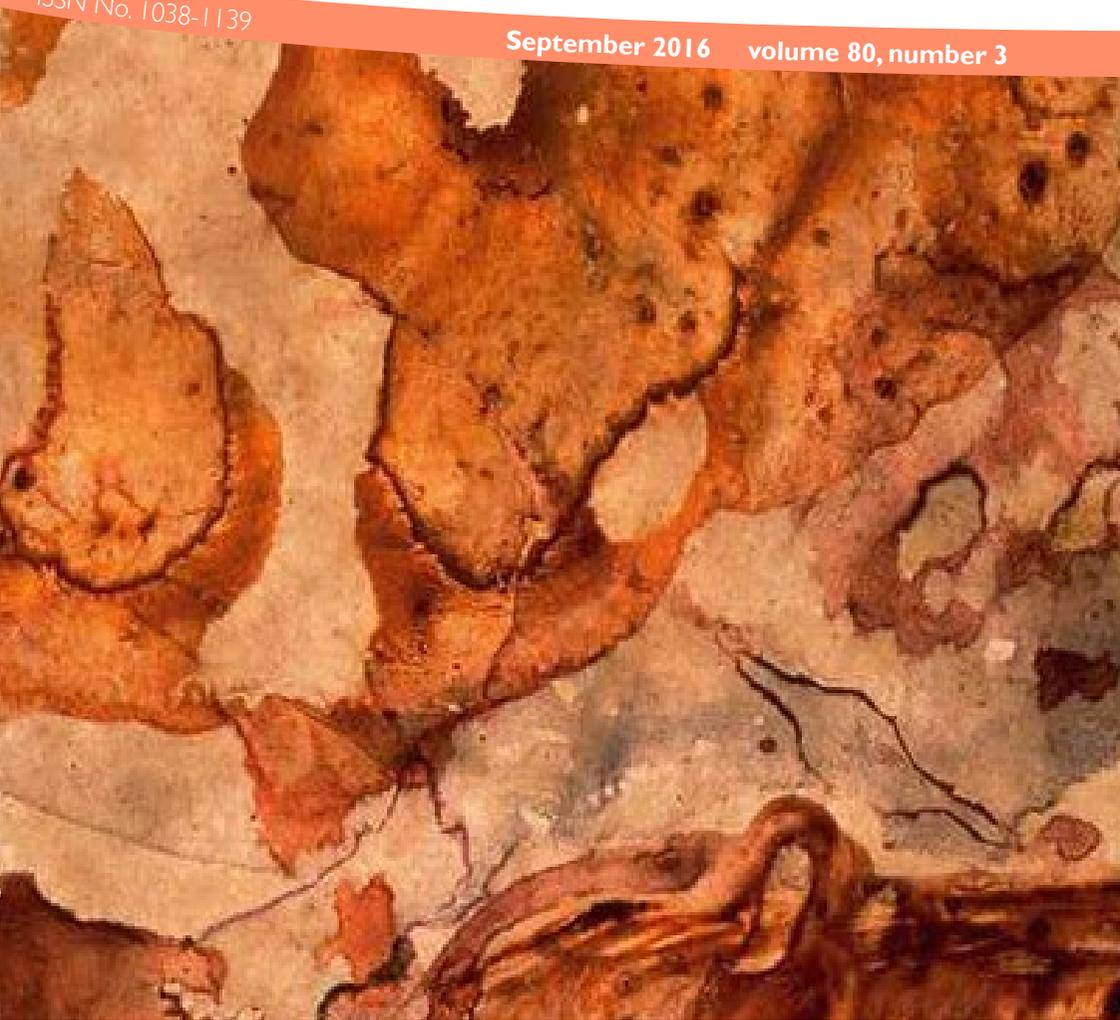


# *Theosophy* IN AUSTRALIA

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**INSIDE**    Spiritual Evolution and the Future of the TS  
              It is all in the Mind  
              Six Ingredients to a Happier Life  
              With Apologies to Shakespeare

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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

- 74 From the International President  
- Spiritual Evolution & the Future of the TS
- 77 From the National President
- 79 It is all in the Mind
- 85 Six Ingredients to a Happier Life
- 92 Q and A
- 95 With Apologies to Shakespeare - poem
- 96 Education: Did you know?
- 97 2017 National Convention
- 98 Minutes - 2016 Convention Business Meeting
- 102 Agenda - 2017 Convention Business Meeting
- 103 National Calendar of Events
- 104 Review
- 105 News and Notes
- 107 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 International President

Tim Boyd



### Spiritual Evolution and the Future of the Theosophical Society

The first of the three truths in the little book by Mabel Collins, *The Idyll of the White Lotus*, says that the soul ‘is immortal and its future is the future of a thing whose growth and splendour have no limit’. This is a concise statement of the trajectory of our unfoldment. Within every one of us there is a germ of the Highest that lies hidden, but whose growth and capacity to radiate into this world with what is described as ‘splendour’ is without limit.

We are all familiar with the ideas of the contemporary scientific community about evolution, the Darwinian model, which focuses on the evolution of life forms. The two driving forces of this model are random mutation and natural selection (survival of the fittest).

#### Spiritual Evolution

When we speak about spiritual evolution, we could ask: What is the difference? The changes, mutations, and processes by which life forms come and go are accurately described in the Darwinian view of

evolution. However, what is not described or considered is the all-important aspect of consciousness. Nowhere is consciousness or its unfoldment formally addressed within contemporary science. It is a significant limitation to the scientific model of the moment.

Consciousness is outside of these limits. Fortunately, there are many scientists who clearly see this limitation and are making efforts to move beyond and actually carry out experimentation in consciousness.

Though consciousness itself is not measurable, its effects are visible everywhere and are measurable. But subtle energies are as yet beyond the realm of measurement, so consciousness is left out of the equation. Yet for those who are involved in the spiritual path and its study, consciousness is all-important.

The Proem to *The Secret Doctrine* speaks about an ‘obligatory pilgrimage’ for the soul – a pilgrimage of outgoing

and return. The soul, or the spark of the Divine, goes out from a unitive state and associates itself with matter. This is the state we are in, where the spiritual germ within us becomes hidden from our normal perception because we are so deeply enmeshed in the processes of the body and the limitations of our day-to-day awareness. This evolutionary process involves the spiritual germ coming more and more to life, to the point that the powers of the spiritual entity within us reveal themselves even through the medium of physical matter.

The spiritual component has vision, but no capacity to directly influence the material world; the physical component can carry the spiritual, but it needs the guidance of a higher vision. Together they make this journey, and together both unfold, and, ultimately, they both go in their own particular directions, taking with them the richness of experience gained during this time of association.

This cyclical process of spiritual evolution is depicted in the spiritual literature of the world. Many of the great stories we encounter in different religious traditions exemplify this process.

When we consider the founding of the Theosophical Society we look to such people as H.P. Blavatsky, H.S. Olcott, and W.Q. Judge. These were all

exceptional people: brilliant, selfless, with many personal qualities that were extraordinary. These are the people through whom the TS came into being. But we make a mistake if we think that the Theosophical movement was generated by people, even exceptional people.

What made these people exceptional was their selfless openness to the Inner Founders of this movement – the Masters of the Wisdom, the Great Ones, who for long years had been searching for opportunities to make their presence known through the reintroduction of a teaching that could ennoble and aid people in the process of transformation. The opportunity presented itself when this particular constellation of individuals came together in the late part of the 19th century.

Late in HPB's life she made a statement about the Theosophical Society which is worth our consideration, because it speaks about its future and purpose. She said that the TS had been two things: (1) On the one hand, it had been a 'stupendous success'; and (2) on the other hand, it had been a 'dead failure'. The 'stupendous success' of the TS was that this movement and the ideas and concepts it was promoting had spread throughout the world. This is even more true in our time.

What did HPB mean by saying that the TS had been a ‘dead failure’? According to HPB’s idea, the Theosophical Society was a dead failure because of the lack of examples of the universal brotherhood which it came into being to promote, and because the TS came into existence to provide a vehicle through which a spiritual current could flow into the world – a current that originates with the Inner Founders, and then finds an outlet through the lives of those attempting to live these ideals.

### **What is the future of the Theosophical Society?**

In many ways its future is the same as its past. There is no new 21st century mission for the TS or its members. The mission of trying to align the life, mind, and actions to the ideals has not changed. Only when that occurs is it possible for the spiritual current to flow. The signs of its flowing will not be found in the numbers of people who sign a piece of paper and say ‘I am a member’, but are in the ways in which these ideals are personally embodied, and then stimulated in the world around us.

Everything that comes into this world, ultimately dissolves and goes back to its source, whether we are talking

about a building, a body, an institution, or an organisation. All have their time. As long as the current of life is sufficiently strong, life remains within these various forms. The Theosophical Society is a form – an organisation. Theosophy, the Ageless Wisdom, is the current that maintains its life.

The Mahatmas said that as long as there are three people within the Society who are alive, awakened, committed, and living through these truths, the Theosophical Society will stand. That is not our problem. The real and only problem is, where do we stand?

When we come together in our theosophical gatherings, from time to time there are moments when there seems to be a harmony that settles upon us. These are the moments when we become most useful in this process of spiritual evolution. It is when something much more potent moves among us and within us. We feel it as a sense of peace or expansion, but it is a presence that makes itself known because, consciously or not, we have provided the opportunity for it to express itself through us.

We then become more effective in our potential service to the higher good that is so needed in these times, and for which the Theosophical Society exists.

## From the National President

Linda Oliveira



This issue includes a number of thoughtful items, including a poem by Joy Mills which was found in her personal papers after her passing and which is rather wittily adapted from a well-known soliloquy by William Shakespeare.

Also included is an article that offers pointers for a happier life. The realisation of human happiness is fundamental to our ultimate well-being. Although an age-old quest, it has spawned organisations today such as the Happiness Institute. Humans have many external differences, but a universal human desire is to be happy.

A clever headline appeared on the BBC news website some time ago: 'Misery: the Secret to Happiness'. The piece concerned suggested that, when it comes to relationships, a key to happiness could be accepting that some miserable times are unavoidable! Acceptance that things will not always be perfect can therefore contribute to our happiness. This suggests also the more general acceptance that suffering is a non-negotiable aspect of the human

condition. The Lord Buddha's diagnosis of the malady of human suffering, and the way out of it, has wide applicability.

The article in this issue suggesting six keys to a happier life notes that there is a paucity of material in Theosophical literature explicitly dealing with the subject of happiness. This is worth pondering. Nevertheless, quite a few hints can be found in the literature about the way to a high state of consciousness, which is ultimately blissful.

Perhaps we can say that there are two main modes of expression of happiness:

1. temporary happiness, often associated with gratification of desire.
- and
2. lasting happiness, a deep and abiding joy, being the flowering of various practices which have been prescribed in the Wisdom tradition for thousands of years.

If we cannot get what we want, then unhappiness normally arises. But when we actually obtain what we want, a

common cycle begins. We are happy for a while, but this happiness has a use-by date. It fades, and then becomes elusive for a longer or shorter period. This is the happiness dilemma: the fact that happiness may visit us for short periods but, once we become used to whatever has made us happy, we become conditioned to it. Happiness disappears because that experience or state cannot sustain itself, being a signature of the personal nature. The state concerned is therefore temporary.

During meditation, for some moments a particularly harmonious and happy state may be experienced. When the everyday mind resumes, though, personal concerns take over and consciousness operates in that fragmented mode which tends to accompany everyday living. Maintaining a more steady meditative state throughout the day is the preserve of the few. A large factor in not being able to maintain such a state is desire, along with the discontent which it breeds. While certain desires, such as the desire for food and water, are absolute necessities for our survival, and while desires are required to help us get on in this world, they become a problem when allowed a completely free reign. This is self-evident.

Dr Hugh Shearman mentioned that desires are all expressions of ‘an urge to

achieve a greater intensity of experience’. We desire things which we feel will enable us to feel more intensely alive. Gradually the objects of desire change – whether within a particular lifetime or else over many lifetimes. We begin to enter the field of desires which are intrinsically unselfish and idealistic, namely, those desires which, when fulfilled, will help other sentient beings.

Hugh Shearman also identifies fulfilment, in contrast to desire, which is another way of denoting the distinction between transient happiness and deep joy. ‘The first glimpse of an entirely new kind of fulfilment’, he asserts, ‘is only a beginning’. For there is a long journey before an individual is wholly given over to this new fulfilment.

Finally, the microbiologist, Darryl Ranney, observed: ‘All parts of the cosmos, including ourselves, are deeply interconnected, flawlessly interwoven, one wholesome unity.’ In his words:

Happiness is too weak and anaemic a word to capture the rapture that pure consciousness knows and is. To see into the nature of this bliss, at our present level of evolution and in the midst of our present human limitation, is virtually impossible. The essence of the human quest is to break free of time, to reconnect to the eternal in all of us, in that space where the past and the future interleave, the reality laboratory of our own minds. (*The Death of Forever*)

## It is all in the Mind

Beverley Champion



**H.P.** Blavatsky told us that her major work, *The Secret Doctrine*, was a synthesis of Science, Religion and Philosophy. We may well ask the question, ‘What is the core message of Theosophy which allows it to be called a synthesis of Science, Religion and Philosophy?’ What is the ‘story’ which connects this synthesis given to us with the publication of *The Secret Doctrine*? For herself, HPB claimed only the role of writer and transmitter. She made it clear that it was a triple production with her two teachers, the Master Koot Hoomi and the Master Morya.

At the time of its publication one writer, Dr Hübbe-Schleiden, considered *The Secret Doctrine* to be a work of utmost importance containing the sacred wisdom of all times. He felt that within its pages were the keys which

could not only solve the riddles of existence, but also the macrocosm and the microcosm.

In these incredible volumes HPB did indeed bring together Perennial Wisdom teachings from wherever they were to be found, in order to make of them one unbroken and harmonious whole and to dispel the myth of separateness. Under the guidance of her teachers she gathered these scattered gems from sciences, religions and philosophies and it would seem that the philosophies held by any nation or community, at any one time, can largely determine its culture. ‘Culture’ is a word which covers religion, philosophy and every form of artistic creativity, indeed, all of human achievement. HPB said that *The Secret Doctrine* was written to ‘change the way that people think’.

So, how can the Perennial, or Ageless Wisdom Teachings, *connect* today's sciences, religions and philosophies? Upon reflection, one word seems to stand out and that word is *Consciousness*. Keeping an open mind and an expectation of discovering a new way of thinking about the subject being studied, should make it possible to find ways to relate the three paths to each other.

HPB said that *The Secret Doctrine* was written not only to 'change the way that people think', but to lead us towards the truth, and that truth had to be discovered for ourselves.

## Science

Of the three traditions I turned first of all to science and was drawn to the book edited by Lester Smith with the title *Intelligence Came First*. It was first published in 1975 and is a compilation of contributions by nine scientists. Right at the beginning, on the page preceding even the Contents, there is a statement by a noted scientist of that day, Sir James Jeans, who said '... the universe begins to look more like a great thought ... Mind no longer appears as an accidental intruder into the realm of matter.'

In the Introduction of *Intelligence Came First*, we read that this book starts

from the premise that 'consciousness is a fact of nature' ... and that the ordered complexity of living things certainly suggests intelligent design. Today, forty-one years on, a renewed debate has emerged among scientists in relation to this concept and to those two words, 'Intelligent Design'.

Also in the Introduction of *Intelligence Came First*, we read:

... the entire universe gives eloquent testimony of being a product of mind and intelligence ... Not only does the idea make sense, but we come to realize that we have known it all the time.

The quote continues,

These ideas have the further merit of being in line with the tenets of the great religions. The mystic does not need to be convinced by such arguments; he experiences for himself, if only momentarily, total immersion in the universal consciousness, the One Life. (p.xiii)

Is this our first connection within the synthesis?

A final statement from this book really challenges us to ponder:

What has evolved is not intelligence itself but the means of expressing this intelligence through the brain and a body of flesh and blood. Primal intelligence became imprisoned in the mineral, stirred a little in the plant, unfolded in the animal, and became released in man. (p.xiv)

No wonder the Masters who inspired the writing of *The Secret Doctrine* said that ‘Modern science is our best ally.’

## Religion

Turning now to religion, the second part of the synthesis, I suggest that in the 21st century, humanity seems to be as divided as ever in this respect, some would say more so. Distrust of the ‘others’ abounds because of differences in belief. The sustained idea of separateness from each other, because of our particular beliefs, continues to hold much power and divides rather than unites humanity.

Theosophy, however, is a message of hope and tells us that not only will unity eventually be realised but that humanity can either speed up or delay the process by the power of our thoughts – by what we are thinking!

In Volume 10 of *The Collected Writings of HPB*, she asserts again that:

Theosophy is not a Religion ... ‘Theosophy is Religion’ itself. A Religion in the true and only correct sense, is a bond uniting men together – not a particular set of dogmas and beliefs. ... Now Religion, *per se*, in its widest meaning is that which binds not only *all* MEN, but also *all* BEINGS and *all things* in the entire Universe into one grand whole. This is our theosophical

HPB also told us that Theosophists should not accept any teaching on blind faith. There should always be a process of intelligent enquiry and the real meaning of the word ‘faith’ is ‘enlightened belief,’ which indicates a true experience accompanied by knowledge which has been gained by enquiry. She said that it is not what we believe that is important, but *why* we believe it.

definition of religion; ... and must be called in its integrity and universality by the distinctive name of WISDOM-RELIGION. (p.161)

HPB also told us that Theosophists should not accept any teaching on blind faith. There should always be a process of intelligent enquiry and the real meaning of the word ‘faith’ is ‘enlightened belief,’ which indicates a true experience accompanied by knowledge which has been gained by enquiry. She said that it is not what we believe that is important, but *why* we believe it.

For a remarkable and clear explanation of Theosophy and Religion, I recommend an article in Volume 8 of *The Collected Writings of HPB*, commencing on p.268 and continuing for fifteen pages! It is a letter written by HPB to the Archbishop of Canterbury,

dated 4 December 1887. It is not entirely clear whether she wrote it alone, or in collaboration with Richard Harte who was assisting her at that time in preparing *The Secret Doctrine* for publication.

As usual, Madame Blavatsky speaks her mind, instructing the Archbishop how the Christian Church should be operating. She says,

What the world now wants is a Church that will tell it of Deity, or the immortal principle in man, which will be at least on a level with the ideas and knowledge of the times. (p.278)

## Philosophy

This brings us to Philosophy, the third Tradition of the synthesis.

When Philosophy is mentioned, I turn to my favourite philosopher, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and once again, consciousness was the first subject addressed. On the first page of his essay on *History*, I read:

there is one Mind common to all individual men. Every man is an inlet to the same and all to the same. He that is once admitted to the right of reason is made a freeman of the whole estate. What Plato has thought, he may think: what a saint has felt, he may feel: what has at any time befallen any man, he can understand. Who has access to this Universal Mind is a party to all that is,

or can be done, for this is the only and sovereign agent.



Ralph Waldo Emerson by Samuel W. Rowse.  
Source: Wikimedia Commons

Some further selected quotes from this same essay read:

There is a relation between the hours of our life and the centuries of time ... of the Universal Mind each individual is one more incarnation and all its properties consist in him ... Every reform was once a private opinion and when it is a private opinion again it will solve the problems of the age. ... everything the individual sees without him, corresponds to his states of mind. ... a man is a bundle of relations, a knot of roots whose flower and fruitage is the world.

In his essay on *Intellect*, Emerson says that:

we are prisoners of ideas.... we get caught up and carried away in these ecstasies, and we call it Truth, but the moment we cease to report and attempt to correct and contrive, it is no longer Truth.

Theosophy teaches that, as time passes, progress will be made towards harmonious activity in personal and national affairs. It will then be seen to integrate all one's faculties, along with their realignment with Cosmic Intelligence. Isn't that the story, the core message which *is* Theosophy? It is a fact that we are all one at the biological level: we share one humanity, one essence of all that has been, and is now, and we have the power to build the future. Unity in diversity is a living Truth for the benefit of all life.

It is the inherent inner urge to attain to still higher consciousness which is common to all three traditions of Science, Religion and Philosophy. True understanding is the unlocking of Divine Wisdom. This is the task and if this can be assisted by way of the study of Science, Religion, or Philosophy, then surely another 'key' has been forged facilitating the opening of more of the Perennial Wisdom.

### Theosophy is in the Mind

Theosophy is, for each one of us, how we perceive it in our mind. We can choose to allow that perception to soar to heights without limit, ever widening, or we can box it into a particular framework and set it into fixed beliefs.

If the latter be the case then, to my mind, it is no longer Theosophy.

In the words of G.R.S. Mead, 'It is living ideas alone that grow and have the power of reproduction', the transcending of our present limitations. Plato told us that 'ideas rule the world'.

And so we return to that pivotal word 'Consciousness'. The Perennial Wisdom teaches that we are each an individual thought of the One Universal Consciousness. In our search for the Sacred, we need to be aware continually and to know what we are thinking. There is no religion higher than the Truth inherent in every human being; and it is a Truth which no scripture, doctrine or belief can ever replace.

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She was appointed as the first Education Coordinator of this Section in 1993 and also served as a Committee Member, Vice-President and President of Adelaide Lodge. Beverley has lectured widely in Australia and in several countries overseas. She is a keen student of *The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett* and *The Secret Doctrine*, and taught classes at Adelaide Lodge until very recently.



Some might say: 'Fragmentation of cities, religions, political systems, conflict in the form of wars, general violence, fratricide, etc., are the reality. Wholeness is only an ideal, toward which we should perhaps strive.' But this is not what is being said here. Rather, what should be said is that wholeness is what is real, and that fragmentation is the response of this whole to man's action, guided by illusory perception, which is shaped by fragmentary thought.

Indeed, the attempt to live according to the notion that the fragments are really separate is, in essence, what has led to the growing series of extremely urgent crises that is confronting us today.

David Bohm, *Wholeness and the Implicate Order*

## Six Ingredients to a Happier Life

Vicente Hao Chin Jr.



The subject of happiness is seldom discussed in Theosophical lectures or articles. The impression one gets is that the Theosophical life is basically a matter of self-discipline. H.P. Blavatsky wrote:

Neither is Theosophy the pursuit of happiness, as men understand the word; for the first step is sacrifice, the second, renunciation.

(*Collected Writings*, Vol XII, p.450)

Thus, we are told that we should be prepared for a life of difficulty, challenge and even suffering.

So is the subject of happiness relevant to the quest for the transcendent life? In *Light on the Path*, one of the most profound Theosophical books in modern times, we are told: ‘Kill out desire of comfort; but be happy as those are who live for happiness.’ Even *At the Feet of the Master* stipulates cheerfulness as one of the six points of conduct: ‘Your duty is to remain always joyous and serene.’

### The Why of Happiness.

There are several reasons why a happy and cheerful life creates a significant difference from practical and spiritual points of view:

- A happy life indicates that one is successfully dealing with adverse karmas that cause sorrow.
- A happy disposition makes one more effective, good, unselfish and service oriented.
- It better enables us to transcend the traps of the worldly life and be more non-attached.
- Because happiness is better than sorrow.

### What is Happiness?

First, what do we really mean by happiness?

- Evidently, happiness is not pleasure because pleasure is momentary and is the result of a temporary satisfaction of a physical or psychological urge. It is the

building up of psychic energy and the sudden release of such energy.

- Neither is it excitement, for excitement is another temporary build-up of psychic energy characterised by positive anticipation. Once it is released then the excitement is gone.
- Happiness is not material success: fame, position or wealth. There have been many famous and ultra-rich people who have committed suicide. If social success is equivalent to happiness, these people should be the happiest people on earth.
- It is not laughter, for even the unhappy can laugh.

Pleasure, excitement and laughter are episodic, in other words, they happen for a certain limited period, and then they are gone the next moment. Is happiness episodic? Does a person become an unhappy person just because he (or she) lost a mobile phone today? Or is he still a happy individual who happens to have lost his phone today? Happiness is not understood as momentary pleasure or positiveness. We look at life and make an overall assessment about whether we are generally happy or not.

In 2001, the well-known psychologist Martin Seligman published a book entitled *Authentic Happiness*. In this book he considered that happiness is

an event that happens to an individual. In 2010, Dr Seligman published another book entitled *Flourish: A New Understanding of Happiness and Well-Being*. In this second book, he concluded that his view of happiness in his first book was not correct. Happiness is not an event; it is a state. He adopted the term ‘well-being’ to describe this state of happiness, which is something that lingers in spite of the ups and downs of each day.

Thus, we can define happiness in this way: ‘It is a sustained state of well-being, contentment and meaningfulness, accompanied by positive feelings.’

- Well-being refers to a general state of satisfaction and meaningfulness in life.
- Sustained means that it is felt or perceived for an extended period – months, years or an entire lifetime.
- Contentment refers to the capacity to accept the present moment as it is.
- Positive feelings refer to optimism, appreciation, gratitude, lightheartedness, joy, cheerfulness, et cetera.

### Six Ingredients to a Happier Life

With the above introduction, let us look into six important ingredients in making our lives happier. All of them are within our control.

1. Remove causes of unhappiness
2. Develop habits of positiveness
3. Nurture positive relationships
4. Help others selflessly
5. Be ethical
6. Have a wholesome philosophy of life



### 1. Remove Causes of Unhappiness.

Many psychologists have made lists of factors that contribute to well-being and happiness, but, strangely, none of them include this important ingredient – removing causes of unhappiness. To my mind, this ingredient is foundational. These are fear (including worry and anxiety), depressiveness, resentment, anger, guilt, hurt and even aversion. If not removed, they can make a person almost incapable of long-term happiness.

A person with fear, for example, can hardly be happy. The state of fear is one of constriction and defensiveness that is definitely unpleasant, whereas happiness is one of naturalness, spontaneity, expansiveness and positiveness. Fear takes many forms: anxiety, phobia, low self-confidence, low self-esteem, fear of criticism, fear of failure or fear of what people will say. The problem is that they are chronic states. It is not just getting scared for ten seconds, and then it

disappears. Anxiety, for example, is something that is constantly in the periphery of one's consciousness and manifesting as tension, guardedness, discomfort or timidity. Its roots are the thousand and one unpleasant and fearful experiences since childhood that have not been resolved and released. They impinge upon the present moment in a semi-conscious way that prevents us from being our natural self and being cheerful. These unresolved unpleasant experiences become subconscious 'push buttons' that are easily triggered by memory or association. They are like constant inner dark clouds that prevent the mind and feelings from being cheerful.

These push buttons can be removed. For the past twenty years, thousands of people have learned how to release them during the Self-Transformation Seminar conducted by the TS in the Philippines. It is done through a direct and simple approach that uses self-awareness and which allows the

bottled-up energy to be safely released permanently. The principle behind such a release is simple and testable. First, the discomfort in the form of tension, tightness or energy congestion is still in one's system, even if it is subconscious. Second, when this inner tension or congestion is allowed to flow, this chronic feeling disappears, and one goes back to a state of naturalness and spontaneity.

## 2. Develop Habits of Positiveness.

Positiveness refers to psychological states such as cheerfulness, enthusiasm, optimism, appreciation or gratitude.

Positiveness is a habit. Some people are genetically endowed with such a predisposition, others are not. For those who are not, they can still develop positive habits and overcome their innate moroseness.

William James was one of the early psychologists who recognised that one could change one's feelings by altering one's behaviour. Normally we say that when we are cheerful (feeling), we smile (behaviour). In other words, cheerfulness results in smiling. But the opposite is equally true, according to James. Smiling produces cheerfulness. Try smiling right now and notice an immediate change in one's internal

state. By developing the habit of smiling (a muscular habit), one shifts naturally towards greater daily cheerfulness.

Let's look at another set of habits: optimism versus pessimism. Optimists look at the bright side of things, while pessimists look at the opposite. Dr Martin Seligman, the founder of Positive Psychology, found that in addition to making people unhappy, pessimism makes people maladaptive in most endeavours: they do poorly in sales, have lower grades in school, fare worse in athletics, et cetera. Fortunately, something can be done to change this attitude or habit. Dr Seligman in fact wrote a book entitled *Learned Optimism* to offer such solutions.

When a person consciously tries to be positive, something changes in the way one looks at life and the world. The world has not changed, but one's state of happiness has. Try regularly expressing appreciation towards other people, feeling grateful for what we have, smiling frequently, being optimistic about almost anything – then the habit of positiveness will set in. And life changes.

## 3. Nurture Positive Relationships.

In the life of the average individual, the greatest source of unhappiness is

people. Jean Paul Sartre once wrote: 'I know what hell is. Hell is other people.' We get upset when we lose a large amount of money, but after a few days, we get over it and continue with life. But when we are hurt or angered or frightened by other people, then the after effect is likely to be long-term or permanent. I have known of 70-year-old people who still cry when recalling their unhappy childhood incidents.

The good news is that people are also the sources of their greatest happiness: warm friendship, a loving marital relationship, a happy family, a happy work environment when it comes to bosses and co-workers, and the opportunity to help other people.

Positive relationship is something that is built, nurtured and watered on a regular basis. There have been known approaches towards building a wholesome and happy relationship with others, such as effective communication (assertiveness without being timid or aggressive); expressing love effectively through the five languages of love: affirming statements, quality time, touching, gift-giving and acts of service, the 95/5 rule, which means that out of a hundred interactions with other people, 95% should be positive or at least neutral, and not more than 5% negative or critical.

Dr. Albert Schweitzer, the Nobel Peace Prize winner, addressing a group of graduating students, said: 'I don't know what your destiny will be, but one thing I know: the only ones among you who will be really happy are those who have sought and found how to serve.'

#### 4. Help Others Selflessly.

This is an inestimable ingredient of happiness – helping others without thinking of anything in return. It need not be in terms of money. It can be a genuinely listening ear or anything that uplifts other people and makes them feel lighter or happier.

Dr Albert Schweitzer, the Nobel Peace Prize winner, addressing a group of graduating students, said:

I don't know what your destiny will be, but one thing I know: the only ones among you who will be really happy are those who have sought and found how to serve. ([www.brainyquote.com](http://www.brainyquote.com))

Dr Martin Seligman once gave two weekend assignments to his psychology students. The first was to engage in something that they thought they would enjoy – watching a movie, hanging out with friends,

going to the beach, et cetera. The second was to do something to help someone – even complete strangers. The following week, the students were asked which of the two activities gave them greater happiness. The students were unanimous: helping others gave a greater feeling of happiness.

### 5. Be Ethical.

This ingredient is not an attempt to be moralistic. It is practical and sound advice.

Try to deliberately harm other people – cheating, deceiving, hurting, or depriving them of something. There are two consequences: Internally, we don't feel good. We may seem to feel satisfaction and even pleasure, but inwardly we know that we have done something wrong, and we cannot have true inward peace and happiness. Externally, we have just set off a chain of karma that will eventually return to us in a painful way – bringing more unhappiness. It can be immediate – being punched back; it may take days or years before we receive what we deserve, such as negative public opinion, losing a job or going to jail; or it may come in another lifetime – being born to cruel parents or being born with severe disabilities.

The reward of an ethical life is inner peace, not being afraid of

consequences, and eventually, a life of harmony and positiveness.

### 6. Have a Wholesome Philosophy of Life.

This ingredient covers a wide variety of insights that one learns from experience or from others. Such insights can come from plain good common sense or from the deep principles of ageless wisdom. Below are examples:

- *Do not compare yourself with others, but strive to attain your own level of excellence by doing your best.* Such a comparative or competitive outlook is one of the sources of dissatisfaction and unhappiness – trying to keep up with our neighbours, colleagues or classmates. There will always be people whose life situations are better or worse than ours. Neither be discontented nor be proud in connection with what other people have or don't have. We set our own inner benchmarks and pursue what is meaningful to us, not what is meaningful to other people.
- *Do not double your loss.* Suppose I lost a leg due to an accident. I may feel bitter and blame people for such a tragedy, resulting in long-term unhappiness. What I don't realise is that I have just doubled my loss –

I have lost a leg, and I have lost my happiness. Why don't I just stop at one loss, and retain my capacity for being cheerful and happy?

- *See the larger picture of life.* Life is not just about jobs or income or social status. It is about growth of the soul towards perfection from life to life. This is a basic insight that has been known in the spiritual traditions of both East and West. It results in human perfection, what Buddhists call Arhats, Bodhisattvas or Buddhas, what Hindus call Rishis or Mahatmas, or what St. Paul speaks of as 'just men made perfect'. The psychologist Abraham Maslow describes such a growth direction as self-actualisation and self-transcendence.
- *We create our destiny.* Many people are passive victims of circumstances. Wiser people are aware that it is within our power to (a) change our attitudes towards our circumstances, and (b) alter our future circumstances by sowing the right seeds of karma at every moment.

The subject of happiness is extremely relevant to all of us who are struggling in this world of sorrow. We need to know the laws that govern nature,

human life and society. This is during a stage of our growth when the self or ego is still engaged in such a struggle. In the spiritual life, however, there comes a point when this centre called self would have faded into universality and non-duality. At such a stage, the issue of happiness is no longer relevant, for one has transcended human happiness and unhappiness.



Vicente Hao Chin Jr. is the President of Golden Link College Foundation, a Theosophical school in the Philippines. He has served as President of the Theosophical Society in the Philippines and the Indo-Pacific Federation of the TS. He has published several books such as *The Process of Self-Transformation*, *Why Meditate?*, *On Education*, and edited the chronological edition of *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*. He has conducted the Self-Transformation Seminar in eighteen countries around the world, and has served as Director of the School of the Wisdom in India.

## 2016 Perth Convention, Q and A Panel

Below are the answers given to several questions by the Q and A panel during the 2016 Convention. The panel consisted of Pedro Oliveira (facilitator/participant) as well as Pamela Peterson (Blavatsky Lodge, Sydney), Grahame Crookham (Canberra Branch), Lynette Muller (Brisbane Lodge) and Lucille Crocker (Blavatsky Lodge). The photo to the right was taken on the campus of the University of Western Australia.



### **Q: Our first Object stresses building a nucleus. How do you see this?**

LC: My understanding is that a nucleus is a central core around which things collect, helping build a bigger being.

LM: The First Object of the Theosophical Society is to form a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood, and from that perspective I would like to suggest that it is the gathering of like-minded individuals who have a tolerance and respect for all living creatures, worldwide.

PP: I believe that in order to begin this venture we must concentrate on the individual. Unless you change the mentality of individuals, they are not

in a frame of mind to suddenly embark on a policy of brotherhood, each being immersed in their own particular ideas. Until we can get past being stuck in our own ideas, we are not going to be able to form this nucleus of brotherhood.

GC: In Canberra the Programming Committee have attempted to articulate what our role is, what we understand by it. One of the dot points in that role statement is to help build a bridge between like-minded people. I see the group of like-minded people with whom we hope to build a bridge as comprising that nucleus; they are not necessarily TS members.

**Q: It is sometimes said that maybe the TS has done the job it was set out to do. If so, what, then, is our modern purpose?**

PP: We would have to begin by defining what was the job we set out to do and that probably would take a long time. But surely, if something is going particularly well, we wouldn't grind to a halt in the middle, would we? I think that we should continue to perpetuate the idea of free thought and should be showing how the Ancient Wisdom has been taken up by people who are not ancient. In fact, recent philosophers have shown that this is still relevant. Someone who comes to mind is Marcel Proust, the famous French philosopher and writer. He made an interesting statement once that the purpose of the journey is not in seeking new landscapes but in having new eyes; and that we must never be afraid to go too far, because truth lies beyond.

LM: Perhaps one should consider Theosophy as a Perennial Philosophy which is owned by everyone. The Theosophical Society, on the other hand, is an organisational structure offering support – and providing an opportunity for – educational expansion in the context of emotional, spiritual and intellectual enquiry. If this can be facilitated then the existence of the Society will be ongoing.

GC: I don't necessarily agree with that initial assumption, but I also see a modern purpose for the TS to present

contemporary interpretations and expressions of the Ancient Wisdom. There are many contemporary souls talking about ancient wisdom and I think it is important to take the opportunity to communicate their message and their interpretations.

LC: The Theosophical Society is alive and is giving a platform for each one of us to explore, as intelligently as we can, what is offered.

**Q: Have the existing religions any place in solving the world's problems?**

GC: About four years ago I attended the Parliament of the World's Religions in Melbourne. At one of the workshops a group presented what they were doing to help the situation in Israel and Palestine. They were working on enhancing communication between these people of different cultures and religions. It came down to communication, education and getting people from these two backgrounds to work together. One example given was an orchestra, that it was as though they were making music together. Here were religions working at solving the current problems.

PP: These are very noble objectives. The problem lies not in the leaders. The problem lies in the millions of

people who have been indoctrinated throughout their lives within various religions. It is very difficult to reverse that process once you are taught something. To overcome that attitude is very, very difficult. That is why, to be honest, I'm very sceptical about the powers of organised religion.

LM: I appreciate the difficulties that Pamela has put forward. However it is possible for an individual to come to a point of recognition of his or her previous conditioning. I am reflecting upon the teachings of Krishnamurti in particular, who suggested that we need to examine ourselves and understand ourselves; it is only from the power of One that things can change. To give just three examples think of Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, Desmond Tutu, and the impact that these individuals have had on their own societies. So although the problem looks insurmountable, through small steps and the actions of perhaps only one individual, things can change. The age of miracles is not dead.

LC: Absolutely everything in this manifested world can be either a tool or a weapon. It is just up to each one of us to look within and see how we're going to use this. If we change ourselves, the world can be changed. I am very positive about this.

PO: We live in an age of absolute statements. The number of atheists in the world has grown. Some time ago a survey in Australia – an official census, I think – revealed that 53% of young people in the age group 18- 25 declared themselves atheists. This is a common trend, even affecting India. Young Indians who go to study abroad do not necessarily follow the tradition of their parents. Their minds are exposed to other environments.

There was a debate some time ago within the TS which included the view that translating *Satyân Nâsti Paro Dharma* as 'There is no Religion higher than Truth' may not be totally accurate because the word 'dharma' [translated here as 'religion' – Ed.] has at least sixteen different meanings. But that was the translation approved by Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott as the motto of the Society. You can see in hindsight that emphasising the relative nature of every tradition in regard to Truth itself is a very healthy principle. So I think the Society still has some work to do in this regard.

This is something that affects all of us, isn't it? The process of experience can be an awakening and a progression towards more clarity and freedom, but it can also be a brutal process of entrenchment into opinionatedness, and all sorts of hard habits.

## With Apologies to Shakespeare



Statue of William Shakespeare,  
Leicester Square, London,  
Giovanni Fontana  
Source: Wikimedia Commons

To speak or not to speak: that is the question,  
 Whether 'tis easier for the heart to suffer  
 The fears and shakings of outrageous trembling,  
 Or to take steps toward a monstrous platform  
 And by conquering end the fear? To sit: to speak,  
 No more and, by a speech to say we end  
 The shaking and the thousand natural shocks  
 That flesh is heir to, 'tis a consummation  
 Devoutly to be wished. To sit, to speak,  
 To speak: perchance to forget: ay there's the rub;  
 For in that deathlike pause what thoughts may come  
 When we have shuffled o'er this platform here  
 Must give us fears. There's the respect  
 That makes calamity of so long speech,  
 For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,  
 The listeners' glare, the proud mind's nagging,  
 The pangs of unquiet knees, the tongue's delay,  
 The inward churning, and the spurns  
 That being speechless make,  
 When he himself might his exit take  
 With a mere faint? Who would laurels bear  
 For drawing out the trembling breath of speech  
 But that the dread of nothing after speech,  
 The unsuspected silence to whose bourn  
 No speaker returns, puzzles the will  
 And makes as rather bear the sitting still  
 Than fly to platforms that we know not of.  
 Thus conscience doth make cowards of us all.

Joy Mills, from her personal papers

## Education: Did you know?

Pedro Oliveira



Throughout the Theosophical literature the word Theosophy has quite often been referred to using terms such as Divine Wisdom and other synonyms. This may indicate not only the depth of that one concept, but also the inherent difficulty of defining the nature of Wisdom. Let us consider some of the synonyms for Theosophy:

**Brahmavidyā:** knowledge of ‘the one self-existing Being’, of Brahma, sacred knowledge (*A Sanskrit-English Dictionary* by Sir Monier Monier-Williams). This term appears several times in Madame Blavatsky’s writings.

**Esoteric Philosophy:** ‘the spiritual and psychic blending of man with Nature’(HPB), also referred to as *Gupta-vidyā*, the hidden or concealed Wisdom which becomes available to those who undergo the necessary preparation to see life’s deeper realities.

**Wisdom Tradition:** a tradition is something which is transmitted from generation to generation. The expression ‘Wisdom Tradition’ suggests the fact that there are those who are the bearers of the timeless tradition and also those who have made themselves ready to receive it.

**Wisdom Religion:** Madame Blavatsky suggests that in hoary antiquity there was only one religion in the world, the Wisdom Religion. It was not a belief-based tradition, as modern religious systems present themselves, but religion per se, an awareness of the indivisible nature of the whole existence.

**Perennial Philosophy:** Aldous Huxley’s definition is profoundly resonant with the nature of Theosophy as presented in Theosophical literature: ‘the metaphysic that recognizes a divine Reality substantial to the world of things and lives and minds; the psychology that finds in the soul something similar to, or even identical to, divine Reality; the ethic that places the human being’s final end in the knowledge of the immanent and transcendent Ground of all being; the thing is immemorial and universal.’

**Ancient Wisdom:** Some students understand this expression in a chronological perspective, as the Ancient Wisdom comes from teachings originating in a very ancient past. Another view suggests that the word ‘ancient’ refers not necessarily to a particular epoch in time, but to that reservoir of Wisdom and Compassion that has always existed and which has been tapped by Sages, Seers, Yogis, Saints and Prophets in all ages. HPB calls this reservoir the Universal Buddhic Principle, that source of Wisdom at the very heart of existence.

## 2017 National Convention

**Sandy Bay Campus, UTAS, Hobart  
Saturday 21 - Saturday 28 January**



Source: Wikimedia Commons

### **Theme: Eastern Spirituality, Psyche and the Human Journey**

Join us in picturesque Hobart for a week of quality time with friends, old and new.

**Featured speaker: public lecture Sunday 22 January:**

**Dr Bruno Cayoun**

**‘The Core Mechanisms of Buddhist Spirituality’**

This presentation will include some mindfulness practice.



Dr Bruno Cayoun is a Clinical Psychologist and principal developer of Mindfulness-integrated Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (MiCBT). He is Director of the MiCBT Institute, has a private practice in Hobart, and has practised mindfulness meditation and undergone intensive training in several countries since 1989.

**Venue:** The Sandy Bay campus is modern and comfortable, in an elevated location with attractive views of Hobart.

**Cost:** subsidised price of \$735 for seven nights, including all meals, single rooms

**Registration:** \$40, required both for live-in registrants and day visitors.

Registration deadline, live-in delegates: Friday 25 November 2016

Registration forms are at: [www.austheos.org.au/new](http://www.austheos.org.au/new)

**Enquiries to:** Jennifer Hissey, Convention Secretary  
email: [catalogue@austheos.org.au](mailto:catalogue@austheos.org.au)

**Full programme:** This will appear in the November issue of *T in A*.

## The Theosophical Society in Australia

### Minutes of the 2016

### Annual Convention Business Meeting



Minutes of the Convention Business Meeting of The Theosophical Society in Australia Sunday 17 January 2016 at University Hall, University of Western Australia, Crawley. Notification had been provided in accordance with Rules 12 and 13 of the Rules of The Theosophical Society in Australia.

#### CONVENTION CHAIR

The Meeting was chaired by the National President, Linda Oliveira.

#### OBSERVERS

A motion that New Zealand TS member Vicky Jerome be admitted as an observer was carried (moved Ken Edwards; Brian Harding seconded).

#### 1. ROLL-CALL OF VOTING DELEGATES AND PROXIES

In accordance with Rule 15(2) of the National Rules, the names of the voting delegates and proxies must have reached the National Secretary on Form 4 by 2 January 2016 at the latest. Only those delegates so named by the due date were eligible to vote at the present meeting. They were noted as follows:

- Kevin Davey or failing him Travis James for Adelaide Lodge
- Pamela Peterson or failing her Peter Brereton for Blavatsky Lodge
- Brian Harding or failing him Geoffrey Harrod for Brisbane Lodge
- Peter Fokker or failing him Tony Fearnside for Canberra Branch
- Helen Steven for Hobart Branch
- Denise Frost or failing her Ruth Holt for

Launceston Lodge

- Kenneth Edwards or failing him Gary Betts for Melbourne Lodge
- Harry Bayens or failing him Franco Guazzelli for Perth Branch
- Carmen French or failing her Janet Blake for Sunshine Coast Lodge.

No Form 4 was received by the due date from Atherton Lodge or Newcastle Lodge.

The National Secretary reminded the delegates present that the Lodges/Branches in the Section had already voted through their Convention meetings, that the Australian Convention Business Meeting is the governing body of The Theosophical Society in Australia, and that no new significant motions can be moved at the present meeting.

#### Vote Allocation 2016

It was noted that each Lodge has one vote at the Australian Convention Business Meeting irrespective of the number of members it has. In addition to that, each Lodge is entitled to one vote for every fifty members in Good Standing for two years as at 31 August 2015. It was pointed out that irrespective of how many votes a Lodge has, all of its votes must be cast either for or against each item, which fact has still not been taken on board by one Branch. The majority decision of the members eligible to vote at a Lodge convention meeting is taken as the votes of that Lodge, for or against, and noted on Form 4 accordingly. The vote allocation based on the number of members in

Good Standing for two years as at 31 August 2015 was as follows:

Lodge	Members in Good Standing last year	Votes
Adelaide	70	2
Blavatsky	171	4
Brisbane	56	2
Canberra	18	1
Hobart	18	1
Launceston	28	1
Melbourne	117	3
Perth	106	1
Sunshine Coast	37	2
Sub-total	631	2
National	88	3
Total Voters present	719	23

The Chair requested a show of hands when anyone wished to speak, and pointed out that there would be an information and discussion session at the close of the Convention Business Meeting, focusing on a number of the Section's activities over the past year.

## 2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE 2015 CONVENTION BUSINESS MEETING

The Minutes of the Convention Business Meeting held on Saturday 24 January 2015 at St Mark's College, North Adelaide were published in the June 2015 issue of *Theosophy in Australia* and sent to every member of the Section in November. The National Secretary reported that all the voting Lodges/Branches voted for the Minutes of the 2015 Convention Business Meeting. There was no discussion on those Minutes.

## 3. NATIONAL PRESIDENT'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2015

It was noted that the National President's Annual Report for the Year ended 31 August 2015 had been sent to every member of the Section in November. The National Secretary reported that all the voting Lodges/Branches voted for the Annual Report at their Convention Meeting. Brian Harding then asked whether the TS receives anything in return for the prizes awarded annually to Studies in Religion at the University of Sydney and the University of Queensland. The Chair replied that copies of winning essays/theses are lodged in the Campbell Theosophical Reference Library. She mentioned that she would also inform the President of Brisbane Lodge about future prize winners at the University of Queensland in case any one of them might be invited to speak

at the Lodge. Melanie Ball asked whether any thought had been given to creating structured, well-defined guidelines to help the TS engage with universities. In response, the National Secretary pointed out that the TS in Australia had organised a successful academic event jointly with the University of Sydney, but that universities may not be all that interested in engaging with the TS as a rule. The Chair suggested that the matter could be considered by the national Executive.

#### **4. NATIONAL TREASURER'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2015**

The National Treasurer's Report for the Year ended 31 August 2015 had been sent to every member of the Section in November. The National Secretary reported that all the voting Lodges/Branches voted for the National Treasurer's Report for the year ended 31 August 2015. There was no discussion on the Treasurer's report.

#### **5. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND BALANCE SHEET FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2015, AND AUDITOR'S REPORT THEREON**

The Financial Statements and Balance Sheet for the year ended 31 August 2015 along with the Auditor's Report thereon had been sent to every member of the Section in November. The National Secretary reported that all voting Lodges/Branches had voted for the Financial Statements and Balance Sheet for the Year Ended 31 August 2015 and for the Auditor's Report thereon. At the call for comments Peter Brereton objected to the absence of a cash-flow statement, without which, he argued, there could be no accurate picture of the financial

situation. He also queried the reduction in Investment Trust income, given the sale of 484 Kent St. The National Secretary stated that she would look into the issue of the cash flow statement, and apologised that she had not already done so, following Peter's similar remark the previous year. As to the Investment Trust income, it was pointed out that a significant portion of income from the sale of 484 Kent St was being held in cash, yielding hardly any income, pending the purchase of an investment property. Lynette Muller voiced appreciation for the management of Section's funds, which, she felt, were in good hands.

#### **6. BUDGET FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2016**

The budget had been sent to every member of the Section in November. A motion that the budget be received was carried (moved Harry Bayens; seconded Denise Frost). It was noted that the National Council had approved the Budget at its meeting in June 2015. The National Secretary reported that all the voting Lodges/Branches voted for the Budget for the year ended 31 August 2016. It was pointed out that the rather large outlay budgeted for the Springbrook Retreat Centre was due to the necessary expenditure on a new wastewater treatment plant.

#### **7. APPOINTMENT OF AUDITOR**

It was noted that Storey Blackwood had been appointed Auditor for 2016, by the National Council, under Section Rule 23(4): 'The Convention shall appoint an Auditor or failing such an appointment it shall be made by the National Council which shall determine the remuneration.'

## 8. ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEWLY APPOINTED OFFICERS

The Chair reported that the following appointments had been made by the National Council at its meeting on 15 January 2016, and by the national Executive at its meeting on 8 December 2015:

National Vice-President:	(NC)
Phillipa Rooke	
National Treasurer:	(NC)
Beatrice Malka	
Assistant Treasurer	(EC)
Dianne Kynaston	
Editor of <i>Theosophy in Australia</i> :	(EC)
Linda Oliveira	

## 9. ANNOUNCEMENT OF BALLOT RESULTS: State Representatives for Tas, Qld and SA/NT:

The National Secretary reported that in accordance with Rules 17(1)(c) and 19, the terms of office of the State Representatives for Tasmania (Denise Frost), Queensland (Phillipa Rooke) and South Australia/NT (Travis James) expired at the appointment of the new State Representatives towards the end of 2015. They were eligible for re-election, apart from the State Representative for Tasmania. An election was duly called on 22 May 2015, with nominations to have reached the National Secretary no later than close of business 11 September 2015. There being only one nomination from Tasmania, Helen Steven was elected unopposed. There being only one nomination from Queensland, Phillipa Rooke was re-elected unopposed. There being only one nomination from South Australia/NT, Travis James was re-elected unopposed.

### State Representative for Victoria:

The National Secretary pointed out that

with the sudden resignation of the State Representative for Victoria on 27 August, a call for nominations had been sent to Melbourne Lodge, the Certified Groups in Victoria, the National Council and the national Executive, in accordance with Rule (18)(3)(a). The deadline for receipt of nominations to fill the casual vacancy was 23 October. As there was only one candidate in this election, Gary Betts was elected unopposed, with his term of office coinciding with that of the vacated office, towards the end of 2016, at which time he would again be eligible for nomination.

## 10. VOTE ON NOTICES OF MOTION

There were no notices of motion

## 11. PLACE AND TIME OF NEXT CONVENTION

The Chair announced that the 2017 Convention would be held at the Sandy Bay campus of the University of Tasmania, from Saturday 21 January to Saturday 28 January.

## 12. RESOLUTIONS OF GOODWILL

The Chair stated that postcards addressed to absent friends and well-wishers had been prepared ready for convention delegates to sign during the week.

## 13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

13.1 The Chair announced that the national Executive Committee for 2016 had been appointed by the National Council as follows: Dianne Kynaston (Assistant Treasurer), Marlene Bell, Dai Trandang, Marie McArdle, Denise Frost. The National President, National Treasurer and National Secretary are members of the Executive ex officio.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 10.15 am.

## The Theosophical Society in Australia Agenda of the 2017 Annual Convention Business Meeting

The 2017 Convention Business Meeting of The Theosophical Society in Australia will take place at 9.30 a.m. on Sunday 22 January at the University of Tasmania Sandy Bay Campus, Churchill Avenue, Hobart. This notification is provided in accordance with Rules 12 and 13 of the Rules of The Theosophical Society in Australia.

### AGENDA

Roll Call of Voting Delegates and Proxies

Confirmation of Minutes of 2016 Convention Business Meeting

National President's Report for the Year Ended 31 August 2016

National Treasurer's Report for the Year Ended 31 August 2016

Financial Statements and Balance Sheet for the Year Ended 31 August 2016, and Auditor's Report thereon

Budget for the Year Ending 31 August 2017

Appointment of Auditor

Announcement of Newly Appointed Officers and National Council Members

Announcement of Ballot Results:

- New South Wales / A.C.T., Victoria and Western Australia

Vote on Notices of Motion

Place and Time of Next Convention

Resolutions of Goodwill

Any Other Business



Participants at a seminar in Launceston which took place from 27-29 June, organised by Tasmanian members. The theme was 'Living an Authentic Life' with guest speakers Brian Parry and Marie Bertelle

## National Calendar of Events



**Springbrook Centre, 2184 Springbrook Road,  
Springbrook, QLD**  
**second half of April 2017 - early announcement**  
**2017 SCHOOL OF THEOSOPHY**  
**Theme: 'The Yoga of Theosophy'**  
**For TS members**



**Guest Presenter: Pablo Sender, USA.**

Pablo Sender, PhD, is a Microbiologist and has a doctorate in Biological Sciences. He became a member of the Theosophical Society in his native Argentina, in 1996. He lived and worked for almost two years at the International Headquarters of the Theosophical Society in Adyar, India, and now works for the TS in America. Pablo has presented Theosophical lectures, seminars and classes in various countries.

This School presents a special opportunity during Pablo Sender's first visit to Australia as his touring time will be limited. The exact dates will be finalised slightly later in the year.

**Early expressions of interest:** Contact the National President  
[pres@austheos.org.au](mailto:pres@austheos.org.au) or 02 9264 7056

**National Convention, Hobart**  
**21-28 January 2017**

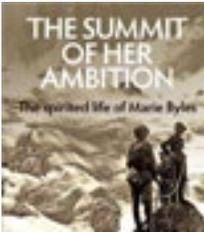
**See page 97.**

*It has been decided not to hold the usual national event at the Springbrook Centre in October this year, due to the proximity of the Indo-Pacific Conference in Auckland that month. This Conference is now booked out.*

**Registration forms and further information about all events organised by the National Headquarters are at: [www.austheos.org.au/what's on](http://www.austheos.org.au/what's_on)**

## Review

### THE SUMMIT OF HER AMBITION – The spirited life of Marie Byles



Anne McLeod, published by Anne McLeod, RRP\$39.95, pb.

Set against the backdrop of NSW from 1900 to 1979, the biography of Marie Byles, the first woman in NSW to be qualified to practice law, is an interesting account of achievement through determination and strong convictions. Independent and head-strong, a feminist, explorer, conservationist and avid writer, Marie selflessly championed for equal rights and the granting of large pockets of Crown Land wilderness to be reserved as National Parks.

At mid-life came a turning point: 'Through disenchantment with

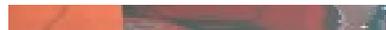
worldly attainments' Marie began a search for inner peace which led her to study Buddhist teachings and take pilgrimages to Burma, India and Japan where she became steeped in the practice of mindfulness meditation.

A keen bushwalker and mountaineer, Marie wrote later in life:

... it is only by leaving the burden of self aside that one is able to climb the mountain heights from which one can look down unperturbed at the really non-existent problems which seem so ridiculously real when down among them.

She was a member of The Theosophical Society in Australia, having joined Blavatsky Lodge in 1958.

Denise Frost



## News and Notes



### Indo-Pacific Conference, 14-19 October, Auckland

#### Theme: The Why of the Theosophical Society

Registrations for this Conference are now booked out.

### Post Conference Theosophy - Science Seminar



#### Theme: Where Science and Spirituality Meet

Immediately after the Indo-Pacific Conference, a Theosophy-Science seminar will be held in Auckland. Speakers will include Dr Victor Gostin from Australia, with further speakers to be announced in due course.

**Location:** Auckland Theosophical Centre, 4 Warborough Ave, Epsom, Auckland

**Dates:** Wednesday 19 October to Friday 21 October 2016

**Cost:** NZ\$75, excluding accommodation

**Please note:** The existing accommodation for the Theosophy-Science seminar is full. Alternative accommodation will need to be organised by individual registrants. We have been advised that there are motels in the Epsom area.

#### For further information and registration go to:

<http://theosophy.nz/events/theosophy-science-seminar>

### Theosophy-Science Group

Members who are interested in connecting with the Theosophy-Science group can contact Dr Victor Gostin at:

[victor.gostin@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:victor.gostin@adelaide.edu.au)

Groups are currently active in Brisbane and Adelaide.

### New Theosophy-Science Website

The latest issue of the Theosophy-Science Group newsletter was

distributed in June 2016. This includes a note by Jacques Manich, from France, announcing a new website: theoscience.org

The main themes on the site are Cosmogogenesis – Creation of the Universe and Cosmogogenesis – Key Characteristics of the Universe. The topics under study are currently focussing on the force of gravitation.

### National Lecturers for 2017

The following members have been appointed as National Lecturers of the Australian Section for 2017:

Barry Bowden  
 Brian Harding  
 Dianne Kynaston  
 Simon O'Rourke  
 Skip Pry  
 Dara Tatray

Each National Lecturer normally visits a few TS centres around the Section each year, in addition to visits by the National President, the Education Coordinator and international lecturers. Lodges/Branches that are interested in any particular speaker are asked to contact the National President directly as she arranges the National Speakers' schedule. Requests will be accommodated where possible, taking into account a reasonable spread of speakers around the Section during the year.

### New Opening Hours for National Headquarters

**Please note that the National Headquarters is now closed on Fridays as of Monday 22 August. Our new office hours are Monday to Thursday from 9.00am to 5.00pm.**

### Changes of Office

Lodges/Branches are asked to send promptly to the National Secretary notification of any changes of office, along with annual reports and financial statements. The Section Directories in *Theosophy in Australia* and on the national website will be amended accordingly.

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:  
campbell@austheos.org.au

### Australian Capital Territory

*Canberra Branch, Chartered 17/7/1971:*  
Postal Address: c/- 27 Reveley Crescent,  
Stirling ACT 2611  
Meet: Friends Meeting House, cnr Bent  
& Condamine Streets, Turner ACT 2612  
7.30pm 1st Monday of month (Feb - May, Sep - Dec)  
2.00pm 1st Saturday of month (June to Aug),  
Emeritus Faculty ANU  
Discussion Group 2.00pm 3rd Saturday of month,  
Emeritus Faculty ANU  
(Please confirm by email or telephone)  
President: Dr Grahame Crookham  
Tel: 0490147020  
Email: tificrook@tpg.com.au  
Secretary: Tony Fearnside  
Telephone: 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 2065  
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: 2.00pm Wednesdays  
President: Howard Gregg  
Secretary: Pamela Peterson  
  
*Newcastle Lodge, Chartered 3/12/1941:*  
Meet: Morrison Room, 29 Highfield Street,  
Mayfield NSW 2304  
7.30pm 2nd Friday each month from March 2016  
<http://www.austheos.org.au/newcastle/>  
President: Tony Buzek

Secretary: Jane Wilson  
Tel: 0452 633 132  
Email: gnlodgetheos@gmail.com

### Blue Mountains Group:

Meet: Senior Citizens Meeting Rooms  
Upper level, Central Arcade  
81-83 Katoomba Street, Katoomba  
Meetings every Monday, 2.00pm  
1st Monday of month - Public Meeting  
Subsequent Mondays - *Secret Doctrine* Study Group  
Coordinator: Donald Fern  
Tel: 02 4757 1910

### Gosford Group:

Meet: The Neighbour 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/- 22 Laitoki Road  
Terrey Hills  
NSW 2084  
8.00 pm 3rd Friday each month  
Coordinator: Dianne Kynaston

### Queensland

#### *Atherton Lodge, Chartered 27/4/1950:*

Postal Address: 14 Herberton Rd,  
Atherton QLD 4883  
Meet: Meeting Room, Community Services  
Tablelands, 38 Mabel St, Atherton  
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 Fridays  
President: Brian Harding  
Secretary: position vacant

*Sunshine Coast Lodge, Chartered 1/4/2004*

Meet: Buderim Croquet Club,  
Syd Lingard Drive, Buderim QLD 4556  
7.00pm Thursdays  
RSL/CWA Hall, 123 Poinciana Drive, Tewantin  
7.00pm Fridays  
President: Janet Blake  
Tel: 0416 442962  
Email: theosunshinecoast@gmail.com  
Secretary: Joyce Thompson

*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  
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  
<http://www.austheos.org.au/adelaide>  
Meet: Members Meeting 10.00am 4th Friday of every  
month. Please contact Lodge for additional meeting  
dates.  
President: Kevin Davey  
A/g Secretary: Marie Paul

**Tasmania***Hobart Branch, Chartered 7/6/1889:*

13 Goulburn Street, Hobart TAS 7000  
Tel. 03 6294 6195 (please leave message)  
[www.theosophicaltas.websyde.com.au](http://www.theosophicaltas.websyde.com.au)  
Meet: 8.00pm 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](http://www.austheos.org.au/launceston)  
Meet: 1st and 3rd Wednesdays and if applicable  
5th commencing 1.00pm for meditation followed  
by meeting at 1.10pm / 2nd and 4th Wednesdays  
commencing 7.20pm for meditation followed by  
meeting at 7.30pm

President: Jenny Haslem

A/g Secretary: Ruth Holt

Tel: 0448 397 246

**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: Saturdays  
President: Ken Edwards  
Secretary: Edward Sinclair

*Mornington Peninsula Group:*

Meet: Mount Eliza Neighbourhood House,  
Canadian Bay Road, 1st Sunday  
of the month 1.00pm - 3.30pm  
(meditation - lunch - Theosophy)  
Coordinator: Alice Opper  
Tel: 03 5976 3815  
[www.austheos.org.au/centres/mpg](http://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: Harry Bayens  
Acting Secretary: Anne Bower

*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)*

