

THE THEOSOPHICAL

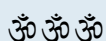
SOCIETY

IN CANBERRA

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The Theosophical Society in Canberra is not responsible for any statement in this newsletter. Views expressed are those of the authors and are not necessarily those of the Society or the Editor.

A word from the President

Welcome everyone to this our first Newsletter of 2018. For our 7th May event, we are inviting members to present for approximately 10 minutes on the topic *"People of Influence"*. Unfortunately, I will be out of town for this event; so would like to take this opportunity to write of someone I devoted my 1980 engineering PhD thesis to (for the persistence he instilled to endure undeterred). I have been a Babaji devotee from the late 1970's and have always been interested in learning more of this Being. Little did I realize at the time how grand a Being he truly is.

The public were first introduced to him through Paramahansa Yogananda's 1946 *"Autobiography of a Yogi"*, Chapter 33 *"Babaji: Yogi-Christ of Modern India"*. Yoganada aligned with a Kriya Yoga lineage comprising sequential teachers Babaji > Lahiri Mahasaya > Sri Yukteswar > Yogananda. In the book he gives merely a hint of the life of Babaji, where he describes his deathless Satguru as a Mahavata-tara, whose *"spiritual state is beyond human comprehension, whose attainment is inconceivable. He is ever in communion with Christ, and together they... have planned the spiritual technique of salvation for this age."* I suspect the reaction from the west was that this is an exaggeration, rather than an understatement.

In 1991 the book *"Babaji and the 18 Siddha Kriya Yoga Tradition"* by M.Govindan became available, a book I based my first TS presentation on (a cassette recording of that presentation is available for anyone interested). The book presents further details of Babaji's most recent terrestrial embodiment, his mission and the scientific art of kriya yoga; as related to Yogi S.A.A. Ramaiah and V.T.Neelakantan in 1953. He describes how his body has not aged since the age of 18 when he conquered death and attained a supreme state of enlightenment.

A book I can highly recommend is *"The Voice of Babaji: a Trilogy on Kriya Yoga"*, comprising the three books *"The Voice of Babaji and Mysticism Unlocked"*, *"Babaji's Masterkey to All Ills (Kriya)"* and *"Babaji's Death of Death (Kriya)"*. Babaji dictated these three books during 1952 and 1953 to V.T.Neelakantan, who wrote them down verbatim and co-published with Yogi S.A.A. Ramaiah. They were reprinted for the first time in 50 years in 2003. Pages 233 to 235 present a word by word reproduction of what the Satguru Deva told Neelakantan about who He is, which I shared last November at Canyonleigh.

An extract is provided: *"I am the sole breath of all Nature. I shine in the sun and the moon and the stars and the whole universe. I am the sun of suns, shining in the sun up above. I am the twinkling spark in the star and the sustaining Principle in the universe. I beat in every breast, see in every eye, throb in every pulse, smile in every flower, shine in the lightning and roar in the thunder. I flutter in the leaves, I hiss in the winds and I roll in the surging seas. I am the Wisdom of the wise, the Strength of the strong and the Heroism of the heroic. I am the very life of Infinity both within and without. I am the One in the all and the All in One. (continued on page 3)*

Notes for members and friends

**Sydney
2019**



Advance notice

**2019 Convention of the Theosophical Society
19 to 26 January 2019**

**Divine Wisdom in Theory and Practice
Sancta Sophia College, Sydney**

See page 12

<http://austheos.org.au/whats/2018-national-convention/>

**Springbrook
2018**



Springbrook Centre

Thursday 26 July to Sunday 29 July

The Science of Yoga

Facilitator: Pedro Oliveira, Education Coordinator

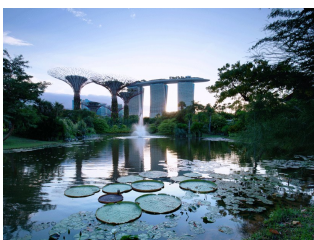
**Cost: \$160 members, \$200 non members
(includes accommodation, sessions and catering)**

Register by 5 July

<http://austheos.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Science-of-Yoga-registration-form.pdf>

Enquiries to: Education Coordinator, edcoord@austheos.org.au, 02 9264 7056

**Singapore
2018**



It's almost time—

11th Word Congress - Singapore

4—8 August 2018

Consciousness, Contemplation, Commitment:

The Future Is Now

and

4th International TOS Conference 9 and 10 August 2018

Register at TS Adyar:

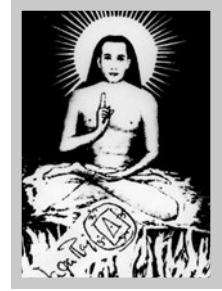
<http://www.ts-adyar.org/event/11th-world-congress>

**Convention
videos**

Videos of some sessions from the TS Convention are already at <http://austheos.org.au/video-wp/>

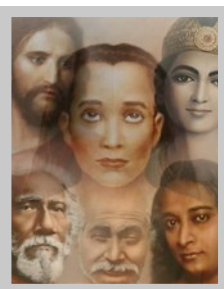
(A Word from the President - continued from page 1)

Ranging beyond names and forms, passing free into woods and forests, mountains and rivers, into day and night, clouds and stars, passing free into men and women, animals and angels, as the self of each and all, am I."



Sri M, a recent speaker at the TS in Adyar, also writes of his personal encounter with Babaji in his book *"Apprenticed to a Himalayan Master"*. Most recently I have read Yogiraj Gurunath Siddhanath's 2010 book *"Babaji: The Lightning Standing Still"*, in which for the first time ever an in depth account of the holographic dimensions of this wondrous being is revealed, who personally met Babaji in 1967. From a traditional Hindu perspective, he identifies Yoganada's Babaji as Shiva Goraksha Nath, the embodiment of Shiva to promote the path of yoga. That is, he is Lord Shiva himself, directly manifested as Reality in Relativity. He also identifies Him as The Ancient of Days, the Jaggan Nath (Lord of the Universe), the Christos and as Sanata Kumara. He is the head of the spiritual hierarchy of the Sages of the Fire Mist (the Agnishvattas) and head of all divine hierarchies. He has with him 33 lofty beings to assist in his divine evolutionary work, comprising Nav Naths (Agni Svatta Rishis), Cosmic Archangels, Rudras (Avatars) and Chiranjeevs (Immortal Humans), e.g. Rama, Archangel Gabriel, Kalki Maitreya, Kuthumi. The author identifies some past incarnations of Lahiri Mahasaya (Devapi, Nagarjuna, Kabir, Kuthumi) and Sri Yukteswar (Moses, Vikramaditya, King Arthur, El Moyra). Lahiri Mahasaya had indicated that Krishna is the ancient Babaji Himself, which author Siddhanath interprets to mean Krishna's higher Self is Shiva Goraksha Babaji.

Mahavatar Babaji works in close-cooperation with the Avatar Kalki Maitreya; Babaji working on the atmic level of the divine consciousness of humanity and the Kalki Maitreya working on the buddhic level of the divine mind of humanity. The author describes the legend of the coming Kalki Avatar and the four horsemen; this legend corresponding with the Christian second coming of the Christ, which he predicts in the year 2500 AD. The four horsemen are identified as: (1) the World Teacher or Bodhisattva or Kalki Avatar (the Maitreya) on white horse, (2) the World King, Lord Vaivaswat Manu (formerly Melchizedek and Noah), (3) King Devapi (Kuthumi/Lahiri Mahasaya) and (4) Vikramaditya (El Moyra/Sri Yukteswar). The author indicates that in the future Lahiri Mahasaya is to take on the role of World Teacher and Sri Yukteswar the role of World King.



I have long suspected a link between Babaji and the founding of the Theosophical Society. Ramalinga Swamigal (1823-1874), one of South India's most celebrated saints (linked to the Tamil Siddha Tradition and hence Babaji), predicted the coming to India of persons from Russia, America and two other foreign lands to preach the doctrine of universal brotherhood. His disciple Pandit Vellay thought this proof that his Guru was in communication with the Mahatmas (Kuthumi and El Moyra) under whose directions the Theosophical Society was subsequently founded. Given the author Siddhanath's above reference to the Lahiri Mahasaya/Sri Yukteswar and Kuthumi /El Moyra link, this adds support to

the view. Further, it suggests the members of the White Brotherhood to be masters of kriya yoga.

I can't vouch for the accuracy of the above authors' insights and opinions, but I do feel comfortable sharing them. Possibly such revelations are all part of the externalization of the White Brotherhood at this Celestial Summer Solstice of the Precessional cycle. What a fascinating world we live in! For an uplifting Babaji kirtan, go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y0XhhKbnVUY>

Om Kriya Babaji Nama Aum

Grahame Crookham ॐ President, The Theosophical Society in Canberra

REDISCOVERING THE BEAUTIFUL—LINDA OLIVEIRA

There was a bonus for Canberra TS on 4 December 2017 - not only was the guest speaker at the public meeting that evening our National President but we met up for morning coffee at the café at the National Museum, giving an excellent opportunity to members to informally meet the President.

Speaking on *Rediscovering the Beautiful*, Linda first reminded the audience that within TS, the topic of beauty is not often given significant consideration but it is in fact inspiring in a cynical world.

As Johann Wolfgang von Goethe wrote: *“Beauty is a primeval phenomenon. It never makes an appearance itself, but is a visible reflection in a thousand different utterances of the creative mind. It is as various as nature herself.”*



TS National President
Linda Oliveira

Three aspects were considered: a general overview of beauty; the yoga of beauty; and manifestations of the beautiful, both exterior and interior.

By considering the yin and yang positive and negative symbol, we can recognise that polarities exist, with each containing the seed of the other; thus the dark can contain the seed of the beautiful.

One of the core teachings in theosophy is ‘unity’ and, it is stressed that the beautiful contains this unity.

In his book *The Yoga of Beauty* theosophist Laurence Bendit writes: *“The beautiful “reaches us through the feeling aspect of the mind – specifically that aspect which responds to finer feelings.”*

Several points from Bendit’s small publication are:

- It is difficult to describe the Beautiful - Something which is beautiful is known through its effects on the beholder.
- The Beautiful reaches us through the feeling aspect of the mind – specifically that aspect which responds to finer feelings.
- The Beautiful not only has an effect on us, but it is actually transformative.
- The reason the Beautiful is transformative is because it has a Buddhic impact.
- The beautiful simply lies there waiting to be found.
- The search for Beauty is a yoga in itself, akin to the path of Bhakti.
- The Beautiful embodies wisdom.

Beauty is an interior quality, with the writings of Plato conveying that beautiful things *become* beautiful by the very presence in them of Beauty. N Sri Ram says that the aim of one aspect of evolution is to bring out the hidden beauty in the human being, beauty of heart, mind and spirit more than of a mere external form.



At the National Museum café

Most of the great religions include the teaching that an immortal Trinity exists.

In ancient Greece, Plato taught of a Trinity of the Good, the True and the Beautiful. But has the Beautiful been somewhat neglected? And is there such a thing as a Yoga of Beauty?



THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY CONVENTION BRISBANE 20—27 JANUARY 2018

From 20 to 27 January 2018, the Theosophical Society held its annual convention at St John's College, St Lucia, Brisbane, with a topical theme: *The Quest for Truth, Science and the Spiritual Search*. St John's motto could well fit into a theosophical perspective: *Esolutus iterum vincitus*: Freed and Rebound. Indeed.

The convention theme was examined through various lenses during the week, with exploration from different points of view. As well as attending a programme of talks, and workshops, we enjoyed music, socialising and learning from other delegates across the informality of the dinner table or at morning tea on the terrace.

Planning for 2019 - the Convention will be held in Sydney next year from 19 to 26 January.



DELEGATES AT TS CONVENTION, ST JOHN'S COLLEGE, BRISBANE JANUARY 2018

We shall share some of the convention week with you from our notes. Videos of some of the talks will be on the TS national website and some have already been uploaded. Keep checking at <http://austheos.org.au/video-wp/>

Sunday 2.00pm the Theosophical Order of Service hosted the first event with Katherine Steeven: *Spiritual Evolution: A new future for human consciousness*.

As nurse and educator, Katherine's aim is to help people follow their internal wisdom – this would seem to be not easy when, especially nowadays, we deal with much uncertainty, complexity and change— with the speed of change itself accelerating. Compare relatively recent technology which previously had few changes in a specific lifetime to the rate of technical change in our own lifetime. Our adaptability is being stretched. Despite our resistance to change, however, we nevertheless long for it. A *spiritual* evolution however is a new future for our human consciousness.

On Sunday at 4.00m key speaker Richard Silberstein gave the public talk on *Bioelectric Fields, where Reincarnation and Biology Intersect*. Professor Silberstein discussed recent research on bioelectric fields which might shed light on the phenomenon of past life memories and the link between birthmarks in current life and an injury in a past life. He talked about the work done by Professor Ian Stevenson who, in his research, had noted the correlation between some birthmarks and past injuries.

(continued from page 5)

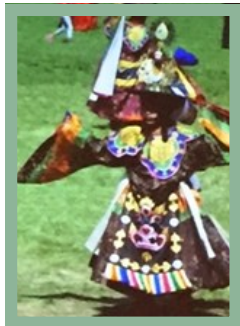
While considering the Etheric Double, the question was raised – do bioelectric fields have some of the properties attributed to the Etheric Double? And biochemical memory experiments with planaria were described; those had been split, and then they regenerated “remembering” where they could find food. Do biology and re-incarnation interact here?

Practical information gained from the talk for our ordinary daily living, was that the hippocampus, associated with memory, shrinks each year of our lives, *but* it would appear that we can grow more hippocampal neurons by exercising. Continue your walking exercises.



Professor Silberstein
and Linda Oliveira

On Sunday evening - Helen Lambert presented a visual journey into Bhutan and Nepal. Helen is an expert photographer whose work has been featured in the magazine *Theosophy in Australia* and we enjoyed a PowerPoint presentation of visual/digital memories of her recent visit, mostly in Bhutan.



We saw the towering Himalayas; Mount Everest grey and moody with its white stabbing peaks; a river snaking voraciously through the clefts; sunny paddy fields waiting for harvest; an archery contest with challenging participants resplendent in national dress; billowing multi coloured flags; alluring temples; a threshold to be crossed to gain entrance to the temple; handicraft centres for the disabled; resplendent painted doorways; gongs which seemed to reverberate even in their two dimensional images; teetering bridges spanning chasms; many happy smiling children; whirling dancers and butter lamps burning with the essence of the flame.

On Monday, Linda Oliveira gave a talk on *The Ever Present Search for the Holy Grail* – The holy grail is a potent image, one that has been embraced in modern times and has spread into corners of society - symbolic of or equating to a degree of excellence.

The legendary stories of the grail are well known; brought to us by Chrétien de Troyes, Robert de Boron and by the poetry of Tennyson and Wagner's *Parsifal*.

At a deeper level, the grail is a symbol for the highest Truth; the quest for our divinity, and the awakening of Buddhi. According to Geoffrey Hodson:

The Grail legend, the supposed quest for the Chalice used by the Lord Christ at the Last Supper, may thus be regarded as an allegory of the Path of Discipleship and Initiation.

In the Parsifal version of the Grail legend, the questions which ought to have been asked were “What ails thee” and “Whom does the Grail serve?” These specific questions imply the need to develop compassion and also hint at life's deeper patterns and purposes; that we serve something greater than ourselves.

From Joseph Campbell: *The theme of the Grail is the bringing of life into what is known as the Waste Land. The Waste Land is the preliminary theme to which the Grail is the answer.It's the world of people living inauthentic lives – doing what they are supposed to do.*



(continued from page 6)

On Monday morning Brian Harding with *HPB, Phenomena and Science* introduced a light historical journey through the TS.

With the growth of spiritualism during the second half of the 19th century, it had become popular to seek “phenomena”. The events at the Eddy Brothers’ farmhouse, at Chittenden, Vermont – and the history of these brothers is interesting reading in itself.

In 1874 Colonel Olcott visited Chittenden with newspaper/illustrator, Alfred Kappes, to investigate the strange events and séances taking place at the Eddy farm.

An interest in “phenomena” was initially present in the Society as it was formed, which then placed a higher importance on the concept of Brotherhood.

But can science explore such phenomena? Dean Radin of the Institute of Noetic Sciences, says that from a scientific perspective, the mere existence of these phenomena, regardless of how weak or unreliable they may be, is astounding. (From *Supernormal*)

In a short talk on Monday afternoon, Carolyn Harrod, on *The Impact of Compassion* began by focussing on the Third Proposition – which affirms the fundamental identity of every soul with the Universal Oversoul. As all life shares one source, we are fundamentally brothers and sisters and part of a connected ecosystem. If we could subscribe to these principles, we would then see ourselves as stewards of all life, value plants and animals for their own sake and their contribution to the eco system; we would respect all people.

Research has shown that when we experience empathy, the amount of oxytocin changes. It would seem that being compassionate makes us happy and acts of generosity encourage more generosity as well as boosting our health. The impact of *self* compassion increases optimism, happiness, gratitude and decreases depression, anxiety and stress. We should remember, however, that this will help only if we put into action what we have learned.

A workshop aimed at committee members and facilitated by Denise Frost and Harry Bayens should be mentioned. Although predominantly meant to assist committee members, the guides and literature are a standing asset of the TS and are available to everyone. From Hugh Shearman’s *A Guide to Work in the Theosophical Society*: “Lodge work is the supreme opportunity and the supreme test for a member of the Society. The members of a Lodge are a group of friends seeking wisdom together. The wisdom that they seek is not merely wisdom of this material world or the mere accumulation of knowledge, however blameless and meritorious. It is Theosophy, a wisdom that is described as divine.”

A pamphlet which would be of use to all is *The Real Work of the Theosophical Society*, by N Sri Ram (extract below).

“Perhaps the most useful subject to discuss at a Convention like this would be the real work of the Theosophical Society, especially in relation to the present times. The Society was not founded as a movement to teach people to be good in the conventional sense—that is, not rob, murder, deceive,etc. Nor was this Society meant to be a school of occultism. A letter from one of the Mahatmas makes that very clear.

He says: “Rather perish the T. S. with both its hapless Founders than that we should permit it to become no better than an academy of magic, a hall of occultism.” These are striking and ringing words. Nor is the Society meant merely to satisfy intellectual curiosity or provide a forum to amuse ourselves when we feel bored by discussing various intellectual themes. It was founded with the exalted purpose of promoting the spiritual regeneration of man.

<https://www.theosophical.org/files/resources/articles/RealWorkTS.pdf>

(continued from page 7)

On Monday evening Pedro Oliveira gave a presentation on Occult Chemistry, as investigations undertaken by CW Leadbeater and Annie Besant, with methods of investigation very different from those of modern science; the methods they used were those of their own consciousness, concentration, awareness and observation.

Tuesday morning: Philippa Rook gave a talk on Ahimsa – non violence, non harm, and how, if we can recognise the “voice of Ahimsa” in ourselves, and respond to it, we can perhaps begin to transform our lives, and by transforming ourselves, ultimately the greater world.

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.

Also on Tuesday morning, Barry Bowden spoke on *The Call from Within*: To understand ourselves we begin to understand others, Internal knowledge is real knowledge. It is only when we have the power to dive into our own nature that it sets us free .

Later on Tuesday morning, the key speaker, Richard Silberstein, spoke on the *Nature of Self, a Transpersonal Perspective*.

On Tuesday afternoon Dara Tatrav gave a presentation on *Classical and Ancient Theories of Learning applied to our work in the TS*. Dara began with the “family tree” history of the TS – Rig Veda, progressing through, among others, Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita, Lord Buddha, Plato, Patanjali, Ammonius Saccas, Shankaracharya, Blavatsky, Krishnamurti; with a time span from as early as 5,000 BC to around 1986.

“What I do believe in is the unbroken oral teachings revealed by living divine men during the infancy of mankind to the elect among men; that it has reached us unaltered; and that the Masters are thoroughly versed in the science based on such uninterrupted teaching.”
HP Blavatsky .

Material records come to life only when their meaning is interpreted *afresh*, by living speakers on the basis of a living energy whose functioning grounds words in lasting knowledge. From each generation to the next, the intent remembered is reconstituted over and over again through an unbroken succession. In an established tradition of common practice that has not been recorded in words, only the unbroken practice of those who succeeded in learning is remembered.

But to pass on the teachings – we must have learned them. Dara referred to N Sri Ram, who declared that the high aim of the Society was the radical transformation of the human being (see again *The Real Work of the Society*).

On our way to knowing the teachings, we, the learner, experience various stages:

Hearing: The beginning of understanding, learning what has been said from primary sources, such as the Upanishads. We listen with confidence that these teachings are genuine.

Reflection: We start to add knowledge by our own efforts, questioning/studying by logical processes.

Contemplation: Contemplation or meditation is where you hold yourself steadily in front of the teaching or object without moving away, without thinking. It is essential to *understanding*, and almost undistinguishable.

(Continued from page 8)

Wednesday was the day of the traditional mid-convention outing. Courtesy of Brisbane Lodge we travelled by hired bus to the village of Maleny on the Blackall Range, about 90 kms north of Brisbane then to the Mary Cairncross Scenic Reserve for picnic lunch. This is an area of subtropical rainforest with stunning views of the Glass House Mountains. Our last stopping point was at Montville, and, even with a short regulated stop such as ours, it was possible to explore the main street with its galleries and enjoy locally made delicacies.

Brisbane Lodge is congratulated once more for organizing the evening concert *Music in the Moonlight* in St John's chapel. Three young musicians performed on piano, violin, cello and recorder and it would be difficult to hear the humble recorder played with such virtuosity as we enjoyed listening to Vivaldi's Recorder Concerto in C Major.

On Thursday morning, Rosanne DeBats gave an illustrated presentation on *Awareness In Plants: Evidence For A Connected Consciousness*. For purposes of the talk, Awareness is "perception, recognition or understanding".

In recent years there have been various publications describing the ability of plants to be aware of their environment, and to process information. The work of Monica Gagliano was illustrated, indicating that plants have memory. At the beginning of the 20th century, Frederic Clements was already describing the reaction of plants to soil, climate and to each other. More modern research has now collaborated the communication of trees and plants, with much of it happening underground through the root systems. Another communication system is through the highways created by fungi – the mycelium thin threads, linking the roots of different plants. Even the term "wood wide web" has come into use. How do we think of all this? John Von Mater says there is a life force surrounding living things and shared by all kingdoms including that of humans.

Also on Thursday morning, Pamela Peterson spoke about the *Trouble with Truth* – a very difficult and elusive thing to find. *Truth is manifold and infinite. It cannot be exhausted by any presentation.* (N Sri Ram.) We heard explanations of truth according to religions, philosophers and theosophists. And Pamela's closing statement advised us, according to Gide, to believe those who are seeking Truth but to doubt those who find it.



Lunch conversations: Rhonda and Georgina

On Thursday afternoon the Theosophical Order of Service held its Annual General Meeting, which is reported separately on page 13.

We have given a slight indication of the theosophical convention week with some key thoughts from talks and presentations. Convention is a unique way to connect with our fellow theosophists. Will we see you in Sydney in 2019?



St John's College

Many of the talks will be on Headquarters website. Keep checking. You will experience some of convention from your own home, but not the whole experience!

<http://austheos.org.au/video-wp/> will be updated with videos from the Brisbane Convention. Some are already online.



Tim Boyd
International President

THE INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT'S BLOG

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0X2nKAYwLvU>

Through his blog, the International President, Tim Boyd, updates members on the work of TS internationally.

From 31 December 2017 to 5 January Adyar hosted the 142nd Annual International Convention; 962 attendees registered worldwide, but, in reality with more in attendance the final number was closer to 1,000. The

video clip shows the work which goes into hosting this yearly event, with even the grounds meriting special care. Children from the Olcott Memorial School, the Theosophical Society's main school for the underprivileged, read the opening prayers of the convention.

Many of us from home took advantage of the livestreaming of the series of talks but, as the President points out, there is more to Convention than the talks— when people actually meet face to face, get to know one another, and share ideas on the work of TS etc. From Adyar, the President then attended the yearly convention of New Zealand TS in Palmerston, and visited the HPB Lodge in Auckland.

He reminded us of the 11th World Congress in Singapore from 4–8 August —and he looks forward to seeing many of us there.



Dancers: Adyar
website

National Library Exhibition—Bessie Rischbieth

Deeds not Words is a small exhibition currently curated until 19 August at the National Library, Canberra – on women's suffrage. Unsurprisingly, among the exhibits are papers of Bessie Rischbieth, who was a strong supporter of the movement, as well as being a member of the Theosophical Society. Perth TS website describes: *She was one of the first women appointed a Justice of the Peace in W.A. and the first to sit on the Children's Court, where she acted for many years. Author, editor, traveller, and a champion of women's interests for more than fifty years, she remained active all her life.*

Among the papers on display is a hand-written letter from Mrs Rischbieth to her sister, Olive, telling her— “This will be a short letter as I am off - out for a big day, having lunch with Florence Fuller then to a Theosophical At Home.”



Renowned portrait artist, Florence Fuller, was also much involved in the Nat. Library copyright free Theosophical Society; one of her portraits is in the National Portrait Gallery, Canberra.

S O GUTH 1943 to 2018

Former member of the TS in Canberra, Steven Guth died on 9 January 2018. Steven investigated the “unexplained laws of Nature” more thoroughly than any other person I have known, moreover he was always willing to share his knowledge and experience. Those who were fortunate enough to know him well benefitted from his knowledge of the “paranormal” and the genuine kindness that accompanied him throughout his life. Steven, when asked, described himself as a writer, so it is not surprising that much of his later work is available on the internet, particularly at <http://devahome.net/>.

Steven is survived by his two sons John and Robert and their families. Sadly, Kathrine, his wife of many years died in July 2017. (Tony Fearnside)

THE HEART OF THE UNIVERSE

5 February started our 2018 events with Dianne Kynaston visiting from Sydney.

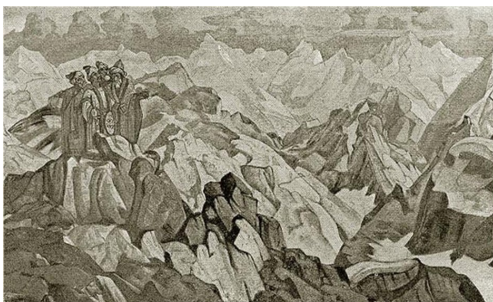
As immediate past ACT/NSW State Representative, Dianne has a deep knowledge of theosophy; she is always a very welcome presenter at Canberra Branch. Dianne's topic was an exploration of the poetic text *The Heart of the Universe*, found in HP Blavatsky's papers after her death, but apparently, with the authorship of it being unknown.

We can connect to the symbol of the **road**, with its connection to a pilgrimage route; for example, the Camino de Santiago and other well known pilgrimage routes. The road in the text, however, is not to be considered a physical path but a spiritual path, an unfolding of our spirituality: from 'I-ness' to 'One-ness'.

This road leads us to the **heart of the universe**; we can equate the heart as the vehicle of love, or the seat of the soul. Those who show us how **to find this way** are our teachers; during our lives, they could be initially a parent or teacher, and eventually those who are beyond the physical and who, with their great compassion, help humanity on the physical plane.

Once the gateway has been reached there is **no turning back**; when the soul opens to its potential it goes onwards.

Develop courage, spotless purity – and let us try to see the other's point of view. The reward for this is to **bless and save humanity**. Success on the path may come in future lives— if this attainment is not possible now. But now it is necessary to make the effort; a future is created by all present actions. What is done *now* is important.



Left: Boundary of kingdoms:

Nicholas Roerich

1916 (Public domain)

There is a road, steep and thorny, beset
with perils of very kind

But yet a road; And it leads to the heart
of the universe,

I can tell you how to find Those who will
show you the secret gateway

That leads inwards only, and closes fast
behind the neophyte for evermore.

There is no danger that dauntless cour-
age cannot conquer.

There is no trial that spotless purity can-
not pass through.

There is no difficulty that strong intel-
lect cannot surmount

For those who win onwards, there is
reward past all telling'

The power to bless and save humanity.

For those who fail, there are other lives
in which success may come.

(from *Collected Writings*)



**Forward planning for 2019:
Convention in Sydney:
Divine Wisdom in Theory and Practice
Saturday 19 to Saturday 26 January 2019**

Sancta Sophia College, University of Sydney
8 Missenden Road, Camperdown NSW 2050

Sancta Sophia College is fairly centrally located in Sydney, near the corner of Parramatta Road and about 6 kms from Circular Quay. See below for a new way to make payments to attend convention next year.

Costs: Single room with shared bathrooms, \$995.50 for 7 nights.
Twin or double ensuite room \$903 per person for 7 nights. Single ensuite room \$1,165 for 7 nights. (Costs are inclusive of meals and all convention talks.)

New. This year a convention payment plan is offered to members who wish to pay by instalments. For details contact the National Secretary, natsec@austheos.org.au

**Worldviews on Death and Dying—Memento Mori
12 to 17 October 2018**

**European School of Theosophy
Pescia, Italy**



The European School of Theosophy was initiated in England in 1982 by Geoffrey Farthing, Ianthe Hoskins and Adam Warcup.

The School focuses on the early literature; the language of the School is English but each year it has a different location and presents a topical programme.

This year the programme is on worldviews on death and dying, at a 17th-century building in

Pescia, Tuscany, Italy—Villaggio Albergo San Lorenzo and Santa Caterina.

The programme includes *Transition from Death to rebirth*, looking at The Tibetan Bardo Thödol; *Companioning the Bereaved*; *The Extinction Myth*; *Living well and dying well*.

The School is autonomous and is not part of any organization.

<http://europeanschooloftheosophy.eu/>

Crossing the Thresholds



On 21 April a DVD with Joy Mills will be shown: *Crossing the Thresholds*. A past President of the TS in America, Joy Mills (1920 - 2015) used great skill with etymology and myths. The DVD is certain to delight. (See programme on page 14.)

Every day there are thresholds to be crossed, doors to be opened and places to be entered. Where do they lead us? The doors that lead onwards, inwards.



The Theosophical Order of Service
Representing theosophy in action on a daily basis
The TOS was founded by Annie Besant in February 1908



New Management Team

The TOS Management Team elected at the TOS AGM in Brisbane on 25 January 2018.

(left to right)

- Dianne Manning, Nat. Treasurer (Brisbane)
- Rhonda Phillips, Nat. Coordinator (Perth)
- George Wester, Nat Secretary (Perth)

Our good wishes go to our new team and we thank the outgoing team for all the work undertaken for TOS in recent years: Jean Carroll, Coordinator, Carolyn Harrod, Treasurer and Travis James, Secretary.

Members at the AGM voted to support the following national projects for this financial year:

- **4 Qandeel Schools in Pakistan** (each school needs \$1,500 for basic education for boys and girls – this includes supplies of materials and a small stipend to the teacher)
- **Golden Link College, Philippines** – which attracts matching donations from the Kern Foundation
- **Syrian refugees** via TOS in Italy (to help 30 families with donations of 30 euros a month for basic necessities).

From the TOS National Coordinator’s report for 2017 – during the year, TOS made donations as follows:

Pakistan Home Schools (Qandeel)	\$4,400	Adyar Olcott Memorial School	\$2,000
Pakistan Educational Sponsorships	\$4,650	Adyar Animal Dispensary	\$150
Philippines Golden Link College	\$3,000	Adyar Women’s welfare centre	\$500
Syrian refugees via TOS Italy	\$9,000	Adyar HPB Hostel	\$700
		Assam Mobility project	\$750

Right: Some of the TOS members who attended the AGM.

Dear TOS members and friends—our donations are also reflected in the above— each time you donated or came along to a brunch, this is where our contributions are going—to assist those in need.

Thank you! Thank you!



Janice (on behalf of the Canberra team)

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN CANBERRA—PROGRAMME 2018

Day	Date	Speaker	Topic
MONDAY 7.30pm FMH	9 April Public meeting	Barry Bowden National Speaker	Future Destiny of Humanity: Humanity's consciousness is an unfinished work. We look at what the future cycles will unfold in our consciousness, but in order to understand the future, the distant past is studied.
SATURDAY 2.00pm ANU	21 April Discussion gr	DVD Joy Mills	Crossing Thresholds on the Inward Journey
MONDAY 7.30pm FMH	7 May Public meeting	Members to present	People of influence
SATURDAY 2.00pm ANU	19 May Discussion gr/ Round Table	Visit from the Bahá'í Community	Bahá'í and TS both support the non-sectarian nature of religion and spirituality, with Bahá'í emphasising the devotional and TS the mental. Viewpoints and matters of interest will be exchanged for mutual understanding and benefit in a Round Table discussion.
SATURDAY 2.00pm ANU	2 June Public meeting	To Be Confirmed	A Spontaneous Kundalini Experience
SATURDAY 2.00pm ANU	16 June Discussion gr	Taoist Tai Chi Society	Philosophy and Practice of Tai Chi
SATURDAY 2.00pm ANU	7 July Public meeting	Margot Herbert	A Course of Love: An Introduction
SATURDAY 2.00pm ANU	21 July	Christmas in July	Presentations by various members
SATURDAY 2.00pm ANU	4 August Public meeting	Gordon Herbert	The Perennial Revelation

FMH = Friends' Meeting House ; ANU = Emeritus Faculty, ANU

Public meetings (Feb—May and Sept—Dec) are generally on the **first Monday and start at 7.30 pm** at: **Friends Meeting House**— 17 Bent Street (Cnr of Bent and Condamine Streets, Turner ACT 2612.

During the cold months of June, July and August, there will be no Monday evening meetings.

The public (general) meetings in June, July and August will be substituted by afternoon meetings at 2.00pm on the first Saturday of those months, at the Emeritus Faculty, ANU, 24 Balmain Crescent, NOT the Friends' Meeting House.

Saturday discussion group meetings are mainly scheduled for the third Saturday at the Emeritus Faculty, ANU, 24 Balmain Crescent — but please check the programme.

Public meetings are open to everyone; and any who are interested in the subject are welcome at the discussion group meetings.