

**THE THEOSOPHICAL
SOCIETY
IN CANBERRA**

www.austheos.org.au
and www.austheos.org.au/canberra/
e mail: tshq@austheos.org.au (Sydney)
email: janton@netspeed.com.au (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

Fantasy and Reality of the times

In 1909 German engineers thought of a marvellously impractical mode of transport which was a cross between an airship, a rigid Zeppelin balloon supporting the weight of passenger cars and the electric railway. The contraption would run on aerial cables and be propelled by electricity. The electric motors would be able to develop airspeeds of 200 km per hour. This was in the time when the horse and buggy were still being used and the motor car was in its developmental stage. At that time, nobody dreamt there would be a disastrous event with a Zeppelin balloon burning along with its passengers near New York in 1937 (the Hindenburg disaster).

In 1925 my father resigned from his job on Java (Indonesia), borrowed money and went to Adyar with his wife for three months to join in the Golden Jubilee to celebrate 50 years of the Theosophical Society. He described the ceremonial events with the presence of Theosophical luminaries and the awe in which they were held by the assembled throng. He described the expectations: the coming of the World Teacher and a peaceful world but Krishnamurti put a stop to the former at the end of the 1920s and the reality from the 1930s onwards was that peace did not come at all.

Near our computer I found a set of 12 small books, some of which were published by the Theosophical University Press, Covina, California, and some by Point Loma Publications, Inc. San Diego [see *Library news on page 10*]. They talk about Evolution, Karma, Reincarnation, The Astral Light, the Cosmic Ladder of Life or Hierarchies, Cycles, Man's Parentage and Destiny, Man and his Seven Principles and After Death. All were published 30 to 60 years ago. As I have not read them, it all seems fantasy to me but reading these books might inform and teach us what to retain as reality and what to let go.

In May 1942 a full moon shone on my disheartened father in a prisoner of war camp in Sumatra (Indonesia). Nature was peaceful and his spirits brightened when he remembered Wesak festivities in a remote valley far away. My father wanted to be there in spirit and meditated in the bright moonlight. The following morning he believed that he had been there, but

(Continued on page 3)

Notes for members and friends



ROME 10-15 JULY 2010

World Congress

2010

*

Rome 10 – 15 July 2010

The tenth World Congress of the Theosophical Society will take place in Rome, Italy, from 10 to 15 July 2010. International President, Radha Burnier, has approved the following theme, which will act as a setting and “bonding agent” for our days at the World Congress in Rome: *Universal Brotherhood without distinctions: a road to awareness.*

The Theosophical Society World Congress will be held at the Summit Roma Hotel, in Via della Stazione Aurelia 99, 00165 Rome; tel. 0011 39 06 665071, fax 0011 39 06 66418062; e-mail: pierelli@srh.it

The reference prices for the stay, inclusive of breakfast, lunch and dinner, are: 88.00 Euros per day in a double room, 110.00 Euros per day in a single room and 70.00 Euros per day in a triple room.

The hotel registration form must be completed and sent by e-mail to: pierelli@srh.it or by fax (+39 06 66418062). by 31 May 2010. The registration form is online at the home site of the Italian Theosophical Society at <http://www.teosofica.org/en/>

AGM

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Annual General Meeting and committee

At the AGM held on Monday, 23 November the following were elected until the next AGM in 2010.

Committee:

President: Peter Fokker

Treasurer: Tony Fearnside

Secretary: Tony Fearnside

Librarian: Henny Fokker

Stephen Hasslauer

Grahame Crookham

Janice Scarabottolo (newsletter)

Programme Committee: Fearnside and Crookham

School of Theosophy Springbrook

On the theme **Theosophy and its Implications**, Colin Price from UK will be the guest speaker at the School from **19 to 26 March 2010. Register by 1 February 2010.**

(Continued from page 1)

this may have been fantasy, rather than reality. In the 1950s Wesak was always remembered by my family and even now tradition makes me think of this at the time of the May full moon, although there is never any recollection of having been there. May fantasy create real happiness at Christmas time.

Welcome to summer 2009-2010.

Peter Fokker, President.

References: *Scientific American December 2009*, pp 7 and 11
Canberra Branch Theosophical Society - Library books
Private diary of H.G. Fokker, translated by Henny Fokker

SATURDAY DISCUSSION GROUP—24 OCTOBER 2009

Visit to Sunnataram Forest Monastery—Bundanoon

Canberra TS enjoyed a day's outing on Saturday 24 October to the magnificent Sunnataram Forest Monastery, about one and a half hour's drive from the city.



“Sunnataram Forest Monastery is a Theravada Buddhist monastery in the Thai forest tradition. The monastery was established in July 1990 and is situated on the outskirts of Bundanoon in the Southern Highlands. It covers an area of 99.7 acres of bush land, hills and cliff.

The property, formerly a farm and a guest house called Edenholme is situated on the outskirts of Bundanoon in Teudts Road. The Edenholme guest house is now the Sunnataram Forest Monastery. From the new sala, you can see beautiful Jervis Bay on the horizon.

“Sunnataram Bundanoon” was started by Elisabeth Gorski, a serious devotee of Buddhism and a disciple of Phra Ajahn Yantra Amaro Bhikkhu. She had a strong desire to see the establishment of a Buddhist monastery in the Theravada tradition on Australian soil, so that people could see Dhamma as a living tradition. It was hoped that the monastery could be the place where everybody could come to learn Dhamma, to be taught and trained, and to develop their hearts and minds for the ultimate release from suffering.” (See the website at <http://www.sunnataram.org/history.html>.)

We were invited to participate in the monks' chanting, and in Dāna, by offering lunch to the monks, before sharing a vegetarian lunch on the outdoor verandah. The highlight came in the afternoon, when Abbott Ven Phra Mana Viriyarampo shared his knowledge and wisdom on the sacred symbolism with us. He conducted a talk illustrated by power point, then took us along a pathway of spiritual symbolism, explaining vividly the meanings of the various images on the holy statues in the monastery grounds.



The Abbott explaining the symbols

Visitors to the monastery are welcome every Saturday and Sunday – lunch is at 11.00 and is followed by a talk, but let them know of your arrival in advance by email. sunnata@bigpond.com.

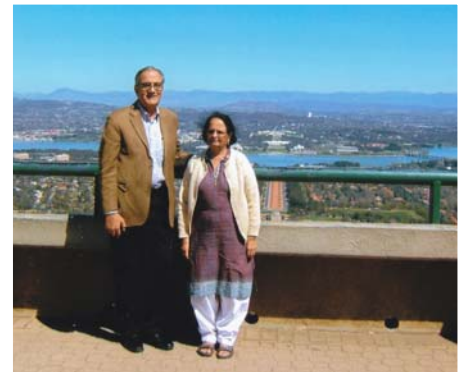
KRISHNAMURTI AND GANDHI
TALK BY PROFESSOR P KRISHNA - 21 SEPTEMBER 2009 AT CANBERRA TS

When Professor P Krishna presented his talk on Krishnamurti and Ghandi on 21 September, it had originally been scheduled as part of the Professor's extensive tour in Australia. Most unfortunately, due to unexpected and unforeseen circumstances, Professor Krishna had to return to India almost immediately afterwards. Canberra TS Branch, therefore, was especially honoured to have hosted Professor Krishna's talk.

Krishnamurti and Ghandi were two individuals with a global mind; both were born and brought up in India, and later educated in England. Although they were outwardly different they came from a deeply religious source; both were crusaders for truth which is of interest to theosophists, as Truth is the Highest Religion.

Both men were inspired by Annie Besant. Ghandi was introduced to the Theosophical Society by Mrs Besant's translation of the Bhagavad Gita and her commentaries on it. He later wrote that it was the Gita which introduced him to India itself as before that he had been unaware of the profundity of Indian philosophy. Krishnamurti was adopted by Annie Besant and brought up in a theosophical environment.

Gandhi took up not only the cause of truth but also causes of a social nature: the eradication of the caste system and religious division in India, the status of women and particularly the cause of the *Harijans* - who were treated as untouchables - as well as the independence of India from British Rule. However he introduced a new element: that of passive resistance, civil disobedience, non co-operation and what we call the non violent approach which included looking upon the ruler as a friend, a fellow human being, without any hatred. He said "*I love the British, they are our friends, but we are fighting against the injustice of their rule in India.*"



Prof Krishna and Mrs Krishna at Mount Ainslie with a view of Canberra's land axis

This attitude had an effect on India's obtaining independence, as a country which came to freedom without hatred of the ruler, with Mountbatten being appointed as the first Governor-General of Free India.

This shows the effect of how a wise individual can turn the course of history - one who did not hate his attackers and who had great respect for all human beings and all religions, with his meetings incorporating prayers for every religion.

When Gandhi arrived in India after fighting against apartheid in South Africa with his same tactics of non-violence, passive resistance and civil disobedience (ideas he got by reading Thoreau) he found that Mrs Besant had already started the Home Rule movement asserting that the Indian people must be helped in order to self-govern. Thus Gandhi found that there was already a movement with which he could join forces, giving him a tremendous respect for Mrs Besant. She presided over the Indian Congress for some time, initially working together with Gandhi until differences of opinion appeared.

It is interesting for us to examine these differences. Mrs Besant believed that the ends do not justify the means and the means should be absolutely pure and correct. She regarded civil disobedience as teaching the population indiscipline and wanted everything to be done legally and constitutionally without involving the people to rebel against the government. In a letter to Gandhi she warned him that he was teaching indiscipline and this would ultimately lead to in chaos in society. Gandhi replied: "*We are using these methods against the British Government because we feel that it is unfair and*

unjust for them to be here. We will not use these methods against our own government.” Her response was that Gandhi understood this but the people would not. The second issue on which she differed was his involvement of students in the struggle, which she considered to be a form of exploitation. She argued that their minds were too immature; it was their responsibility to study and they should not be involved in this political struggle.

It is better to have independence come ten years later, she asserted, without using what she considered to be wrong means and indiscipline. We can see a certain truth in this; as after its independence India had problems with these methods being used for all kinds of personal gains and students dabbling in politics without having a full understanding.

Gandhi’s tactics, however, did bring an early independence to India, without violent uprisings against the British and with the Indian government remaining part of the Commonwealth and with a lasting friendship being maintained between Britain and India. So the influence of one man can make change and one religious mind can make a tremendous difference to the whole process.



Annie Besant with Gandhi

Krishnamurti also had such a religious mind. He never took on any specific social call. He said his mission was to set man free of the disorder in his consciousness, of violence and greed - essentially the same as what the Buddha set out to do. He maintained that ignorance is the cause of sorrow, which in the sense of psychological suffering, can be ended by ending ignorance. Ignorance, in this sense, does not mean lack of knowledge, but is an illusion in the mind. The disorderly states in our consciousness - conflict, jealousy, hatred - originate from some form of illusion in the mind. Illusion may be defined as something which one takes to be true when it is not, or something to which one is giving tremendous importance when it is not really important. In both cases it is illusion and it is from such illusion that division arises.

The ending of illusion is the same as the quest for truth. If you can perceive what is true and what is false then the false drops away. This is not a learning process as in the acquisition of knowledge. This kind of learning, which Krishnamurti emphasized as religion, is discerning what is true and what is false, so that the false ends. The religious mind inquires not merely intellectually to form a new opinion, but it inquires to obtain the transformation of consciousness. That is important to understand, because both Gandhi and Krishnamurti arrived at a different human consciousness which held no violence and is the true religious quality which theosophists value. It is not merely a quest for philosophy or science which is the factual knowledge of how the world operates. Every university has a professor of philosophy but the professor of philosophy is not the Buddha and the professor of Christian theology is not Jesus Christ, although he may be able to tell you everything that Jesus said. The difference is that his consciousness is not the Christ consciousness – he does not have the Christ wisdom or the love and compassion, although he can describe it and explain it. Ability to explain does not bring about transformation of consciousness. This is what both Krishnamurti and Gandhi pointed out, that ultimately it is in this quest for transformation of consciousness that one actually comes across the state of compassion and non-violence within oneself. This is the essence of the religious mind. Krishnamurti expressed it in other words: *Truth is a pathless land.*

Both Gandhi and Krishnamurti considered that religion should be able to change the state of consciousness and not be merely the act of performing rituals, which is the outer form of a religion. The originator of a religion did not give it that form; the followers constructed the church, the rules and the path by which you can come upon the deeper understanding of the Buddha or of Jesus through their sayings. By studying those texts, at best you may become a professor of philosophy – which is not becoming a realised man. The difference is that in one

case there is an actual transformation of consciousness and in the other there is only a change in ideas. It is important to realise this difference - that truth does not lie at the level of knowledge.

One definition of truth is whether what you are telling is an accurate description or if you are distorting the account. The other definition is when we say, for example, that the law of gravity is a great truth. It is a definite cause and effect relationship which has been tested and can therefore be called truth. However this description is still at the level of knowledge, of knowing how things happen. Religious truth, on the other hand, is not a clear description of the situation, nor is it connected with the correct relationship of cause and effect.

Religious truth is more subtle and comes into being when a consciousness perceives what is, without any distortion. This was pointed out by Mrs Besant when she wrote in 1912 that very few seers can free their mind from the influence of their own past knowledge interfering with their perception. This means you must have a certain amount of freedom from thought, because the thought comes from your conditioning and your previous values - all of which are an accident of birth. If you remain with your past conditioning, then you will always perceive a subjective truth.

Theosophy is a set of truths which are universal, the essence of all religions and is therefore positing the truth as the unknown and directing us to enquire and come to a state of mind or consciousness which is in direct contact with those eternal truths. This is what is meant by truth being the highest religion. Krishnamurti talked about this as did Gandhi when he described his life as his experiment with truth. This means experimenting and observing and watching and discerning what is truth and what is false.

The divisions between humans is born of illusion in the mind. If we examine this we find that it comes from the attachment to illusion in the mind of one and the attachment to a different illusion in the mind of the other person. It is not truth they are attached to, but their particular brand of illusion, which comes from their conditioning, depending on where they were born and brought up. One has to go beyond this conditioning to come upon the universal truth, which is what theosophy stresses.

Today everybody talks of the universal mind and globalisation, but to have formulated this insight in the nineteenth century was the genius of Blavatsky and Olcott when they created the Theosophical Society in the 19th century, with its aims going beyond all religions in the quest for truth and pointing out that religious truths are universal.

This is not a matter of opinion and choosing the one you like, but of examining whether something is true or wrong. And the examination is not merely through ideas and thinking but through observation, through seeing and doubting your own opinions because they may not be true. It requires the courage which Krishnamurti, Gandhi and Mrs Besant displayed. When they perceived something as true, they were willing to drop the false and go along with it, even although it sometimes signified difficulties in their personal lives.

This was commitment to truth going beyond public opinion. You must be willing to stand out from society and your friends, and not necessarily go along with them for the sake of convenience. This element was common to both Krishnamurti and Gandhi - by standing up against the wrong practices in society they put themselves in great personal peril. That is a quality which is essential for the discovery of truth, for otherwise one is compromising with public opinion for the sake of a good reputation and admiration by one's friends. You may succeed in society but have not yet become a man or woman of truth, you are still accepting everything that society maintains and you are not a reformer.

The greatest changes in the world have been brought about by people who have dissented from their past. They questioned and brought something new into the realm of understanding of themselves. It is such people who have taken humanity forward.

We must have respect for dissent, which does not mean you must agree with the dissent but you respect it, and respect the right of the individual to say something quite different from what you think. You respect in the sense that you are listening, you are willing to examine and see whether the statement is true or not and if it is true, to drop the false which is your own opinion. That is how one grows in wisdom and it is that perception of the truth that transforms consciousness.

Ultimately the realised man is said to be reborn – he has dropped his earlier structure and is approaching life afresh, with freedom from the past. Without it there is no actual transformation of consciousness. These are some of the lessons which one needs to learn and the outer differences are superficial.

These facts are common to Krishnamurti, Gandhi and Annie Besant, despite that fact that the causes they took up were externally different. Gandhi took on social causes, Krishnamurti never took up any social cause - commitment to the liberation of men was his mission - and Annie Besant had many causes - occultism, social reform, the TS, freedom of India. But the wisdom behind them all comes from the quest for truth, which was common to all three, and is central to theosophy



Henny Fokker with Professor and Mrs Krishna enjoying a walk through Floriade

We must not look for the truth in books alone, which is not a recommendation not to read, but merely accepting what a book tells, and agreeing with it, is not perception of the truth. You have to rediscover the truth of that for yourself. It is possible to teach Newton's laws only on the blackboard but that does not give a deep understanding of them. We experiment in the laboratory, verify the facts and somewhere along the line comes the experience of saying "Ah, this is what it really means" and that is when the perception of the truth has gone deeper than the intellectual acceptance of a statement made by Einstein or by Newton. The same thing has to be done in our lives.

You can read what Jesus said and agree with him but doing that will not automatically bring love and compassion into your consciousness, which will happen only if you can really perceive that the other man is yourself and that the division between you and him is born of illusion.

What is a human being? A human being is his body and his consciousness. Is the Hindu very different in the body from a Muslim, for example? The scientist and medical people would say – "*Very superficial difference*".

Inwardly the body is the same, the heart, the lungs, the blood, nervous system – all of these function the same way. Are they very different in their consciousness? This man eats different food from that man, he dresses differently and so on. There are differences at the superficial level, but at the level of consciousness? There is desire, attachment, fear of failure, the wish to be successful, jealousy, possessiveness, sorrow, the mother loves the child – it is exactly the same, whether you are a Hindu, Chinese or American. Human consciousness functions in the same way. What is different is the training one gets from childhood. Because I was born in Madras and had theosophical parents, along with some other influences in my life, my mind is conditioned differently – but that is the same as saying the shape of my hands or my hair or colour is different – a superficial difference of form, the difference of language: I may worship one way, you may worship another way.

One religion worships in front of a statue, and another without a statue, but each one is just following what his parents have been told. If you ask the worshipper the question and he's honest: *Do you know what God is?* He will say, *No, I don't know what God is, but I'm telling you what my ancestors have told me.* And the follower of the other religion will tell you the same. *I also don't know what God is but I'm repeating what my ancestors have said.* To be attached to what we have been told and to fight for it is silly because the truth may be different. That is why this quest for truth is emphasized in theosophy. So, although Krishnamurti left the TS, and Gandhi separated from Mrs Besant, I would consider them to be theosophists because the true theosophist is one who is going beyond his conditioning to come upon the truth in order to realise a different consciousness. And that was common to both Gandhi and Krishnamurti.

You cannot live beyond your wisdom. Knowledge is not wisdom but you can grow in your wisdom and grow by this quest for truth. I don't see a great difference between Hinduism or Christianity or Krishnamurti or Buddhism because ultimately they are talking about love and compassion. Somebody may present a certain path and another person will present a different path, but it's not the path that takes you there. On that path you need to have deep insights, and come upon a change of consciousness. Only then do you come upon the wisdom that is the essence of religion. and although these people outwardly appeared very different, common to them was the transformation of consciousness, their quest for wisdom and their understanding of themselves and of life and of freeing their consciousness of all hatred and division. That is the essence of the religious mind, which is also the essence of the theosophical mind.

THE TIMELESS CHRISTMAS
Canadian Theosophist, Volume 29, #10 (1948)

The story of the virgin-born son who becomes the God, is a universal one. Each story has its own setting, its own local colour, its own names for the characters. The essential point of such stories, considered symbolically, is that the 'Christ-Child' is born of the purified soul of man and its overshadowing divinity, 'the father-in-heaven'. It is an inner experience. The various characters represent inner qualities; Joseph symbolizes Mind, the fashioning, shaping, conserving, protective quality. Mind acts as the companion of the soul and is the protector and guide of the mystic child during its childhood. It is Mind that protects the child from the adversary, Herod or Herat as the name is given in the earlier Egyptian story, and who is known as the 'slayer of the youngling in the egg'. Herod symbolizes the familiar principle within us which is ever ready to nullify and destroy the young, growing, creative, unifying power which will be ultimately its dethroner. It is Mind which guides the child to Egypt, the place of learning; but after that period is passed, Mind fades into the background.

The inner Christ is now becoming surer of its powers and more certain of its destiny. The subsequent trails are symbols of initiatory experiences which take place within the individual. Calvary, 'the place of the skull', is the scene of the mystical 'crucifixion' and these experiences test and confirm the standing of the individual and enable him to enter into new and unexplored realms of his own consciousness. The Christ stories are reminders to mankind that there is a divine power within every man and woman which can be brought into full manifestation. The process by which this is accomplished has analogies to physical conception, birth, growth and maturity; from its first faint and subtle manifestations the divine power grows in splendour and power until finally the candidate 'standeth like a white pillar to the west, upon whose face the rising Sun of thought eternal poureth forth its first most glorious rays. He holdeth life and death in his strong hand'; until in the full consciousness of his matured powers he can say "*I and my Father are one.*"

Piet Mondrian and Theosophy

In newsletter 53 we published Grahame Crookham's talk on the influence of theosophy on art, which included a section on Piet Mondrian. Going further into Mondrian's art and his relationship with theosophy led to this brief excerpt from an article in the *Rivista Teosofica Italiana* March 2005.

Mondrian painted his tryptich *Evolution* between 1910 and 1911 – it was linked to a stylistic symbolism and could be considered a kind of manifesto with an adhesion to theosophy. The painting was negatively received by contemporary critics (as were his works exhibited in the two previous years) and subsequently Mondrian abandoned his explicit symbolism, probably because his painting style was mature enough to go forward – along the path towards abstractism.

Mondrian's first contact with theosophy is documented as being in 1899. He had read *The Great Initiates* by Edouard Schuré (1889) and the texts of some of Steiner's conferences, he knew HP Blavatsky (*The Secret Doctrine*) and in 1909 became a member of the Theosophical Society. Mondrian discussed this with his brother Carel, and his friend Albert Van den Briel. As noted by Henkels, Mondrian approached Symbolism through the revival of neoplatonic doctrine. It has been suggested that his father's severe Calvinism must have influenced Mondrian's way of thinking and that perhaps he tried to escape from this through his interest in theosophy. According to Seuphor¹, Mondrian had a portrait of Blavatsky in his studio in 1916, next to one of Steiner, who was extremely influential on Mondrian. His friend, Van Doesburg will confirm how important theosophy was for Mondrian, much more than for himself; and Mondrian declared to Van Doesburg that he had been influenced more by Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine* than by Shoenmaekers².



Mondrian: 'Evolution'

Let us return to his tryptich, *Evolution*, and its relationship with theosophy. A simplistic précis of this is that the world is conceived as One with laws and principles in which opposite polarities recompense the cosmic harmony; for example, male/female; spirit/matter. Through progressive stages of consciousness, the initiate reaches the vision of pure divine reality, with single religions reflecting only a small aspect of this; and through its evolution, humanity comes ever closer to this spiritual realisation. The symbol of the Theosophical Society includes the six pointed star (or the double triangle) which synthesizes this unity of spirit and matter with the superimposition of the two triangles, one pointing upwards and the other pointing downwards.

As Welsh³ indicated, *Evolution* should be studied by first observing the figure on the left, then the figure on the right, and last of all the central figure whose open eyes and luminosity indicate the conquered vision of a higher truth. The same format of the tryptich can be suggested by a passage in *Isis Unveiled* with the description of three spirits living in man: terrestrial spirit, astral spirit and divine spirit. The colours are symbolic – going from a greenish hue to blue, the spiritual colour. Perhaps also the masculine looking aspect of the feminine form gives the idea of the hermaphrodite, where there is fusion of the male (spirit) and female (matter). The double triangle appears in the figure on the right. The central figure with wide open eyes has been compared to Steiner's concept that spiritual vision occurs in full consciousness and not in a state of trance.

(From an article by Jolanda Nigro Covre: *Rivista Teosofica Italiana* No. 3 March 2005, abridged and translated by Janice Scarabottolo)

¹ Michel Seuphor – French art critic, painter and writer

² Dutch theosophist M. H. J. Schoenmaekers

³ Robert P Welsh, biographer

LIBRARY NEWS
THE OBJECTIVE OF THE LIBRARY IS TO SUPPORT THEOSOPHICAL STUDIES

Reincarnation: A lost chord in modern thought – Leoline L. Wright (Theosophical Manual No. 2)	WRI 1
The doctrine of Karma: Chance or justice? – Gertrude W. van Pelt (Theosophical Manual No. 3)	PELT 3
Man and his seven principles: An ancient basis for a new psychology – Leoline L. Wright (Theosophical Manual No. 4)	WRI 3
After death – What? – Leoline L. Wright (Theosophical Manual No. 5)	WRI 2
Evolution: Who and what is man? – Henry Travers Edge (Theosophical Manual No. 6)	EDG 3
Man’s divine parentage and destiny: The great rounds and races – Gertrude W. van Pelt (Theosophical Manual No. 7)	PELT 2
Cycles: In universe and man – Lydia Ross (Theosophical Manual No. 8)	ROS 1
Hierarchies: The cosmic ladder of life – Gertrude W. van Pelt (Theosophical Manual No. 9)	PELT 1
The astral light: Nature’s cosmic picture gallery – Henry Travers Edge (Theosophical Manual No. 10)	EDG 2
Psychic powers – Helen Todd (Theosophical Manual No. 11)	TOD 1
Theosophy and Christianity – Henry Travers Edge (Theosophical Manual No. 12)	EDG 4

The Theosophical Manuals—From the preface:

Nature exists and Man exists, and somewhere, unobscured by man’s own sophistries there must be available the wisdom and learning which tells us *why* and *how*. H.P. Blavatsky calls this wisdom the Ancient Wisdom. In this series of twelve Theosophical Manuals this Ancient Wisdom in its fundamentals is explained with clarity of presentation and logical appeal. The first Manual, *Theosophy: A general view of occult doctrine* by C.J. Ryan, which is not in our library but will be ordered, outlines the overall teachings, presenting a general picture. The succeeding booklets cover in greater detail the various subjects which are all part of the Ancient Wisdom. It is hoped that these Studies will be received with an open mind, for in them the earnest searcher will find keys that are indispensable to an understanding of the Universe and of Man.



Take a few minutes to look at our Canberra website <http://www.austheos.org.au/canberra/>. It is linked to the main Australian Section TS site and lists our programme and recent newsletters. Keep in touch with Canberra TS by bookmarking our site to keep you up to date with our events.



The Theosophical Order of Service
Representing theosophy in action on a daily basis.

The TOS was founded by Annie Besant in February 1908

United Nations :
Head of Food and Agriculture Organization starts hunger strike

14 November 2009, Rome - Hours before the opening of the World Summit on Food Security FAO Director-General Jacques Diouf began a 24 hour hunger strike to call for action to end the scourge of hunger and in solidarity with the one billion humans who suffer chronic malnutrition.

He called on "people of goodwill everywhere" to join him in a worldwide hunger strike. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon has announced he will be joining the strike on 15 November.

Spotlighting his initiative Diouf began his fast at 8.00pm in the lobby of FAO headquarters in Rome, where he also spent the night. He told reporters, "I hope that through these gestures we will raise awareness, and build pressure from public opinion to ensure that those who can change this situation are able to do so."

Diouf appears on a six-second video clip which highlights that in that time-frame, one child has died. An anti-hunger petition linked to the FAO site can be signed at <http://www.1billionhungry.org/> Visitors to the website are asked to sign the petition if they agree that one billion people living in chronic hunger is unacceptable.

Why a World Food Summit in 2009?

The World Summit opening on 16 November will adopt a declaration committing the international community to eradicating hunger at the earliest possible date and to achieving the right to adequate food for all. The global food insecurity situation has worsened and continues to represent a serious threat for humanity. With food prices remaining stubbornly high in developing countries, the number of people suffering from hunger has been growing relentlessly in recent years.

The global economic crisis is aggravating the situation by affecting jobs and deepening poverty. FAO estimates that the number of hungry people could increase by a further 100 million in 2009 and pass the one billion mark.

The above information is from FAO website: <http://www.fao.org/>

Local member goes international

Having arrived safely at the TS Headquarters in Adyar, Barbara Harrod is now working in the Editorial Department. We look forward to receiving her news from Adyar.

Projects

Support our local project to sponsor the education of a girl student in Pakistan. TOS National projects which also need support are SEE (cataracts operations) in India and Home Schools in Pakistan.

With thanks from all in TOS.

Janice

**THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN CANBERRA
PROGRAMME**

Date		Speaker	Title of talk
Saturday 16—Saturday 23 January		National Convention for members	Launceston Maritime College
Monday	1 February	Lucy Baker	Using latent powers to heal
Saturday	20 February	Discussion group	Esoteric healing
Monday	1 March	Dianne Kynaston	The Great White Sisterhood
Saturday	20 March	Discussion group	Esoteric healing
Friday 19—Friday 26 March		Colin Price (speaker from UK)	Springbrook School of Theosophy Theosophy and its Implications (register by 1 February)

Information on future talks will be in the next newsletter

Our public meetings are usually on the **first Monday of the month at 8.00pm** and discussion group meetings are usually on the **third Saturday at 2.00pm**.

Unless otherwise stated, all meetings are at the **Friends Meeting House**, at the corner of Bent and Condamine Streets, Turner.

EVERYONE IS WELCOME, PLEASE BRING FRIENDS.

Donations are requested at our meetings

We rely on these donations to cover the cost of renting the Friends Meeting House for the evening and they are sincerely appreciated.

The Theosophical Society in Canberra, through the Australian Section, is part of the world-wide Theosophical Society which has its headquarters in India. The Australian Section publishes the quarterly *Theosophy in Australia*, arranges annual conventions, schools and retreats and facilitates a network of regional lodges and branches. Members of the Canberra Branch receive a newsletter, and have access to a library of over 1,000 books as well as audio cassettes and video tapes. The Canberra Branch arranges monthly public meetings, workshops, study groups, occasional activities for members and discounts at the Adyar Bookshop in Sydney.

Annual fees for the Theosophical Society in Canberra:

Single: \$50, **Couple:** \$90, **student/pensioner*:** \$40

Joining fee: \$5, **Associate member:** \$10, **Friends donation:** (suggested) \$20

Library: no charge for members; \$10 for non members (reimbursed on return of book).

* Number of concession card required: as per National Executive Committee minutes of July 2004