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INSIDE

Can Science Explain Phenomena?

Ahimsā

Florence Fuller: Theosophist and Artist

2019 National Convention, Sydney

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

CONTENTS

- 38 From the National President
- 39 Can Science Explain Phenomena?
- 46 Ahimsā
- 53 Florence Fuller: Theosophist and Artist
- 57 An Interview with Chris Pang Way
- 61 National Calendar of Events
- 62 Glossophical Gleanings
- 63 2019 National Convention, Sydney
- 64 Call for Nominations
 - State Representatives
- 66 Education
- 67 Theosophical Order of Service
- 68 Review
- 69 News and Notes
- 71 Section Directory

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.

From the National President

Linda Oliveira



Some of the offerings in this issue include scientific perspectives on psi phenomena; reflections on ahimsā, being the first of the *yamas* or restraints in the yoga tradition; some rich historical information about Theosophist and artist, Florence Fuller; and an interview with one of our long-time members. Also, members will be warmly welcomed at our January 2019 National Convention, due to take place in Sydney. Information is provided on page 63.

Recently it was a pleasure to give a talk during the White Lotus Day celebration at Blavatsky Lodge in Sydney. Of course, the day is so named because our President-Founder, Colonel Olcott, observed one year after HPB's passing that lotuses grew 'in unusual profusion'. The legacy of HPB's reintroduction of Theosophy to the world is substantial; no doubt many have felt much gratitude for a set of teachings which, if examined more closely, help to give clarity and meaning to the perambulations of the universe, our world and our lives.

The symbolism of the lotus is quite profound, with nuanced meanings in Hinduism and Buddhism. For example, in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition, the lotus symbolises in one sense the goddess White Tara, being the female

representation of the Lord Buddha. In Hinduism, among other things the lotus represents Sarasvatī, the goddess of Wisdom. The breadth of its physical symbology is brought out very well in this passage from *The Secret Doctrine*:

The Lotus, or Padma, is, moreover, a very ancient and favorite simile for the Kosmos itself, and also for man. The popular reasons given are, firstly ... that the Lotus seed contains within itself a perfect miniature of the future plant, which typifies the fact that the spiritual prototypes of all things exist in the immaterial world before those things become materialized on Earth. Secondly, the fact that the Lotus plant grows up through the water, having its root in the *ilus*, or mud, and spreading its flower in the air above. ... The root of the Lotus sunk in the mud represents material life, the stalk passing up through the water typifies existence in the astral world, and the flower floating on the water and opening to the sky is emblematical of spiritual being. (vol. I, pp.57-58)

The lotus, when fully open to the sky, is indeed an apt symbol for the blossoming of the spiritual nature in all of us, helping provide some long-term optimism and inspiration amidst a troubled world.

Can Science Explain Phenomena?

Brian Harding



Introduction

In my title, I use the word ‘phenomena’ rather than ‘psychic events’ or ‘psi events’, since phenomena was used frequently in the early days of our Society. The term ‘psychical research’ dates from the founding of the Society for Psychical Research (SPR) in 1882 by Frederic W.H. Myers, Edmund Gurney and Henry Sidgwick. The commonly used abbreviation, ‘psi’, was first used by British psychologist Robert Thouless in 1942. Phenomena (or psi) include mind-to-mind connection (telepathy), perceiving objects or events at a distance (clairvoyance), seeing future events (precognition) and mind-matter interactions (psychokinesis). All of these involve the apparent transfer of information or energy by means that bypass normal human senses.

Regular use of statistics and the task of sorting out different psi abilities really began with J.B. Rhine, at

Duke University, North Carolina. There, in 1930, he began studying ESP – ‘extra-sensory perception’. In 1937, Rhine established the *Journal of Parapsychology*, a peer-reviewed academic journal. Still published today (by the Rhine Research Centre), it now also covers consciousness research.

Later, the beginning of the space age impacted on parapsychology – psi – research. Edgar Mitchell, lunar module pilot on Apollo 14, underwent a transformative experience in 1971, when he saw Earth from space as he was returning from the Moon. He went on to become the first Chief Scientist of the California-based Institute of Noetic Sciences (IONS) in 1973. Its current Chief Scientist is Dean Radin. His books include *Supernormal* (2013) in which Radin summarises work that continues to confirm the reality of phenomena. For example, he says the likelihood that telepathy exists is as close to proven as science can establish. Similarly, he asserts that

precognition definitely exists. This is the conclusion derived from strict experimentation using, for example, the measurement of skin conductance, unconscious changes in the eyes of participants, and measurement of brain activity. The results show that the odds against chance are up to a mind-boggling billion-to-one.

Similarly, says Radin, ‘historical, anecdotal, case study and scientific evidence’ shows clairvoyance is real. Amazing results are also claimed in the study of mind-matter interactions – psycho-kinesis (PK). Modern research has included double-slit experiments and experiments with a Michelson interferometer.

There has also been much work on ‘intention’. Radin points to Patanjali’s *Yoga Sutras*, which suggest, for example, that the act of cultivating loving-kindness may have a field-like influence whereby one’s intentions will affect the mood, attention, or behaviour of people in the vicinity (*Sutras* III.23, III. 38). Intentional influence from a distance has been tested through projects such as Lynne McTaggart’s *The Intention Experiment* (2008).

Radin concludes, ‘So far, we’ve learned that there are rational, evidence-based reasons to accept that

some of the *siddhis* – the ones that have been repeatedly tested under controlled conditions – are real.’ But he points out that this has staggering implications for ‘rational’ science (what the Masters call ‘your exact science’). He says, ‘From a scientific perspective, the mere *existence* of these phenomena, regardless of how weak or unreliable they may be, is astounding.’ If we agree that psychic phenomena (psi) exist, we can move on to ask – can science explain such phenomena?

Theories of Psi

In his *Entangled Minds* (2006, pp.240-274), Radin discusses at some length various theories of psi and I will use his comments as a framework here. It is interesting that such theories were suggested almost from the beginning of psychical research.

a) Signal-transfer theories

These theories go back to an address in 1899 to the British Association for the Advancement of Science by the physicist Sir J.J. Thomson. Thomson proposed that electromagnetic (EM) waves might be the physical carrier of telepathy. This, in a way, is logical – after all, we know that the brain generates EM fields and that EM fields can carry information at the speed of light. (It’s also interesting that in 1899

Thomson was able to present such a topic to the British Association – I don't think that would happen today.)

The problem with this idea is that EM field strength drops off rapidly with distance, whereas experiments conducted using heavy shielding and over long distances, show that psi effects decline little over large distances. The exception to this occurs with extremely low frequencies (ELF - 0.3 – 1 kHz). In the 1960's, Russian physicist I.M. Kogan proposed that telepathy might be carried by these ELF waves. But if this were so, precognition times would still be limited to the speed of the waves (the speed of light) whereas observed times actually vary over a wide range – from minutes to months – indicating widely variable speeds. Retro-cognition phenomena, in which hidden information from the past is able to be received by some individuals, is not accounted for either.

b) Goal-oriented theories

These try to explain the teleological or goal-oriented aspects of psi, which seem to have emerged from 'intention' experiments. Physicist Helmut Schmidt proposed a theory derived from quantum physics (see below) in which observation influences probabilistic events, so wishes are fulfilled, so to speak. There are other

ideas, such as Edwin May's Decision Augmentation Theory in which our decisions are guided by precognition.

c) Field Theories

These also have a long history including Jung's concept of the collective unconscious, William James' cosmic consciousness, Frederick Myers 'subliminal self', Sheldrake's morphogenic fields and neuroscientist Michael Persinger's geomagnetic field theory. These models postulate some form of nonlocal memory permeating time and space with which we can resonate, or large, unified, mental fields that our individual minds are part of at some deep level. The latter provide an explanation for telepathy and apparent synchronicities.

d) Multidimensional Theories

These became popular in the latter part of the nineteenth century, when people's fancy was captured by the idea of 'the fourth dimension'. The time-space peculiarities of psi, which classical models could not accommodate, did seem to make some sense when a fourth spatial dimension was assumed. British psychologist, Whately Carington, published a book in 1920 entitled *A Theory of the Mechanism of Survival: The Fourth Dimension and Its Applications*. The author argued that it might be possible

I now believe we were wrong, and I regret my part in it. Dignity, love, loyalty, awe and psi must be dealt with on their own terms in a science built on these observables, not one built on the observables of subatomic particles.

Lawrence LeShan

for consciousness to survive in a 'fourth dimension'.

A recent, more sophisticated, version of the multidimensional model was developed by physicists Elizabeth Rauscher and Russell Targ (see 'Investigation of a Complex Space-Time Metric to Describe Pre-Cognition of the Future', in Ingrid Fredriksson (ed.), *Aspects of Consciousness: Essays on Physics, Death and the Mind*, McFarland & Co., p.5, 2012). They assumed that the familiar four dimensional space-time has a complex conjugate, 'complex' meaning it is based on the square root of -1. This gives us 8 dimensions, through which mind can navigate. In principle, this can be shown to account for the nonlocal properties required by psi without contradicting known physics. However, it doesn't explain how the required mental navigation takes place, nor how psychokinesis might work.

e) *Quantum Theories*

There are several versions of these and they have been very popular in recent years. Radin devotes several pages to them in *Entangled Minds* (2006). Lawrence LeShan (1974) was also an early advocate of these theories. However, in his 2009 book, he writes:

I now believe we were wrong, and I regret my part in it. Dignity, love, loyalty, awe and psi must be dealt with on their own terms in a science built on these observables, not one built on the observables of subatomic particles.

(p.15)

That is, not a science built on material objects – see, for example, A.N. Whitehead's (1985) view that the fundamental bits of existence are 'drops of experience', not material particles.

Let's return to Radin's list of quantum theories of psi. Because quantum physics has shown that human consciousness appears to be involved in turning probabilities into actualities, we could be led into consciousness research. There is not space here to delve further into this.

Radin starts with what he calls 'observational theory'. This, he says, was first proposed in the early 1970s and was based on similarities between

the non-local property of the quantum wave function and the observed space-time independence of ψ . Further, the quantum measurement problem suggests that mind plays an important role in the physical reality we observe. This theory accords with the ideas of John Eccles and Eugene Wigner, the neuroscientist Wilder Penfield, and mathematician John von Neumann, for example. Experiment has shown that observation can also retroactively influence quantum events, confirming time-reversal effects.

Walter von Lucadou suggested that the structure and function of any complex system are entangled and that ψ effects arise from resultant non-local correlations that derive from this entanglement. Harald Walach proposed that what may be called 'generalised entanglement' might be relevant to understanding ψ , an extension of an earlier suggestion by Princeton researchers Robert Jahn and Brenda Dunne. The idea of entangled minds seems to be supported by research with people in close relationships, including twins, where ψ effects appear to be a lot stronger than between strangers.

A number of you will be familiar with the work of David Bohm (1980, 1993). Bohm was uncomfortable with the Copenhagen interpretation of quantum



physics and believed that quantum theory suggested the existence of a deeper reality than that presented to our normal senses. This he called the 'implicate order', an undivided holistic realm that is beyond concepts like space-time, matter or energy. In the implicate order, everything is fully enfolded or entangled with everything else. By contrast, the explicate order, the world of ordinary observations and common sense, emerges or unfolds, out of the implicate order. Bohm used the hologram as a metaphor to illustrate how information about a whole system can be enfolded into an implicit structure, any part of which reflects the whole.

In 1932, the Hungarian mathematician, John von Neumann, placed quantum theory on firm mathematical ground. Like the Copenhagen interpretation, von Neumann assumed that quantum theory tells us about the observer's knowledge of reality rather than 'reality' itself, and the observer and what is observed are part of a single system. Physicist Henry Stapp of the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory has recently refined von Neumann's work (2004). His work suggests that the mind/brain might be a self-observing quantum object residing within an entangled non-local medium that, Radin says, happens to be entirely compatible with the known characteristics of psi. Radin then goes on to discuss the characteristics of entangled minds. He concludes that, if Stapp and others are right about the quantum mind/body connection, then human experience is indeed a part of quantum reality.

The Future – a New Reality

Back to Lawrence LeShan (2009); he steps back and asks us to rethink what we mean by 'paranormal'. If there is a 'paranormal' there must be a 'normal'. What do we mean 'normal'? What is reality? He writes:

Impossible events do not occur. Therefore, if a scientist is faced with

the fact that an impossible event has occurred – our daily fare as psychical researchers – the paradox must be resolved. This can be done only by re-defining reality in such a way that what was previously impossible now becomes possible. (p.63ff)

This makes sense. Our ideas about what is 'reality' and what is 'normal' have changed over time and few people seem to be aware of that. What is 'normal' at one stage in history, is not normal ('paranormal') at another.

LeShan goes on:

A theory about reality ... is simply an integrated set of hypotheses concerning reality and is judged by its effectiveness in attaining whatever goals seem relevant to whoever is doing the judging. It is a theory of metaphysics to be compared with other theories of the same kind. (p.65)

Two examples come to my mind. In 1901, classical physics (classical reality) was unable to explain what was known as 'the ultraviolet catastrophe'. The mathematics of classical physics couldn't explain the spectrum of black body radiation – until Max Planck came along with two radical hypotheses. He suggested that the oscillating molecules of the black body can have only discrete units of energy (the energy is 'quantised') and that these molecules could only emit or absorb

energy in discrete packets he called photons. And – bingo – calculations on this basis, a new ‘quantum reality’, perfectly explained observations.

Einstein came up with a new ‘relativity reality’ in 1915. He put forward two basic postulates that did not accord with the ‘common sense’ of classical physics, and our notions of time and space had to change.

So what LeShan is saying in the above quotations is that we have to change our common-sense notions of reality – just as Planck and Einstein did. So far as I am aware, parapsychology is still awaiting its own Planck or Einstein. But, unlike physics, maybe it’s as easy as persuading ourselves that phenomena are simply a part of our human reality.

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Ahimsā

Phillipa Rooke



‘An ancient sage once taught that the seed of Ahimsā dwells in the heart. Although it may be smaller in size than a grain of barley, it is also greater than the earth and all the heavens. Containing the potential to influence all our thoughts, all our desires, and all our actions, the seed of Ahimsā is waiting to be discovered and permitted to flower in our lives. By responding to the often quiet voice of Ahimsā, we can begin to transform our lives and help to create a new world.’¹

Ahimsā is a Sanskrit word. It is the negative of *himsā* meaning in simplified terms ‘to harm’, and therefore ahimsa means ‘not to harm’.

Ahimsā also translates as non-violence, non-injury, and abstinence from acts that inflict harm on other creatures or the environment.

And from the yoga glossary for the yoga sutras:

Non-violence, non-harmfulness, the act of not only refraining from harm but the act of removing and eliminating harm (*himsa*). Thus the thought and action that honors well being, happiness, life,

and the life force (*prana*). Living a life honoring and respecting all life forms including acting responsibly to one’s physical body.²

So, ahimsā is quite far reaching.

Jainism

There is a preoccupation with ahimsā within Jainism, for no other religious tradition has carried it to the extreme of the Jainas. For them it is not simply the first among virtues but *the* virtue.

For Jains, ahimsā is to be practised at the physical and mental level. It includes mind, speech and action. For them it is a symbiosis of the spiritual

and the physical accompanied by a sense of responsibility and restraint. Ahimsā is also rooted in a host of positive aims and actions which have great relevance to contemporary environmental concerns.

Jainism also places emphasis on *himsā* as injuring oneself – behaviour which inhibits the soul’s ability to attain liberation. Under Jainism, violence or injury to any living being is considered violence to self and a major impediment to one’s liberation.

A group of young Jains conducted an experiment with the principle of ahimsā to test its usefulness in their daily life through personal experience. This experiment was limited to the human form of life. For a week they attempted to avoid any thought, word or deed which could be construed as being harmful in any way to other human beings. Violence was considered to include: anger, hate, gossiping, personal criticisms, evil thoughts, jealousy and of course, physical violence.

This course of action could prove very enlightening for anyone interested in self-examination. For argument’s sake, let us take ‘anger’. The parameters of anger could be said to span annoyance or irritation in its milder form, through

to blind rage at the other extreme. Taking just one aspect of *himsā*, say irritation, one would need to practise a certain level of alertness in order to ‘catch oneself at it’ over the period of a week, observing the subtleties, the covertness of its manifestations in our daily life, and from there start the experiment of eliminating all forms of anger from our being. One would learn a lot about oneself from this, seemingly simple exercise!

In the Jain experiment, advice was given to participants to assist them in the practice of ahimsā, such as observing silence for an hour each day, spending the evenings reading good books, and trying to think about the good aspects of family members and close friends. This advice suggests that a change in the normal way of life was needed for the practice to be effective.

Nathaniel Altman, who wrote the book *Ahimsā*, related some of his experiences and insights in practising ahimsā:

Not as simple as I first believed it to be, although it was also more creative and exciting than I had ever imagined.

In the beginning, I seemed to concentrate more on developing the positive outer aspects of Ahimsā in my life at the expense of not coming to terms with the inner factors which caused disharmony in the first place.

I had to admit where and how I was not in truth, and especially, I had to be aware of the injury I was causing to others by my behaviour.

Although I had imagined earlier that taking responsibility for myself in this way would destroy me, I found that quite the opposite was true, and I experienced a new sensation of relief, lightness, and self-acceptance.³

Jainism would have ahimsā as reverence for all life. To have reverence for anything is to regard it ‘with *deep and affectionate respect*’. Implied in these words I think is great kindness, love and compassion.

Theosophy

Regarding reverence for all life, the words ‘all life’ can relate, for some, to sentient creatures which can feel or are capable of feeling, or it can extend beyond the animal world of which we are a part, to include plant life. But Theosophy takes the concept of life even further. The second of ‘The Four Basic Ideas’ expounded by H.P. Blavatsky is :

THERE IS NO DEAD MATTER. Every last atom is alive. It cannot be otherwise, since every atom is itself fundamentally Absolute Being. Therefore there is no such thing as ‘spaces’ of Ether, or Ākāsha, or call it what you like The true idea shows every atom of substance, no matter of what plane to be itself a LIFE.⁴

N. Sri Ram says, ‘The nature of life which is a universal energy, is to act, also to flow, progress and evolve.’⁵ If we can perceive life as being that flow, movement, we can see the actuality of the statement, ‘THERE IS NO DEAD MATTER. Every last atom is alive.’ We can see that in the human body. The atoms of our form are constantly changing. The body completely renews itself every seven years, we are told. When the human spirit passes from that form, the atoms concerned start their transformation into part of the earth or atmosphere, moving and changing constantly from one state to another. It is the movement of life, consciousness in action

Let us take the next sentence: ‘It cannot be otherwise, since every atom is itself fundamentally Absolute Being.’ We can look at the Theosophical concept of ‘matter’ as being ‘The illusory aggregate of veils surrounding the fundamental essence ...’.⁶ Putting these two statements together we could extrapolate from the idea of matter as being ‘veiled Absolute Being’, to the matter of each atom being, essentially, the veiled appearance of life in each of its forms.

Then we come to the final part of the statement:

Therefore there is no such thing as ‘spaces’ of Ether, or Ākāsha, or call it

what you like The true idea shows every atom of substance, no matter of what plane, to be itself a LIFE. ⁴

In considering ‘spaces’, can we assume that because we cannot ‘see’ with the human eye anything in places which we call space, that there is absolutely nothing occupying that apparent space? Many forms of matter can be simply beyond our range of sight. The word ‘plane’ in this statement, when she says ‘no matter of what plane’, signifies a *state of consciousness*. Each part of the cosmos has its own particular state of consciousness or plane. The state of consciousness of a rock is different from that of a plant, which is again different from an animal, a human being, planet earth, the sun, et cetera, ad infinitum. If every atom of substance is itself a life, then the whole of manifestation is pulsating with life.

Annie Besant saw this clearly when she mentioned in her second review of *The Secret Doctrine* (1889):

As Science has shown living forms [are] everywhere on the material plane, races in each drop of water, life throbbing in every leaf and blade, so the ‘Secret Doctrine’ points to the living forms on higher planes of existence, each suited to its environment, till all space thrills with life and nowhere is there death, but only change! ⁷

From ahimsā meaning ‘the reverence for all life’, perhaps we can come to

From ahimsā meaning ‘the reverence for all life’, perhaps we can come to understand ahimsā as being a deep and affectionate respect for every atom of substance, both seen and unseen.

understand ahimsā as being a *deep and affectionate respect for every atom of substance, both seen and unseen*.

Environment

Supporting this Theosophical idea, but relating specifically to this planet, is the philosophy of Deep Ecology.

In this discipline, the move is from a human centred approach, to biocentrism, or the eco-centric approach. Here, nature, environment and ecosystems are said to deserve moral protection, not because they can serve human needs or desires but purely because they too are part of this earth, just as we are. The ideas of Deep Ecology which are based on Scientific Ecology go a long way towards establishing an understanding of our interconnection with other forms of life on this planet, and indeed with the planet itself. Embedded in the ethos of Deep Ecology one can see the reverence for all life.



Arne Næss states that from an ecological point of view:

the right of all forms [of life] to live is a universal right which cannot be quantified. No single species of living being has more of this particular right to live and unfold than any other species.⁸

In this vein, N. Sri Ram says:

Each thing in Nature has a significance in itself, which is contained in its own existence and functioning. Hence the injunction not to kill, as far as possible. There is an innate quality in each, which is in a process of manifestation, of seeking to express itself.⁹

And from *The Voice of the Silence*:

‘Help nature and work on with her; and nature will regard thee as one of her creators and make obeisance.’¹⁰

Acting responsibly to our own body is in fact putting ahimsā into practice. In the human form, all parts of the body work to express their own particular quality, and function together, making a harmonious whole. Let one of those functions cease to work effectively,

and the whole entity is thrown out of balance. Anything that we do intentionally to disturb the well-being of the body could be considered as violence. In the same way, on the planetary scale, all the various areas of Nature should be allowed to function without impediment to create harmony and balance. We have no right to dominate and destroy.

Materialism

We see today the effect of violence being committed by our consumer society on our continuing ability to sustain life on this planet. Things of matter are being produced in a manner which requires them to be thrown away and frequently replaced either because of obsolescence or poor quality, to mention just a little of that violence. The production of these things requires the desecration of the earth and often the debasement of those who work to produce these things. A materialistic manner of living disregards ahimsā, the reverence for all life. Materialism

has no place in the understanding of the interrelatedness of all life. It contributes greatly to the degradation of the life of this planet. While minds are occupied with thoughts of acquisition, annoyances, criticisms, et cetera – all revolving around the self – there is no room for the thoughtfulness required to lead a life of harmlessness, for that quiet ‘other’ to be heard. If we truly practise ahimsā and come to realise the actuality of the interrelatedness of all life, and carry this ideal in our hearts, we have no choice but to act for the good of all.

Studies have been done investigating how the values we hold relate to our well-being. It was found that having materialistic values and acquiring the desired objects does not lead to increased well-being. Those same studies have shown that the desire for intrinsic values, which relate to one’s essential nature like ethical, moral and spiritual values, when unfulfilled, causes a drop in well-being. It is only in actually acquiring the desired intrinsic values, in this particular case, complete harmlessness, that well-being actually increases.

So, to finish:

An ancient sage once taught that the seed of Ahimsā dwells in the heart. Although it may be smaller in size than a grain of barley, it is also greater than the earth and all the heavens.

Containing the potential to influence all our thoughts, all our desires, and all our actions, the seed of Ahimsā is waiting to be discovered and permitted to flower in our lives. By responding to the often quiet voice of Ahimsā, we can begin to transform our lives and help to create a new world. ¹¹

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Phillipa Rooke has been a member of the Theosophical Society for 23 years. She is currently Vice-President of the Brisbane Lodge and the Queensland State Representative on the National Council. She has given talks at the Brisbane Lodge and at various Lodges and groups around the State, at national conventions and at the School of Theosophy. Her current Theosophical passions range through meditation practice, Eastern spiritual thought, and the ever unfolding journey of discovery of the essential unity of all things, of which the brotherhood of the First Object of the TS is an expression.



59. Let thy soul lend its ear to every cry of pain like as
the lotus bares its heart to drink the morning sun.

The Voice of the Silence

Non-violence leads to the highest ethics, which is the goal
of all evolution.

Thomas Edison

Florence Fuller - Theosophist and Artist



pen portrait
of Florence
Fuller,
1897,
*Adelaide
Chronicle*.
Artist
unknown.

Early Life and Career

Florence Fuller was an Australian Theosophist and painter who was born in Port Elizabeth, South Africa, in 1867, a daughter of Louisa and John Hobson Fuller. She had several siblings, including sisters Amy and Christie, both of whom subsequently became singers.

The family migrated to Australia when Florence was a child. She worked as a governess while undertaking studies in art, and first took classes at the National Gallery of Victoria Art School in 1883, then again for a further term of study in 1888. During this period she was a student of Jane Sutherland, referred to in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* as ‘the leading female artist in the group of Melbourne painters who broke with the nineteenth-century tradition of studio art by sketching and painting directly from nature’.

Fuller’s uncle was Robert Hawker Dowling, a painter of orientalist

and Aboriginal subjects, as well as portraits and miniatures. British-born, he had grown up in Tasmania and made a living there as a portraitist, before returning to his native England at age thirty. For the next two decades, his works were frequently hung at the Royal Academy. He returned to Australia in 1885, and Fuller became his pupil. In that year, aged eighteen, Fuller received a commission from Ann Fraser Bon, philanthropist and supporter of Victoria’s Aboriginal people. The commission was for Barak – last chief of the Yarra Yarra Tribe of Aborigines, a formal oil on canvas portrait of the indigenous Australian leader, William Barak. Ultimately, that painting was acquired by the State Library of Victoria. Although the painting is an important work regularly used to illustrate this significant figure in Australia’s history, interpretations of Fuller’s portrait are mixed: one critic noted the painting’s objectivity and avoidance of romanticising Aboriginal people, while another concluded that ‘Fuller is painting an ideal rather than a person’.

In 1886, Dowling returned to his native England. Giving up her work as a governess, Fuller began to paint full-time, and had opened her own studio before she had turned twenty. Dowling had intended to return to Australia and had left behind an incomplete portrait of the Victorian governor's wife, Lady Loch. He died, however, not long after arriving in England; Fuller then completed Dowling's commission. Lady Loch became her patron. Other early portraits followed: two pictures of homeless children, entitled *Weary* (inspired by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's poem on child labour 'Weariness') and *Desolate*, in 1888; and *Gently Reproachful* circa 1889. *Weary* was acquired by the Art Gallery of New South Wales in 2015. The gallery's curator of Australian art described the depiction of billboard posters in the painting as giving it a 'sense of gritty realism that was arguably unprecedented in Australian art'.

Also in 1889, Fuller was awarded a prize by the Victorian Artists Society for best portrait by an artist under twenty-five.

Theosophy and Later Career

Biographer Joan Kerr speculated that it may have been Jane Sutherland who introduced Fuller to Theosophy,

a spiritual and mystical philosophy that teaches the unity of existence and emphasises the search for universal wisdom. Described by art historian Jenny McFarlane as 'the most important counter-cultural organisation of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries', it was influential throughout Fuller's life. She joined the Society in Perth on 29 May 1905, after hearing charismatic Theosophist Charles Webster Leadbeater during his lecture tour. Bessie Rischbieth was a feminist who joined at the same time, and together they influenced the movement's development in early twentieth century Perth. Fuller was variously secretary, treasurer, and librarian of the local branch of the Theosophical Society.

In 1906 Fuller's portrait of feminist and Theosophist Annie Besant was among the paintings exhibited at the West Australian Art Society's annual exhibition. Around the same period, she painted other portraits of the movement's leading figures, including Henry Steel Olcott and Helena Petrovna Blavatsky. These representations departed from the academic portraiture in which Fuller had trained, as she incorporated practices of intuition and visualisation 'inspired by Indian aesthetics as mediated by the Theosophical Society'.



Inseparables: Florence Fuller, c.1900 Wikimedia Commons

In 1907, Besant became the President of the Theosophical Society globally, and set to work with a major expansion of the organisation's headquarters at Adyar, in what was then Madras. When it was announced that Besant would undertake a speaking tour of Australia in 1908, she was expected to stay with Fuller while in Perth. Some months later in 1908, Fuller left Western Australia and travelled to India, staying at Adyar. Of her time in India, Fuller wrote:

I went in search not only of beauty, and light, and colour, and the picturesqueness in general, which delight the eye and emotions of all artists – but of something deeper –

something less easily expressed. I spent two and a half years in a community that is quite unique – perhaps the most cosmopolitan settlement in the world – the headquarters of the Theosophical Society ... Well, I painted there, of course, but my art was undergoing a change, and I felt that it could not satisfy me unless it became so much greater.

Fuller's time at Adyar was eventful. C.W. Leadbeater arrived around the same time as Fuller, and soon afterwards he 'discovered' the person he believed would become a global teacher and orator, Jiddu Krishnamurti (then in his teens). Leadbeater and others tutored Krishnamurti. Fuller may have taught him photography. She also had a small studio built in the grounds, and painted. Her works from the period include a portrait of Leadbeater and a portrait of the Lord Buddha. [An original of the latter is at the Australian TS Headquarters - Ed.] McFarlane emphasises the significance of the latter work, pointing out that it is 'strikingly modern' in comparison to all of Fuller's other work, and more radical than compositions created by Grace Cossington Smith and Roland Wakelin, half a decade later. The painting owes much to Theosophy's emphasis on seeing the subject 'through a psychic, visionary experience'.

Sources describing Fuller's movements after her time in India sometimes are

ambiguous. She arrived in England in June 1911, where she marched with Besant in the suffragette protests associated with the coronation of George V. She continued to paint portraits, but found it difficult to realise the transformation in her art that she had conceptualised in India:

I have painted a great many portraits since I have been in England, and have been, I suppose, fairly successful – though I have done nothing in any way remarkable. The hidden inner life has not yet succeeded in expressing itself on canvas, and I can only write myself as one who aspires to a greater art, but who has not yet achieved.

Fuller subsequently travelled from London to India in 1914. One newspaper report described her as a ‘visitor’ to Sydney in 1916, although McFarlane says she travelled there with Leadbeater and remained in the city. (Another report stated that she visited Brisbane a year later.) Both newspaper pieces indicated that Fuller had spent a period painting in Java (at that time part of the Dutch East Indies), although when this occurred is not clear, and such a visit is not mentioned by McFarlane. There was at least one subsequent substantial journey, as Fuller arrived again in Sydney, via Perth, from India in 1919. At some point following these travels, Fuller settled permanently in Mosman

in Sydney’s northern suburbs, where she continued her painting, including miniatures. Her 1916 visit to Sydney had included an exhibition of a group of her miniatures, all of them portraits of theosophists including Besant and Henry Olcott, co-founder of the Theosophical Society.

Fuller continued to be associated with the theosophical community as her health and economic circumstances deteriorated.

In 1927, at the age of sixty, health issues caused her to withdraw from activities. She died nearly two decades later, on 17 July 1946. She was buried at Rookwood Cemetery.

Notable works:

Inseparables (1900) - see p.55

Summer Breezes (1904)

A Golden Hour (1905)

Portrait of Deborah Vernon Hackett (c.1908)

The above text was part of an exhibition of Florence Fuller’s works at the Adyar Museum, International Headquarters of the Theosophical Society, in December 2015. Information supplied by theosophy.wiki Sources of two quotations not provided.

An Interview with Chris Pang Way



Chris Pang Way is a long-time member who joined the Theosophical Society on 13 June 1979. Rather than answering the next five questions sequentially, he commented that the background to the first question will also answer the succeeding four questions, which very much involve some of his family's history.

*How did you come to join the TS?
Which lodges have you belonged to?
What is your role in Atherton Lodge?
Can you tell us a bit about Atherton Lodge?
Your uncle was a member in Atherton.
Can you elaborate a little on this?*

As can be deduced from my name and photo, I am Chinese. My grandfathers on both sides of the family first came to Australia from China around 1880, so both parents were born and educated in Australia. My father's family lived

first in Aloomba, Queensland (between Cairns and Innisfail) but moved to Atherton when my father was of school age. My mother's family settled initially in Darwin, but also moved to Atherton when my mother was approaching school age.

Both families, quite independently of each other, moved back to Hong Kong and mainland China when my parents were in their late teens or early twenties. My father was in Hong Kong for about eleven years and my mother for seven years. They married there. I suspect it was my father who came across the Theosophical Society in that city. My mother and father joined the Hong Kong Lodge as did my mother's youngest brother, John Fong On.

The families of both of my parents returned to Australia a little before the

Second World War. My sister and I were born in Texas, a small town near the New South Wales/Queensland border. However, my family moved to Atherton in 1946 to be close to my mother's side of the family. I believe it was mainly through the efforts of my parents that the Atherton Lodge was formed in 1950. Meetings were held in a shop/residence building on my parents' property and the Lodge's library books were also housed there. I recall that the meetings were held once a fortnight at the time, and this generated enough interest in Theosophy in the area for a lodge to be formed in Cairns after a few years. Later, when Cairns Lodge closed, people who lived on the coast and were interested in Theosophy travelled to Atherton for meetings which was about a ninety kilometre, one and a half hour trip each way; for some, slightly more.

For a considerable time meetings have been held once a month, probably because modern living has meant that people have had less time to devote to Theosophy and the small population of the area has resulted in less people to draw upon for presentations. The present format is a two hour session on the second Saturday of the month, starting at 2 pm. Sometimes there is a short break between the first hour and the second. There is also a shared veg-

etarian lunch prior to the session, to allow people to chat to others before the formal meeting. The monthly meetings probably better suit the people living far away as well. The present programmes for the year range from lecture presentations, videos and discussion groups, to an occasional workshop style session.

Incidentally, some TS members and some people outside of the TS are surprised how long the Lodge has been going. Why Atherton Lodge continued while others closed was due to the strong commitment to the TS, and Atherton Lodge, of several members including my parents, my uncle, John Fong On, Rina Van Straten and Christine Watson.

How has your membership of the TS influenced your life?

Even though I wasn't originally a member of the Theosophical Society in a formal sense, as is the case with a sprinkling of TS members, I was born into a TS family. So in many ways I was a Theosophist from birth and grew up with many of the concepts often mentioned in the Theosophical Society such as karma and reincarnation, the astral body, clairvoyance, meditation, et cetera. It probably would be more correct to say that Theosophy, rather

than membership of the TS, has shaped my view of the universe and of life throughout my lifetime.

Can you say a bit about your professional background?

As I had studied science at Townsville University College/James Cook University (BSc Hons, MSc) with an emphasis on Chemistry, I moved to Sydney in 1976 with the expectation that I would be more likely to find work there in line with my qualifications. I was fortunate to obtain a temporary position with the NSW Environmental Protection Authority, which quickly led to a permanent position in the EPA's laboratory as a Chemist, and later a Senior Chemist. This was quite a busy period in my life with a young family and a fairly heavy work commitment.

I had been in Sydney for about two and a half years when a good friend of my parents contacted me while in Sydney and suggested I should join the TS. He also mentioned that there was a TS science group, Dr Hugh Murdoch being the person to contact. Hence I joined Blavatsky Lodge in 1979. It was probably almost a year later that Hugh gave a talk on astronomy at Blavatsky Lodge, when I was able to meet him and join the Theosophy-Science group. Some ten years later a Blav-

atsky Lodge friend encouraged me to join the Lodge's Executive Committee. After a few years I became the Hon. Secretary of Blavatsky Lodge and held the position for six years. I officially retired from the EPA in September 2003. On moving to Atherton in 2004, I was asked by Atherton lodge to take on the Hon. Secretary position, and have continued in that role up to the present.

What Theosophical subjects are of particular interest to you and why?

Most of my Theosophical reading took place when I was in my late teens and early twenties. The books that I recall particularly are *Occult Chemistry, Man Whence, How and Whither* and *At the Feet of the Master*. The first two books fitted in with my interest in science, but I felt that the last one was simply and clearly written and gave a very good guide on how to live one's life. I feel I am at that stage in life when I want to find my own spiritual path. I find that I am given help when needed, and am at the appropriate place at the right time to help others.

How do you think Theosophy can help the world?

Theosophy is there to help people find their spiritual path, whether it is through books, lectures, courses or by

meeting and talking to others. Certainly there is much wisdom to be found in Theosophical literature, and often with multiple levels to be discovered. I do believe, by bringing people together who are interested in a spiritual path, that this allows more of those serendipity moments to happen and without the Theosophical Society as a place to meet this wouldn't happen or, at least, would be less likely to happen.

What would you say to anyone who is thinking of joining the TS?

'Welcome', and probably much of what was in the previous question. I would also mention the various events which arise such as the World Congress, the Indo-Pacific Conference and the Annual Convention which are worth attending for the quality of the presentations and for meeting new people.

Thank you, Chris.

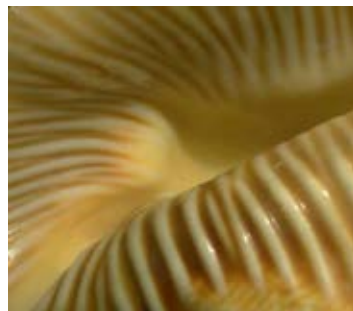
However wise you may be already, on this Path you have much to learn; so much that here also there must be discrimination, and you must think carefully what is worth learning. All knowledge is useful, and one day you will have all knowledge; but while you have only part, take care that it is the most useful part.

At the Feet of the Master

One final comment: My father, Joseph Pang Way, realised that he could introduce Theosophy to people by writing about happiness (which many people would be interested in) and by pointing the way to happiness through various quotes from Theosophy. He ended up writing three slightly different versions of a booklet, *The Master Key to Happiness*, *Happiness Now* and *Happiness for You Now*, with one or two being translated into Italian and two of the Indian languages. Atherton Lodge ordered a reprint of *Happiness for You Now* for the Lodge's 50th anniversary, a copy being sent to other Lodges/Branches around Australia.

[Atherton Lodge has some copies of the booklet left for purchase for \$5 plus postage; otherwise the booklet can be made available either electronically or as a CD.

email: pangwayc@iinet.net.au - Ed.]



National Calendar of Events



Springbrook Centre

arrivals **Thurs 26 July** – departures **Sun 29 July**

Theme: ‘The Science of Yoga’ For TS members and non-members

The essential teachings of Yoga were codified, many centuries ago, by Patañjali in his Yoga-Sūtras. According to such teachings, Yoga is both a science and a way of life that can lead the practitioner to a direct knowledge of his or her own essential nature.

In this seminar we will delve into some of the key aphorisms of the Yoga- Sūtras and seek to find out their relevance to our own understanding of life. We will also try to understand, together, the process of *Samyama* that leads to an unconditioned awareness of consciousness in its essential nature.

Each day will begin with a meditative attunement specially selected to offer the keynote for the work of the day.

Facilitator: Pedro Oliveira

Cost: \$160 members / \$200 non-members (includes sessions, accommodation and catering)

Enquiries to: Education Coordinator edcoord@austheos.org.au
tel. 02 9264 7056 (Mon-Thurs)

Registration forms and further information for all events organised by The Theosophical Society in Australia are at: <http://www.austheos.org.au/whats>

Glossophical Gleanings

- on the lighter side

David Wilson



Atman:	a gent's head-gear specialist
Aura:	a mischievious little boy (Cockney)
Chela:	a man who guards prisoners
Dweller on the Threshold:	the rent collector
Elemental Essence:	similar to vanilla but less tangible
Flight of the Alone to the Alone:	a bumble-bee about to be sucked into a jet engine
Kama Loka:	a place where camels are locked up
Koilon:	a punctuation mark in a sentence
Kundalini:	a famous Italian musician
Logos:	things trees are sawn into
Monad:	a type of money adding machine
Moon Chain:	chewing food with a violent action of the teeth (Lancashire)
The Mysteries	
Lesser Mysteries:	how to fill in an income tax return
Greater Mysteries:	how to live on the money that is left
Mystic:	an ineffectual type of glue
Silent Watcher:	school teacher at examination time
Slayer of the Real:	a Hollywood script writer
Spirilla:	the thing on the other side of a pen-knife for taking corks out of bottles
Yoga:	a dish made from sour milk

David Wilson was a long-time member of the Australian Section who passed away in 1999. He was at one time President of Melbourne Lodge and also Canberra Branch.

2019 NATIONAL CONVENTION THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN AUSTRALIA

for TS members

Dates: Sat 19 – Sat 26 January

Venue: Sancta Sophia College
University of Sydney



Theme: ‘Divine Wisdom in Theory and Practice’

Featured Speaker: Dr Julian Droogan

Julian Droogan is a Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of Arts at Macquarie University where he teaches in Asia-Pacific Studies, issues of Religion and Politics and International Studies. He has written books and papers on archaeology, Asian history and culture as well as the role of religion in modern politics and international relations. Julian is also a visiting lecturer at the Art Gallery of New South Wales. He won the John Cooper Memorial Prize, which is funded by The Theosophical Society in Australia, at the University of Sydney in 2002, and again in 2005.

Accommodation - cost recovery rates: single rooms with shared bathrooms \$955.50 for 7 nights; twin or double ensuite rooms \$903 per person for 7 nights; single ensuite rooms \$1,165 for 7 nights.

A Convention payment plan is now being offered for members who would like to pay in instalments. For enquiries, please contact the National Secretary, Dara Tatray: natsec@austheos.org.au tel. 02 9264 6404

Registration fee: earlybird fee of \$20 if received by 31 August, regular fee of \$40 if received after 31 August.

Registration form: <http://austheos.org.au/whats/>

Registration deadline: for guaranteed rooms, live-in registrants,
Fri 30 November

Enquiries to: Jennifer Hissey, Convention Secretary
email: catalogue@austheos.org.au

Register soon. We look forward to seeing you in Sydney!

Call for Nominations - State Representatives



ELECTION OF STATE REPRESENTATIVE FOR EACH OF THE ELECTORAL STATES OF NEW SOUTH WALES/AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY, WESTERN AUSTRALIA AND VICTORIA

In accordance with Rules 17(1)(c) and 19, the current terms of office of the State Representatives for NSW/ACT (Gloria Yiangou), Western Australia (Franco Guazzelli) and Victoria (Kari Torgersen) will expire at the appointment of new State Representatives towards the end of 2018. Accordingly, nominations are invited for the election of one State Representative for each of the named states. Of these, the State Representative for WA (Franco Guazzelli) is not eligible for re-election.

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

The State Representative elected in each State will represent the Lodges (Branches), Groups and Members in that State in all meetings and affairs of the National Council. They shall also liaise with all Lodges (Branches), Groups and National Members in their Electoral State and shall represent their views to the National Council and to the National Society Officers, as appropriate. As well, they shall receive and deal with representations from individual Members within their Electoral State, and shall refer the representations where requested or deemed necessary.

A photograph of the candidate, curriculum vitae, relevant biographical data, and a personal statement by the candidate, which may, for purposes of distribution, be edited in consultation with the candidate, must accompany all nominations. All nominations should be on Form 8, endorsed with the consent of the Nominee, and reach the National Secretary at the above address no later than close of business Friday 10 August. If there is only one candidate in any Electoral State there will be a for or against vote: hence the August rather than September deadline.

Copies of Form 8 may be obtained from the National Secretary: natsec@austheos.org.au

2018 National Convention



Keynote Speaker
Dr Richard Silberstein



Linda Oliveira with John Harris,
Brisbane Lodge President



Day outing - members from Queensland,
New South Wales and Tasmania



Rosanne DeBats,
Adelaide Lodge



Carmen French (left) and
Dianne Manning (right), Qld



around the dinner table

Education

Pedro Oliveira



BASIC COURSE EXPLORING THEOSOPHY

A clear and accessible presentation of the basic principles of the Wisdom Tradition. It addresses topics such as: evolution, karma, reincarnation, our dynamic powers, meditation and the power of thought. It is based on the book *Life — Your Great Adventure* by Eunice and Felix Layton.

Cost: \$25. Includes a copy of the book and postage within Australia.

Orders to be sent to the Education Coordinator,
edcoord@austheos.org.au

**Is there some
meaning to
existence?**

**Is there life after
death?**

Will we live again?

**How can we find
inner peace?**

**How can I know
myself?**

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN AUSTRALIA

Level 2, 162 Goulburn
Street
Surry Hills NSW 2010
02 9264 7056

www.austheos.org.au

Theosophical Order of Service

Rhonda Phillips

Each year the TOS AGM approves 3 National projects for the coming year. This year's projects are:

- Qandeel Home Schools in Pakistan
- The Golden Link College in the Philippines, and
- The Syrian Refugee Project sponsored by the Italian TOS

The Italian TOS Syrian Bread Project

The Italian TOS has committed to help support 30 desperate Syrian families in Kilis, Turkey, which is just 100 Km from Aleppo, Syria. The focus will be on widows. Many Syrian women are on their own with an average of 5 children. It is very difficult for these women, with young children and without a male head of the household, to support and feed their family.

Bread is a staple food and during war it becomes a precious commodity. The 'bread project' aims to help 30 widows with small children, by providing free bread to them for one year. They will



The male head of the household accepts the TOS bread.



receive a card entitling them to 2 kg of bread each day, which will cost 1 Euro per day or 30 Euros per month. The bread is supplied by the single bakery, which is still operational. Let us help these children, by taking peace and bread to them. War must not be their daily bread.

This year our National TOS AGM was held during the Brisbane Convention. A new committee was democratically elected and we welcome Rhonda Phillips, National Coordinator, George Wester, National Secretary and Dianne Manning, National Treasurer. Geoff Harrod has agreed to continue as the Web Administrator

We thank the outgoing TOS committee. After seven years of service to the TOS, Jean Carroll, National Coordinator, Travis James, National Secretary and Carolyn Harrod, National Treasurer have stepped down. For many years, they have dedicatedly set the direction of the TOS and built a strong TOS presence in Australia.

Rhonda Phillips
tos.australia@gmail.com



This one hand explains the difficulties of a female head of the household.

Review

Annie Besant (1847-1933)

Struggles and Quest

Muriel Pécastaing-Boissière

The Theosophical Publishing House

London, 2017, 325pp.

available from

<http://shop.theosophicalsociety.org.uk>

cost: approx. A\$18.00 plus shipping

It is a measure of this extraordinary woman that this biography of one of the two most famous Theosophists contains only fifty pages devoted to her Theosophical activities. The rest catalogues her passionate contributions to the wide range of great social issues of her day. At a time when married women had no right over their own wealth or their own bodies she successfully challenged the status quo and had it altered. She championed exploited workers, especially young women. She was a Fabian, a socialist, and a Secularist. She fought for the right of Atheists. Nor was her focus confined to the United Kingdom.

She argued for Indian Independence from the British Raj; supporting and encouraging Indian leaders such as



Nehru, Jinnah and Gandhi. It was she who dubbed Gandhi 'Mahatma'. As International President of the Theosophical Society she found the time to establish newspapers and political organisations in support of this great cause. Although she foresaw the partition between India and Pakistan she was spared the dreadful experience of the actual event.

The English Section is to be congratulated on this publication. It will remind today's Theosophists of the great souls who did so much to establish our Society.

Brian Parry

News and Notes



School of the Wisdom, Adyar

Information is now available regarding two School of the Wisdom sessions to be held at our International Headquarters in Adyar later this year and early next year. They are:

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

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.

Research Project - Artists who have been Influenced by Theosophy

Sydney member Dianne Kynaston has been undertaking extensive research about artists who have been influenced by Theosophy, especially Australian artists. This research has spanned a number of years and is forming the basis of some important new research files being assembled for the Archives at the TS National Headquarters. Dianne would like to hear from any readers who have information which may be of interest in this regard.

Please email her at:

diannedeva@gmail.com

Transitions

We remember fondly the following members and friends who have passed away recently:

Prof. Henryk Skolimowski, founder of Eco-Philosophy - 6 April

Patricia ('Trish') Bradley, a long-time member from Brisbane until early this year - 2 May

Barbara Atkinson, Brisbane Lodge
- 10 May



A visit by Michael Gomes to the National Headquarters
 left to right: Dianne Kynaston, Linda Oliveira,
 Michael Gomes, Jennifer Hissey, Rosanna Cummins

Update - New Website

The Section's new website is under intensive construction. This is a large project involving a completely different look. Some interesting new content is being added, in addition to the substantial body of material which is being transferred from the existing site. Development is quite advanced now thanks to our dedicated team. As soon as the website goes live, the news will be widely announced both electronically and in this magazine.

One new feature will be a dedicated access area for TS members only. As the TS is a member organisation, we want to provide something special on the site for our valued members. Four sessions of Michael Gomes' morning classes on the theme 'HPB's Esoteric Instructions' at the recent School of Theosophy were filmed. The School was a special event for TS members; this is one example of a set of items which will be placed in the members' access area. Something to look forward to ...

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

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
www.austheos.org.au

Campbell Theosophical Research Library:
catalogue@austheos.org.au

Australian Capital Territory

Canberra Branch, Chartered 17/7/1971:
Postal Address: c/- 53 Chataway Crescent,
Fadden ACT 2904
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: Dr Grahame Crookham
Tel: 0490147020
email: tificrook@tpg.com.au
Secretary: position vacant
Newsletter Editor: Janice Scarabottolo
Tel: 02 6288 7656 email:janton@netspeed.com.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
www.tssydney.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
<http://www.austheos.org.au/newcastle/>
President: Tony Buzek
Acting Secretary: Dianne Kynaston

Tel: 0452 633 132
Email: diannedeva@gmail.com

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 Gemmell
Tel: 02 4782 4269
email: helen.lambert1@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
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

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

Brisbane Lodge, Chartered 21/1/1895:

355 Wickham Terrace, Brisbane QLD 4000
Tel: 07 3839 1453
email: brisbanelodge@theosophyqld.org.au
www.theosophyqld.org.au
Meet: 7.30pm Wednesdays, library open 6.30-7.30pm
President: John Harris
Secretary: Phillipa Rooke

Shine Coast Lodge, Chartered 1/4/2004

Meet: Buderim Croquet Club,
Syd Lingard Drive, Buderim QLD 4556
7.00pm Thursdays
President: Pam Walsh
Tel: 0427 713 061 (Pam Walsh)
Email: theosophyshinecoast@yahoo.com
Secretary: Jean Carroll

Toowoomba Group:

Meet: 49 Lindsay Street, Toowoomba
1st Wednesday at 7pm and 3rd Sunday
at 2:30pm each month
(Meditation 1pm & Study Group at 1:30pm)
Annual Springbrook retreat each Winter
Coordinator: Gayle Thomas
Secretary: Barry Bowden
Tel: 0438 331 885

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

310 South Terrace, Adelaide SA 5000
Tel: 08 8223 1129
Email: president@tsadelaide.org.au
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)
www.theosophicaltas.websyte.com.au
Meet: 7.30pm Mondays
President: Helen Steven
Secretary: position vacant
Email: helen_steven@live.com

Launceston Lodge, Chartered 12/1/1901:

54 Elizabeth Street, Launceston TAS 7250
Postal address: as above
email: launcestontheosophicalsociety@gmail.com
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: meltheos@bigpond.com.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
www.austheos.org.au/centres/mpg

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: tsp Perth@iinet.net.au
http://www.tsp Perth.com.au
Meet: 7.30pm Tuesdays
President: Franco Guazzelli
Secretary: Carole Ann Webster

Mount Helena Retreat Centre:

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

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

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

Freedom of Thought

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

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

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



Freedom of the Society

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

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

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

