



## Australian T.O.S. Links August 2012

### Your Co-ordinators Report

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Since my last report Marie Walton has resigned from her position as National Secretary to further her career in Transpersonal Psychology. On behalf of all TOS members I wish Marie all the very best for her ongoing journey.

Our new acting National Secretary is Travis James from the Adelaide Lodge. This position is to be ratified at the Melbourne Convention Jan 2013. Travis is quite involved in service at his local lodge and brings a special energy to enhance our national agenda. I look forward to working with Travis in the spirit of service.



**Acting National Secretary  
Travis James**

In this issue you will see an update for the TOS Convention in Chicago next year. Please do consider joining our small group to travel to the states. Events such as this are designed to inspire and create new ideas to take our organization forward. Also, please do have a look at the heart-warming report from Mrs Usha Sha on the success of the water bore project in Kenya.

Yours in service Jean.



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### Living Theosophy: Support

In our Living Theosophy Series we now look at another aspect of **Living Theosophy** that of support.

Stay connected and let others in. Widen your channel of giving and receiving. Reach out with encouragement and be versatile and timely in your resources. Support is often very subjective and can be confusing. How do you offer support? To what do you give your energy to? What is the highest, and how do you know what is best for yourself and others?

True support has two distinct aspects intertwined; love through the expression of gentleness and truth in the expression of realness. When we love without truth, we relate to others from the surface of ourselves, often in order not to make “waves”. On the other hand, when we only relate from truth it tends to create a feeling of distance tainted with judgment and limitation.

Weaving gentleness and realness together brings about balance in our lives with others. Sometimes support calls for loving someone in a way that gives them what they feel they need – empathy, help, affection or affirmation.

It is not always easy to make the distinction between these two currents of support and to bring about healing. In the end, our capacity to express gentleness and realness and be fully ourselves rests “soul-ly” within our commitment to what we feel life is about and what we value. Finding ways to balance these two strands within ourselves with the same gentleness and realness reveals and bring a deeper sense of authenticity to our actions. This ultimately supports our own inner nature with what it needs to flourish. May your heart, mind and actions be filled with gentle authentic support?

<http://jajabird.wordpress.com/2012/07/11/support>

### Donation from Maple Brown Abbot

Theosophical Society in Australia have once again generously donated funds to assist our TOS Programmes abroad. This year the amount of \$5000 has been distributed as follows:-

- \$2,400 to Pakistan Educational Sponsorships (to cover the 16 students they sponsor @\$150 per student)
- \$1,000 to Golden Link College in the Philippines (The Kern Foundation in the USA matches all donations dollar to dollar)
- \$1,000 to the Kenyan water bore project
- \$600 to the Pakistan literacy home-schools



**Service - You cannot do everything you see that needs to be done, therefore, do that which will bring about the greatest amount of good to the greatest number of seeking souls – Master DJhwal Khul**



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### Update TOS Conference Chicago Jul 2013

A reminder of both the TOS International Conference 23-27 Jul 2013 and the TS in America Summer Gathering 19-23 Jul prior to our TOS Conference.

International guests are invited to arrive as early as possible on 19 Jul and depart on 27 Jul. There is a usd20 per person registration fee payable on arrival at the Summer National Gathering. There is no registration charge for the TOS Conference.

There are two options for participants:-  
(note all rates subject to change)

1. Stay on Olcott Campus shared accommodation
2. Stay off Campus at the Holiday Inn where single, twin and shared rooms are offered

#### **On Campus Olcott Campus 19-27 Jul**

Very limited availability, 2 or 3 to a room. .Cost includes room and vegetarian meals usd50 per person per night.= usd400 for 8 nights

#### **Off Campus Holiday Inn 19-27 Jul.**

2 miles from Olcott Campus with free shuttle service to from conference. Special daily rate for those attending TS & TOS events  
Twin share usd42.50 per person per night, plus 11% room tax  
Single Room usd85 per night plus 11% room tax .Two room suite 1 bedroom 2 dbl beds & 1 fold out couch in living area – nightly rate @usd99.95 plus 11% tax per night..  
Suite can accommodate up to 4 people  
Cost breakfast at Holiday Inn approx usd12.

For those staying at the Holiday Inn there is a daily package of vegetarian meals i.e. lunch and evening meal at Olcott – usd15 a day = usd\$120 for the 8 days.

**A booking form will be available towards the end of this year and will be featured in our next TOS Links – more info click under**

<http://international.theoservice.org>



TS Headquarters Wheaton, Chicago

#### **Donations 2012**

Our treasurer Carolyn Harrod has returned to Australia. If you have any further donations for the year, these may be mailed to:

Ms Carolyn Harrod,  
26 Lytham Street,  
Indooroopilly Qld 4068

**The Theosophical Idea of Charity** means personal exertion for others; personal mercy and kindness; personal interest in the welfare of those that suffer; personal sympathy; forethought and assistance in their troubles and needs. H.P. Blavatsky



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### Your stories: Refugee Focus Day at Adelaide TOS

Last edition we featured a story of service at the School of The Wisdom, here is another quite topical story in view of the current debate on asylum seekers.. Sent to us by Dr Olga Gostin of the Adelaide TOS.

The first fundraiser for TOS-Adelaide in 2012 followed the popular *Sunday at the TS* format, that is, a whole day dedicated to a theme developed by invited speakers, with morning and afternoon teas and lunch included. Our chosen topic revolved round refugee stories, with three main speakers, their supporters and TS members.

The first speaker was 14-year-old Afghani refugee Bez who arrived in Adelaide as a 7 year old in 2005. In a competent power-point presentation Bez explained how his father was a Hazara, forced to flee his homeland for refusing to fight with the Taliban. Bez told us about his first impressions of life in Adelaide, revolving round traffic congestion, density of houses and the anonymity between neighbours, and repeated shifts in residence (and school) as his family sought better housing and work opportunities. He described his family as “physically safe but mentally uneasy”. The major sources of unease were identified as 1) language difficulties, compounded by the fact that many refugees were illiterate in their homelands; 2) cultural differences which can lead to cultural disconnection especially between generations. Drug use, alcohol and peer pressure were specifically named as sources of conflict; 3) different educational system, where the

illiteracy of parents means that kids have to fend on their own and are often tempted with truancy and/or trying to get a job; 4) general problems of cultural adaptation, compounded by the spread of Adelaide and the need to negotiate public transport.

Bez became naturalized in 2007, along with his family, but had entered a period of sullen indifference to life around him. There was little to stimulate him and life revolved round school and TV. An important turning point for him was in January 2011 when Bez was invited to join a group of young people under the tutelage of a Mr. Peng Choo who'd set up eLabtronics where young people could engage in creative activities revolving round electronics and latest technology. Bez demonstrated several examples of inventions by the peer group consisting of girls and boys from various ethnic backgrounds. One intriguing circuit showed how ordinary garden lemons can power a battery thanks to harnessing the natural acidity in the fruit. The sessions at eLabtronics have whetted Bez's appetite for learning and performing well at school. He plans to go to university to study medicine or enter politics.







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The second speaker was Professor Matthias Tomczak from Flinders University who gave us a very stark power-point presentation on his recent visit to Pakistan as SA representative for SAWA (Support Association for the Women of Afghanistan). Specifically Matthias showed slides of the High School for Afghani refugee women in Rawalpindi, Pakistan, supported to the tune of \$25,000 per year by fundraising overseas, notably Australia. Women and widows especially, are in dire need of education and access to some craft or other skill as according to the dictates of local practice, no woman can walk outside unaccompanied by a man from her kinship group. Marginalised and despised, many such women fall back on begging and/or prostitution as their sole source of income. Several initiatives by SAWA seek to educate girls and women into basic literacy so that they can become a force for change in the future. Matthias had many insightful comments on contemporary politics in Afghanistan and prospects for the future.

Our third speaker was Ratan G. from Bhutan who gave us a rather sobering account of conditions in southern Bhutan, and explained why all is not so rosy in the Kingdom which measures its gross national product in terms of happiness. We were given a brief history of the kingdom and of its long-standing cultural, religious and linguistic divides between north, east and southern Bhutan, and how a decree to enforce "one nation, one people" in 1990 led to intimidation, forced eviction, arrest and even torture. Our speaker experienced all of this and was a refugee in India and other Asian countries for 16 years before coming to Australia three years ago. Adelaide now

harbours 2000 of Australia's 3500 Bhutanese refugees. Our speaker spoke about the hardship of learning English, of the huge obstacles to adaptation when most migrants are illiterate even in their home languages, of the difficulty of finding housing where several generations in one family might live together and support each other.

It is fair to say that our first *Sunday at the TOS* was not exactly a bellyful of laughter, but it was an occasion to reflect seriously on what it means to be a refugee today. We emerged infinitely grateful for our good fortune in having settled and secure lives and happily donated the takings of nearly \$100 which we made up to \$200 that went to SAWA.

**Postscript to this article:** Showing how collective consciousness can result in positive action. Victor and Olga Gostin have offered their family home of 40 years to a three-generation Bhutanese family who have spent 21 years in refugee camps in Nepal under the umbrella of Red Cross, Caritas and UNHCR. Olga goes on to say- what a joy it is to see the family settled and so happy, with the garden loved and nurtured beyond their wildest expectations.

Please send any stories that show the work that your TOS groups are doing. We can all be motivated to present a similar event in our various groups.

Please email to [tos.australia@gmail.com](mailto:tos.australia@gmail.com)

**Correction** – In the story on Service at Adyar in the previous edition Lucille Crocker was the contributor not Lucille Ball as reported.



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### Update Water Bore Project Water is flowing

Our initial donation of \$3000 with a follow up donation of \$3200 has helped considerably in getting the water to flow in Kitui. Below is a report from Mrs Usha Sha of the TOS in Nairobi/Kenya

The last few weeks have been hard for Kitui. The neighbouring districts had so much rain that it was feared that some crops might get destroyed and yet in Kitui no water! The maize plants were withered and dry. The greens looked sad and thirsty. There were the daily treks looking for places to buy water and then the task of carrying water-filled jerry cans home. No mean task! It is only women who do the water carrying in Kitui and young girls have to help, missing out on school. (The men only use water as a business, selling it to women coming from far and wide on foot.)

When our bore hole was ready for action, news travelled fast that the water was going to be available the next day, June 29. The whole community was stirred up and next morning a line of yellow and black and green jerry cans appeared with their owners.

Prayers were recited, the lock was opened and water gushed out. Incredible! Wow! No more treks! And best of all: so much time that was spent fetching water every day that can now be used by the women in more beneficial ways! Once the modalities have been worked out, water will be used not just for drinking and washing but for watering subsistence crops.



Patiently collecting water



The architects of the Water Bore Project Mrs Usha Sha Nairobi/Kenya with our International Secretary Mrs Diana Dunningham Chapotin



Villagers waiting to fill water pots



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### Reports from our Local TOS Groups

#### Canberra: from Janice Scarabottolo

Our small TOS Group continues, we meet monthly when possible, beginning each meeting with a meditation.

We continue to sponsor a student from Pakistan, donations for this project are made mainly by having a small "collection" box at all our TS. Our thanks go to TS headquarters for their generosity and time on photocopying our newsletter. We made a small contribution to the Tanzania Heart Babies project. As in previous years we continued to collect used postage stamps and donated them to the Red Cross who then sell them for funds. We donated knitted square for the Wrap with Love Project which has headquarters in Sydney, These squares are sewn into colourful blankets by the Project and sent to trouble spots worldwide. They have a website which is part of a community site at <http://artsandcraftsnsw.com.au>

We promote TOS work in general by having a small folder at meetings and on forwarding the TOS National Coordinator's newsletters by email. A page of the Canberra TS newsletter is dedicated to TOS. Thank you to everyone who has contributed to the above.

#### Adelaide: from Travis James

Once again the Adelaide TOS held its annual Winter Solstice Dinner attended by 37 people, the dinner raised \$450 with Victor Gostin as the Master of Ceremonies. TS president Sheryl Malone opened the entertainment with

a poem "The Night Before Winter Solstice". Victor Gostin gave a description of what was happening astronomically at the time of the solstice while Joy Usher of Astro Mundi told about the astrological aspects of the winter solstice and how being in the Southern Hemisphere we are saved the cold with its need to seek shelter and stocking up for the winter months.

Stephanie Gates and her friends lightened the night by singing pieces from musicals such as "All I ask of you" from the "Phantom of the Opera" and "Edelweiss" from the Sound of Music. Sheryl finished off the entertainment with a poem describing the fortunes of a Yule Tide Tree. Then everyone tucked in to the dinner donated by the TOS people and the attendees. Prizes of bookshop vouchers were awarded to the two best dressed.

The dinner is a time for people to get together in a friendly relaxed atmosphere, enjoy some entertainment, have a good meal and at the same time raise money for a well-needed project (no pun intended) I would like to thank everyone involved.



Friar Tuck





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### Service Ideas for our Groups Service from home

Would you like to do service from your home?

Please do consider these Social Activist Groups. These are made up of people that are community minded and pressing for changes on regional and global issues to make a more sustainable environment in our global village. You can become involved in activities of your individual liking, and can participate from your living room or home office. The following web sites offer a variety of issues to choose from both here in Australia and Abroad.

[www.getup.org.au](http://www.getup.org.au) Australian Activists.

Current topics Save the Barrier Reef and restricting Fishing Trawlers dragging monster nets (killing dolphins etc) in our oceans.

[www.avaaz.org](http://www.avaaz.org) A Global organization

Current topic game hunting. Middle Eastern kings and princes are about to force up to 48,000 people in Tanzania from their land to make way for corporate-sponsored big game hunting. But Tanzanian President Kikwete has shown before that he will stop deals like this when they generate negative press coverage.



<http://sumofus.org> A UK based organization.

Current topics include lobbying against high interest rates in Australian Banks.

### International Peace Day: 21 Sep 2012



This year, 2012, the International Day of Peace is on a Friday, special activities and celebrations will take place all across the world over the 2012 Peace Day Weekend. We encourage you to attend these events, or even put on an event of your own. Peace Day which should be devoted to commemorating and strengthening the ideals of peace both within and among all nations and peoples. This day will serve as a reminder to all peoples that our organization, with all its limitations, is a living instrument in the service of peace and should serve all of us here within the organization as a constantly pealing bell reminding us that our permanent commitment, above all interests or differences of any kind, is to peace.

#### Your Contacts:

**National Co-coordinator: Jean Carroll**

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

**National Acting Secretary: Travis James**

**National Treasurer: Carolyn Harrod**

**Web addresses:**

<http://australia.theoservice.org>

<http://international.theoservice.org>