

The Theosophical Society in Australia
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The Campbell Library Newsletter

February 2013

The Rona Scott-Abbot Collection



Rona May Scott-Abbot, who passed away in 2006, joined the Theosophical Society in 1975. She was originally a member of Newcastle Lodge and at one stage served its President. Her home was the venue for a number of Lodge seminars and social activities. During the early 1980s she became active in Blavatsky Lodge of the TS in Sydney and was especially involved in the work of the Theosophical Order of Service. Several years later she became a founding member of the Mosman Group which later became the Olcott Lodge. She was also a founding member of the Northern Beaches Group in Sydney.

Rona was an accredited artist of the Australian art world and is listed in several encyclopedias of artists and galleries in Australia. Her work is described as abstract-symbolist, working with religious themes, nature, and mythological characters. She taught art for many years at St. Aloysius Girls High School in Newcastle. She painted a series of paintings entitled 'Cosmic Birth' inspired by the Stanzas of Dzyan in H. P. Blavatsky's *The Secret Doctrine*. Originally there were over seventy oil paintings in this series, a number of which are now owned by TS members. Several are currently housed in Lodge premises around the country. She did a great deal of work for charitable organizations, such as those involved with drug addicts, alcoholics, the blind and the handicapped, as well as animal welfare and vegetarianism. She also worked with the Newcastle Branch of the Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association. In her final years, Rona remained dedicated to theosophical ideals, working constantly for various social issues as well as animal rights.



(From *Theosophy in Australia*, special issue 1988, and September 2006.)

Following a telephone call from Ralph Abbott, Rona's husband, the Acting Education Coordinator, Pedro Oliveira, visited him together with the National President in November 2012, to accept his generous offer of donating the late Rona Scott-Abbot's collection of theosophical books as well as books on art, mythology, mysticism, poetry and psychology, some of which will be of great value for the Campbell Theosophical Research Library. Also included in the collection donated to the National Headquarters were over forty of her paintings based on the Stanzas of Dzyan in *The Secret Doctrine* referred to above. Three of those paintings now hang in the boardroom of the National Headquarters. The books and the remaining paintings are now safely stored at the National Headquarters.

Some of the new books from the Rona Scott-Abbott Collection in the Campbell Library

Hymns of the Rgveda by Ralph T. H. Griffith

Motilal Banarsidass, New Delhi, 1976

'This is an attempt to bring within easy reach of all readers of English a translation of the Hymns of the Rgveda. Veda, meaning literally knowledge, is the name given to certain ancient works which formed the foundation of the early religious belief of the Hindus.'

The Vedic Experience - Mantramanjari - An Anthology of the Vedas for Modern Man and Contemporary Celebration by Raimundo Panikkar

All India Books, Pondicherry, 1977

'This anthology collects selections of the most crucial texts of the Indian Sacred Scriptures, including the *Rig Veda*, the *Brahmanas*, the *Aranyakas* and the *Upanishads*, the mystical and philosophical culmination of the *Vedas*.'

Myths of the Hindus and Buddhists by Sister Nivedita and Ananda Coomaraswamy

Sagar Publications, New Delhi, 1972

'The mythological beliefs of two religions - Hinduism and Buddhism - have been portrayed prominently in this book. Efforts have been made to trace the early stages of these beliefs. The authors have gone straight to the original sources and given first hand information about mythology of Hinduism and Buddhism.'

The Ten Principal Upanishads - Put into English by Shree Purohit Swami and W. B. Yeats

Faber and Faber Limited, London, 1975

'This is a book full of grand passages and haunting phrases from those ancient sages who have left us some of the profoundest reflections ever made upon the nature of man.'

The Oxford Book of English Mystical Verse - Chosen by D. H. S. Nicholson and A. H. E. Lee

Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1932

'In sending out this anthology we have no desire to venture on a definition of what actually constitutes mysticism and what does not, since such an attempt would be clearly outside our province. Our conception of mysticism must be found in the poetry we have gathered together.' This is book is a classic in its field.

The Last Three Minutes by Paul Davies

Phoenix, London, 1994

'In this free-ranging account, Paul Davies surveys the latest predictions about the ultimate fate of the universe, and assesses the profound scientific and philosophical implications. He outlines the many current theories of how the universe may come to an end – or is it possible that the universe never will end, that the “last three minutes” will never come?'

Asiatic Mythology – A Detailed Description and Explanation of the Mythologies of All the Great Nations of Asia

By J. Hackin, Clement Huart, Raymonde Linossier, H. De Wilman-Grabowska, Charles-Henri Marchal, Henri Maspero and Serge Eliseev

Crescent Books, New York, no year mentioned

'It contains a detailed description and explanation of the mythologies of all the great nations in Asia, including Persia, India, Tibet, Java, China and Japan.'

This Newsletter is published occasionally by the Education Coordinator. The Theosophical Society in Australia is not responsible for any statement in this Newsletter. Enquiries: edcoord@austheos.org.au or (02) 9264 7056.