



Nelson Theosophical Community



Dear Nelson Theosophy members,

This is the first newsletter of 2019. We hope the new year is unfolding in a positive way for all. Apologies for the later than usual newsletter mail-out. It has been a busy time from the start of the year, with the Theosophical Summer National Convention held in January in Napier, which I attended. See report below.

The plan for the next few months in Nelson is to host visiting speakers and resume the regular screenings of films with subjects of spiritual and metaphysical understanding. The films will be shown at the usual venue of Jan's home on Tipahi Street. See the film list for March/April following the Convention Report.

Members are welcome to suggest choices of films that may fit with the theosophical worldview. I have found the online film website called Youtube to be the best resource for getting a wide range of up-to-date lectures and documentaries on all the areas that theosophy embodies – science, nature, spirituality, ancient scriptures, philosophy, metaphysics, esoteric wisdom, sacred geometry and much more.

It can be almost too much of a choice at times with such a wide range of subjects, and so many different areas of interest that people have. It is hoped that the films chosen for March and April will stimulate some discussion afterwards over a cuppa.

Report on the 122nd Theosophical Summer National Convention, Jan 17th - 23rd 2019

Theme of the Convention: Connectivity and Responsibility - Exploring an aspect of theosophy related to the Three Fundamental Propositions as proposed by Blavatsky in today's world. What does Theosophy and modern science have to share with us on these ideas?

The Convention was hosted by the Hawkes Bay Branch, held at Hewett House which is part of Napier Girls High School. It was a very good venue for the meeting, with good-sized lecture and dining areas with modern facilities, and good views overlooking Napier township and only a short walk to the town centre and the beach and waterfront area.

Following the official welcome and opening prayers and the AGM of the Theosophical Society in NZ, our guest speaker Betty Bland, past National President for the Theosophical Society in America, accompanied by her husband David, gave a series of talks related to the overall theme of the Convention.

Her first one on the Friday evening was titled **'Science and the Akashic Field'**, in which she explored the ancient doctrine of the akashic energy field which is said to surround the earth, but on a higher dimensional level than can be measured with scientific instruments. This field holds a vibrational record of all events that have occurred on our planet since its creation, and can be tuned in to by psychically aware individuals.



Betty Bland



Hewett House main lecture room



The dining hall and discussion space

She compared this ancient doctrine with the findings of modern science that show evidence of this hidden field of energy, possibly as an expression of Rupert Sheldrake's concept of 'morphogenetic fields' in nature, as well as the recent discoveries in physics that point to what has been called the 'zero point field', and how these findings can change the way we view our actions and responsibilities, as well as how we can unfold a higher consciousness and wisdom by connecting with this hidden field.

The next day at the morning session, following the morning Attunement Meditation, our National President John Vorstemans presented '**The Soul Speaks**', in which he explored the concept of the soul from various religious and philosophical perspectives, and how an understanding of the soul learning to connect with it via spiritual practices can expand our view of reality and the human experience of being in a physical body.

The next session was a discussion by David Bland entitled '**A Call to Social Action**', in which he explored the role of activism as a socio-political movement that is becoming more dominant in these times, and how the understanding of spiritual principles can make more effective use of the energy needed to change existing policies of corporate and political groups that are having negative effects on the planet and human well-being.

There were a variety of interesting subjects presented over the rest of the time of the Convention, many of which are in the process of being uploaded onto the Theosophy in NZ website in video form. There is a good review of the convention in the latest Theosophia magazine as well. The other presentations that Betty Bland gave were titled '**The Cosmic Web and You**', '**The Seven Rays**', and '**Experiencing Connectivity**', our well-known national lecturer Murray Stentiford presented '**Responsibility in the Webwork of Life**', Wellington member Simon Webber spoke on '**Dharma and the Maintenance of Order**', long-term member Renee Sell presented '**Beyond the Noise: Attuning to the note within**', member Benjamin Upton took us on a slide show trip into the solar system and through the galaxy with his talk '**Stellar Changes**' and member Raymond Kortas talked on '**Our Responsibility to Serve**'

These talks and others from the Convention will be archived in video form on the TS website in the near future, so keep an eye out for those, or type in the titles above in the search bar on the website to see if they have been uploaded. It is so good to have modern video technology to preserve these talks as a record of the work of dedicated members to help keep the exploration of higher understanding growing. Great memories of another successful theosophical gathering in a well-appointed venue, with great meals as well!

Film evenings.

Our next film evening will be on **Tuesday 12th of March at 7pm** at Jan's place in Tipahi Street. The film will be the lecture that Benjamin Upton gave at the recent Napier Convention, titled '**Stellar Changes**', which runs for 50 minutes. This is a very good exploration of the connection that ancient civilisations had to the movements of stars and planets, how this understanding shaped their mythology and whether cosmic influences had an effect on the rise and fall of ancient cultures, as well as the possibility that present solar and galactic energy shifts are influencing events on earth via changes in the magnetosphere that protects us from excess solar radiation.

The other film evening will be on **Tuesday 2nd April at 7pm** at Jan's place, titled '**A Brief History of Consciousness**' which is a 45 minute lecture given by well-known professor of psychology and physics researcher Dr Stuart Hameroff. This explores the way that consciousness is understood by academics studying brain function at a sub-molecular level, and whether the brain is using quantum processing to express what we perceive as awareness. He also explores the beliefs of early philosophers with their theories of consciousness.

Visiting speakers for March and April

Visiting speaker **Barry Bowden** from Australia will be presenting a lecture at the **Nelson Spiritualist Church on Friday 22nd March at 7.30pm.**

Title: The Science of Self Knowledge.

The science of how to know our self is as exact as the modern science when understood. The Self we don't know is our problem at this time, over-shadowed as it is by the mental world - we believe that this is true knowledge but it is only really information and data. Knowledge is the ability put into action what is needed. This goes through the stages to be passed through inwardly before Self-knowledge starts to unfold.

**Bio for Barry:**

Barry has worked for many years as a bio-dynamic farmer. He is a National lecturer for the Theosophical Society in Australia as well as being involved in Toowoomba and Brisbane Lodge. He spent time recently in Brazil as a guest at their Theosophical farm and spoke at the South American Convention.

Barry has found through his working with nature, that there is an inner unfoldment of spiritual truths as one becomes sensitive to the energies of the natural world. His study of theosophical teachings has helped to integrate these truths and helped to develop a deeper level of self-understanding as well as understanding of others and life itself. He aspires to help people realise the hidden potential within themselves.



Our National President John Vorstemans will be speaking at **Nelson Spiritualist Church on Friday April 12th at 7:30pm**

Title: The Pilgrims Journey

This presentation is not so much about the journey, rather who is the one taking the journey, and the pathways that the journey takes us on. Here we together discuss the nature of who we really are and the power we have when we know.

Bio for John:

John has been studying theosophy for many years, is a qualified Ayurveda medical practitioner and herbalist, with interests in evolving technologies in education. He has studied many aspects of the ancient wisdom, particularly with moving from a knowledge to practice of the wisdom principles as it relates to transformative processes in ones way of life. Theosophy to John is a way of life, not simply an intellectual pursuit.

Physicists examine consciousness & conclude the universe is ‘spiritual, immaterial & mental’

When we look at the weird and wacky world of quantum physics, it can be hard to make sense of some of the things scientists have been observing over the years.

“We choose to examine a phenomenon which is impossible, absolutely impossible, to explain in any classical way, and which has in it the heart of quantum mechanics. In reality, it contains the only mystery.”

- Richard Feynman.

One thing is for sure, consciousness, or factors associated with consciousness (observation, measurement, thinking, intention) have a direct correlation with what we perceive to be our physical material world.

Max Planck, a physicist who originated quantum theory, regarded consciousness as fundamental and matter as derived from consciousness. He said that: -

“We cannot get behind consciousness. Everything that we talk about, everything that we regard as existing, postulates consciousness.”

Eugene Wigner, a physicist and mathematician told the world that: - *“It was not possible to formulate the laws of quantum mechanics in a fully consistent way without reference to consciousness.”*

R.C. Henry, Professor of Physics and Astronomy at Johns Hopkins University said that: - *“A fundamental conclusion of the new physics also acknowledges that the observer creates the reality. As observers, we are personally involved with the creation of our own reality.”*

Physicists are being forced to admit that the universe is a ‘mental’ construction. Pioneering physicist Sir James Jeans said in *The Mental Universe*: *“The stream of knowledge is heading toward a non-mechanical reality; the universe begins to look more like a great thought than like a great machine. Mind no longer appears to be an accidental intruder into the realm of matter, we ought rather hail it as the creator and governor of the realm of matter. The only conclusion is the universe is immaterial, mental and spiritual.”*

Recently, Australian scientists recreated an experiment that proves reality doesn’t really exist until we are measuring it, observing it, or ‘looking’ at it, at least to on the scale of quantum mechanics. An experiment devised by the Griffith University’s Centre for Quantum Dynamics, led by Professor Howard Wiseman and his team of researchers at the university of Tokyo, recently published a paper in the journal Nature.

Communications confirming what Einstein did not believe to be real: the non-local collapse of a particle’s wave function. It’s quantum entanglement, and it basically suggests that space is just the construct that gives us the illusion of separation. All of these findings within quantum physics have led to the suggestion that ‘consciousness create reality.’ That is, factors associated with consciousness, like measurement, are somehow involved with our material world.

Consciousness Creates Reality

The quantum double slit experiment is a very popular experiment used to examine how consciousness and our physical material world are intertwined. It is a great example that documents how factors associated with consciousness and our physical material world are connected in some way. One potential revelation of this experience is that “the observer creates the reality.”

A paper published in the peer-reviewed journal *Physics Essays* by Dean Radin, PhD, explains how this experiment has been used multiple times to explore the role of consciousness in shaping the nature of physical reality. In this experiment, a double-slit optical system was used to test the possible role of consciousness in the collapse of the quantum wave-function. The ratio of the interference pattern’s double slit spectral power to its single slit spectral power was predicted to decrease when attention was focused toward the double slit as compared to away from it. The study found that factors associated with consciousness significantly correlated in predicted ways with perturbations in the double slit interference pattern.

“Observation not only disturbs what has to be measured, they produce it. We compel the electron to assume a definite position. We ourselves produce the results of the measurement.” - Dean Radin

Although this is one of the most popular experiments used to posit the connection between consciousness and physical reality, there are several other studies that clearly show that consciousness, or factors that are associated with consciousness are directly correlated with our reality in some way.

How we can incorporate this information into our lives & use consciousness to transform the world

Change requires action, but the place within which that action comes from is most important. Modern day science, especially quantum physics, has been catching up to ancient mysticism and concepts that are/were so deeply ingrained in various cultures throughout the ancient world. One great example of this is the fact that everything is energy and nothing is solid, as shown to be true at the sub-atomic level of reality.

‘We are what we think, all that we are arises with our thoughts, with our thoughts we make the world’

- The Buddha

Broadly speaking, although there are some differences, Buddhist philosophy and Quantum Mechanics can shake hands on their view of the world. We can see in these great examples the fruits of human thinking. Regardless of the admiration we feel for these great thinkers, we should not lose sight of the fact that they were human beings just as we are.

We look forward to seeing members at the film evenings and the upcoming public talks. The plan is to keep with monthly film evenings and discussion after, along with national as well as local speakers as it happens

In service

Tim