm

President: John Harris

Secretary: Phillipa Rooke

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

Meet: Buderim Croquet Club,  
Syd Lingard Drive, Buderim QLD 4556  
Tel: 0427 713 061 (Pam Walsh)  
7.00pm Thursdays  
Email: [theosocsunshinecoast@gmail.com](mailto:theosocsunshinecoast@gmail.com)  
<https://sunshinecoast.theosophicalsociety.org.au/>  
President: Pam Walsh  
Secretary: Jean Carroll

*Toowoomba Group:*

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](mailto: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](mailto:president@tsadelaide.org.au)  
[www.theosophical.org.au](http://www.theosophical.org.au)  
Meet: Members Meeting 10.00am 4th Friday of  
every month. Please contact Lodge for additional  
meeting dates.  
President: Travis James  
Secretary: position vacant

**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: position vacant  
Email: [helen\\_steven@live.com](mailto:helen_steven@live.com)

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

54 Elizabeth Street, Launceston TAS 7250  
Postal address: as above  
email: [launcestontheosophicalsociety@gmail.com](mailto:launcestontheosophicalsociety@gmail.com)  
<https://launceston.theosophicalsociety.org.au/>  
[www.austheos.org.au/launceston](http://www.austheos.org.au/launceston)  
Meet: 1.00pm Wednesdays except the week of the 1st  
Wednesday when meetings are held instead at 1.00pm  
on the 1st Saturday (see also website listing to double

check time if there is a visiting speaker)  
President/Secretary: Denise Frost  
Tel: 0400 140 624

**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](mailto:info@melbournetheosophy.org)  
<https://melbourne.theosophicalsociety.org.au/>  
Meet: usually 4th Saturday each month  
President: Edward Sinclair  
Secretary: Kari Torgersen

*Mornington Peninsula Group:*

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: 03 5976 3815

*Wodonga-Albury Group:*

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

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

21 Glendower Street, Perth WA 6000  
Tel/Fax: 08 9328 8104  
Email: [tsperth@iinet.net.au](mailto:tsperth@iinet.net.au)  
<http://www.tsperth.com.au>  
Meet: 7.30pm Tuesdays  
President: Franco Guazzelli  
Secretary: Matthew Thompson  
*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](mailto:info@tsretreat.com.au)  
Caretaker: Kay Schiefelbein

## *Freedom of Thought*

As the Theosophical Society has spread far and wide over the world, and as members of all religions have become members of it without surrendering the special dogmas, teachings and beliefs of their respective faiths, it is thought desirable to emphasise the fact that there is no doctrine, no opinion, by whomsoever taught or held, that is in any way binding on any member of the Society, none of which any member is not free to accept or reject. Approval of its three Objects is the sole condition of membership. No teacher, or writer, from H.P. Blavatsky onwards, has any authority to impose his or her teachings or opinions on members. Every member has an equal right to follow any school of thought, but has no right to force the choice on any other. Neither a candidate for any office nor any voter can be rendered ineligible to stand or to vote, because of any opinion held, or because of membership in any school of thought. Opinions or beliefs neither bestow privileges nor inflict penalties.

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

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



## *Freedom of the Society*

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

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

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



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

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

~

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

~

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