



Australian T.O.S. Links

April 2005

Update on the Tsunami appeal

Following the recent tsunami in South-East Asia, many theosophists contributed to an appeal to support the tsunami relief work being undertaken by the Theosophical Order of Service (T.O.S.) in Chennai, India. These donations were amalgamated and the T.O.S. in Australia arranged for \$19 421 to be transferred to the Theosophical Society in Adyar for this work. This donation was composed of \$5 000 from the Pritchard Account funds held in trust for the T.O.S. in Australia by the TS in Australia, \$5 000 from the TS In Australia and \$9 421 donated to the TS in Australia and the T.O.S. in Australia for the Tsunami Appeal. Further donations have been received since this initial transfer was made and they will be transferred to Adyar in the next month.

Mr C.V.K.Maithreya, President of the T.O.S. in Chennai, has recently provided an update on the current tsunami relief work. The projects chosen by the T.O.S. in the rehabilitation phase include acquisition of reverse osmosis plants to provide drinking water and alternative vocational training for those affected by the tsunami. Tailoring is one of the skills being considered. The T.O.S. has brokered the donation of several reverse osmosis plants and is funding their running costs for 18 months. His reports and photographs are attached for your information and use in promoting the appeal. This is a long term project that will benefit from the continuing support of Australians.

Thanks to Georgina Fode and her National Committee

After many years of dedicated service as National Director, Georgina Fode has retired from this position. Georgina's commitment to the T.O.S. and its ideals has been evident in the National Newsletters she wrote to keep groups in touch and in the personal contacts she made throughout Australia. Her compassion and energy were also evident in the practical, humanitarian work in which she was involved. Thank you, Georgina, on behalf of the T.O.S. groups throughout Australia, for your leadership. Thanks also to Edward Sinclair, our retiring National Treasurer and Nina Mazurek, our retiring National Secretary, for your commitment to the work of the T.O.S.

The role of the Director and the National TOS

Most organisations that maintain their vitality and focus throughout a long life regularly take time to reflect on their goals, the way they operate and their relationships both within the organisation and with the communities in which they work. This period of transition from one National Director to another provides a natural opportunity for all of us to re-examine this role and the contribution that it can make to the work of the T.O.S. in Australia. This is not to say that there is anything wrong with the ways the role has operated in the past but to take the opportunity to see if it needs to change in any way to better meet the needs of the current context.

It seems to me that the real strength of the T.O.S. lies in the work undertaken by groups at a local level. It is here that positive, harmonious relationships are developed and maintained with our communities. What then is the role of the National Director? Is it to facilitate networking and help local T.O.S. groups share

ideas and information? Do we need a National organisation in a formal sense, or do we need simply a way of networking the T.O.S. groups throughout Australia?

Could you please discuss these ideas within your local T.O.S. group and send your views to me. The following questions may help:

- What do you think the role of the National Director should be?
- How can the National Director best support the work of your local group?
- Do we need a National T.O.S. organisation that is separate from the local T.O.S. groups?

Service through volunteer work in our communities

Did you know that volunteers are often referred to as *the lifeblood of Australian communities*? They belong to the largest workforce in Australia, and according to the last census, their volunteer work is estimated to contribute an economic value of more than \$18 billion per annum. Volunteers come from all age-groups and more than 25% of older people contribute to the community through volunteer work. Volunteer work brings great satisfaction to the volunteer and often means a great deal to those whose lives the volunteer touches. For instance, the smile on the face of the resident in an aged care home when their 'special friend' visits is beyond value... and that smile will often last for hours after the visit.

We do not usually need to look far for opportunities to be of service to our communities. T.O.S. members are often active volunteers, contributing to their communities in a variety of ways that suit their interests and lifestyles. For instance, Brisbane members visit elderly people in nursing homes as part of the Community Visitor scheme. Others tutor recently arrived migrants, provide transport and friendship to cancer patients coming to Brisbane for treatment, teach elderly people new skills and contribute to activities at a work and meeting place for people with disabilities. In addition to these individual focuses, a group service activity can provide a sense of communal purpose for a T.O.S. group. In Brisbane, our main group activity is a monthly commitment to plant trees and care for a section of a reclamation site. As well as working together, we make sure that we include time for socialising over afternoon tea.

Please let me know the service activities that are proving to be successful for your T.O.S. group members, and I'll circulate them to increase our bank of ideas.

Supporting the work of the TOS in developing countries

At the Annual General Meeting of the T.O.S. in Australia, a request was made for the details for sending funds to support the welfare work of T.O.S. groups in developing countries. The information below is current as of February 2005.

Pakistan T.O.S.

Contact: Mrs Fareeda Amir amanamir@iprimus.com.au

Bank details —

Theosophical Order of Service – Pakistan

Account No: 01_05_7412231_90

Swift Code: SCBLU533

Standard Chartered Bank Ltd

Garden Road Branch

Karachi, Pakistan

East Africa T.O.S.

Contact: Mr Kiran H Shah sidgudka@net2000ke.com
Bank details — (please give the bank the full details)
Nairobi Lodge of the Theosophical Society – TOS
P.O. Box 45928, Nairobi 00100, Kenya.
Account Number 1102268
Swift Code of Bank of Baroda, Nairobi: BURKINA
Sari Centre Branch, Westland, P.O. Box 886, Nairobi 00600
Routing No 026 005 322 for credit of account No 10183401 (Head Office)
through Bank of Baroda in New York
Swift Code of New York Branch: BARBUS33N
(remit in US\$)

Bhuvaneshwar T.O.S. (Northern India)

Contact: Mr R P Mohanty, 144 Bapujinagar, Bhuvaneshwar
Bank details — send via International Treasurer of the TS, with an email to
ts_treasury@sify.com informing them for whom the donation is intended.
The Theosophical Society for TOS in Bhuvaneshwar
Account No: 428 10001 582
Swift Code: SCBLINBBXXX
Standard Chartered Bank Ltd
Sorrento Building, Adyar Branch
Chennai – 600 020

Chennai T.O.S. & Adyar welfare programs

Contact: Ms Keshwar Dastur,
Bank details — send via International Treasurer of the TS, with an email to
ts_treasury@sify.com informing them for whom the donation is intended.
The Theosophical Society
Account No: 428 10001 582
Swift Code: SCBLINBBXXX
Standard Chartered Bank Ltd
Sorrento Building, Adyar Branch
Chennai – 600 020

Golden Links School

Contact: Mr Vic Hao Chin Jr tspeace@info.com.ph
Send a bank draft in \$US to:
T.O.S. Foundation Inc.
1 Iba Street
1114 Quezon City
PHILIPPINES

Janice Scarabottolo from the Canberra Group has provided the address of a webpage compiled in 2003 by Diana Dunningham Chapotin and the Spanish Language Coordinator. It provides a summary of T.O.S. service activities around the world and would be a useful source of information when selecting recipients for donations. The site's address is: <http://www.theoservice.org/International/Around-world.htm>

Contributions to *The Service Link*

The Service Link is our annual International Theosophical Order of Service magazine. There are four major ways that we can support its ability to provide an avenue for linking and inspiring T.O.S. groups around the world. We can:

- subscribe for the small sum of \$7 each year
- contribute articles or book reviews
- contribute photographs of T.O.S. activities
- send news and an annual report to me so that I can compile a summary of Australian T.O.S. activities for the magazine.

A thought to share

In the truest service the consciousness of self is forgotten — you help because you cannot do other than help.

From *Thoughts for Aspirants*, N. Sri Ram

Contact

Please contact me by email at cdharrod@bigpond.net.au
or by mail at Ms C Harrod, 26 Lytham Street, Indooroopilly Q4068.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours in service
Carolyn