

east west north south

Quarterly newsletter of the NSW Branch
of the Anthroposophical Society in Australia

OCTOBER 2018



From the chair

Hello and welcome to the belated Spring issue of our newsletter.

As you can read in Mark's report the NSW branch conference at Linuwel school was quite well attended and very well received by those who were able to attend, sadly I was not one of them. Thanks to Mark, Ruth and everyone who helped them organise this conference.

Also, of course, much appreciation to Lisa Romero for all she gave and always gives in order to help people to healthily negotiate the great challenges and possibilities of our time.

We've now had two worthwhile conferences this year and it would be great to keep the momentum with at least one next year. We branch committee members would be delighted if regional groups contacted us to

express a wish to host a conference next year and we would be most willing to give organisational and financial assistance as needed.

As you may know, we have a fund which came from a bequest from Mavis Wiles, a member in Sydney, given to the NSW branch with the wish to 'make Anthroposophy more available to regional NSW'. We have in the past made funds available to assist regional groups to bring guest speakers or performers, etc and are keen to continue this. So please contact us with requests for assistance to realise initiatives.

If you are not in a position to organise a conference but have ideas for one you would like to happen, then feel free to send us your suggestions.

Best wishes for your work,
Ron

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Cover photo — frog celebrates a rosy spring in the Mid North Coast.

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The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the views or outlook of the Anthroposophical Society in Australia.

East West North South is published electronically only. It is issued quarterly for each season — usually in December, March, June and September.

Readers are encouraged to forward the newsletter to friends or acquaintances who may be interested in its contents, and where possible to print a hard copy for people who are unable to receive emails.

Contributions are welcome.

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A sure-footed guide on the inner work path

By Mark Gallagher

With preparations nearly complete for the NSW Branch's *Developing the Self for our Tasks in the World* meditation conference at the Linuwel School in August, we still had a blank spot in the program on Saturday afternoon.

We had pencilled in "Further exploration of Lisa's work in small groups", contemplating perhaps painting or clay exercises based on themes from Lisa Romero's talks on Friday night, Saturday morning and earlier Saturday afternoon.

"I can carry the afternoon session too, if you like," Lisa told us.

And so it was that Lisa Romero, with her at times uncertain smile and her always penetrating gaze, guided, prodded and shepherded some 35 of us along the path she wanted us to travel towards the goal she apparently sees so well.

For hour after hour Lisa stood and talked, answered questions and wrote on the blackboard, working hard to give us a glimpse of that goal – and an under-

standing of how to go about not just setting out for it, but staying the course and reaching it.

On Saturday Lisa filled a blackboard with an outline of the stages and processes we need to pass through on our meditation path to the spiritual world. Delving into her small stack of multi-coloured sticky-noted and bookmarked tomes, Lisa read out numerous quotes from Rudolf Steiner to reinforce and amplify her own words. These rang through the room like the chime of a bell and she would pause to let the force of Steiner's words sink in.

We were led through the steps required to move from the state of the everyday self in the sense-perceptible physical world, with its content-filled thinking, feeling and willing, by undertaking inner development to bring into being the capacities of observer, experiencing soul and individual free will. Then gradually the blanks were filled in to illuminate the goals we can strive for in the spiritual world.

The central position of spiritual beings and the spir-



observer, able to detect and respond to the spirit present everywhere in the world.

* The verses Rudolf Steiner gave us are “the clothing of spiritual beings”, which help connect our higher I with progressive spiritual forces.

* These days our will is the least developed of our faculties (compared with thinking and feeling) and is therefore targeted by anthroposophy’s exercises. The six sub-

itual world in the anthroposophical path were emphasised repeatedly, contrasted with some other disciplines and self-development techniques that were devoid of spirit, aiming only for personal power or advantage.

Everyone is different of course – Rudolf Steiner says somewhere that each human being is almost a separate species – so we were all affected in our individual way by Lisa’s words and teaching efforts. But as she talked her gaze swept around the room, meeting yours and seeming to indicate somehow that her words were intended for you and that you would understand. If only.

“Seeing what makes you struggle (the shadow) is actually a sign of progress,” I wrote in my notebook, “You can only see the shadow because of the light.”

And later, “(the poet) Rumi said ‘what you are seeking is also seeking you’. We have to look behind the events of our life . . . everything is trying to wake us up . . . this is why we come here – to complete the circle (of our destiny) . . . Life is an esoteric schooling.”

Talking to us on Friday night, just about all day Saturday and until early afternoon on Sunday, with just a couple of sessions working by ourselves in small groups, Lisa covered a lot of topics in her efforts to get through to us. From my notes some of the following stood out:

* Mindfulness, which is everywhere at present, is so often devoid of spirit and can end up cultivating individualised free will that leads only to greater and greater egotism. We do not need to develop only our observer, but our *faithful*

subsidiary exercises can help to overcome external hindrances, while meditation works on internal hindrances. Meditation is the portal to results in the spiritual world.

* We should not focus on what is wrong with us, but on seeking the divine as part of the transformative path. Through meditation, erroneous parts of our being go through a transformation. Seek the divine and cultivate virtue on the path to transforming the mortal to the immortal self. Only the esoteric truth promotes human evolution. After death, the gods receive what belong to the gods.

* Don’t dwell on ambition and vanity, think upon the divine human being.





* * *

The beautiful surroundings and atmosphere of the Linuwel School at East Maitland provided a wonderful setting for our meditation conference. The school principal Tracey O’Leary and her staff could not have been more hospitable and welcoming and the branch is very grateful. Everyone was bowled over by the quality of the food prepared by Nicholas Grilanc and his helper. Some teachers and other local anthroposophists generously provided billet accommodation for a number of conference participants and their kindness and assistance is greatly appreciated.

* * *

Just after I got home from the Linuwel weekend, I emailed a friend about how the conference went,

saying, in part:

“Everyone who went to the conference seemed to think it went well and thanked the branch for organising it. There is always a post-conference glow, of course, but Lisa Romero really fired on all cylinders through the weekend and I think she truly got through to many people there. Her message was inner work, inner work, inner work, practicality and the need to truly acknowledge and strive towards the spiritual world. I thought she was amazing and she basically worked non-stop all weekend. She asks for nothing for herself and just emanates love and a spirit of service to other human beings.”

And she does.

* * *

Lisa Romero’s activities and schedule are available on the website www.innerworkpath.com
Upcoming courses in Australia are:

Inner Development and the Living Spiritual Year, on February 22-24 2019, at Rudolf Steiner House in Sydney; and
The Easter Mysteries, March 8-10 2019, in the Byron Shire.

For more information go to www.innerworkpath.com
Her books, *The Inner Work Path*, *Developing The Self*, *Living Inner Development*, *Sex Education And The Spirit*, and *Spirit-Led Community*, are available at the Rudolf Steiner Book Centre Sydney, phone 9264 5169, email info@rudolfsteinerbookcentre.com.au



Privilege of meeting fading works of art

By Ron Vaisey

Quite recently I began working as a community care worker where I live in the Blue Mountains. As you are probably aware this entails visiting clients in their homes to deliver a variety of services such as: Personal care (assisting people to shower and dress, administer medications, apply creams, etc); Domestic assistance; Social support (transporting people to medical appointments or shopping, etc) and respite visits. In this work I have met quite a broad spectrum of people living with many different illnesses, injuries and challenging life circumstances, some whose health is improving and others on a more or less rapid decline in their physical and/or cognitive and psychological capacities and well-being. Sometimes with a lot of support from family and friends and sometimes with little or none.

It's always most interesting to observe the processes that occur when I am sent to a new client and first encounter the particular physical, elemental and psychological configuration of the client's, often disintegrating, body and of their home environment. We meet and absorb much more than we are generally aware of and, if I take seriously Rudolf Steiner's indication that because we have all had many lives and have built up much karma we seldom meet people we have not met before, this can give me pause for thought and a deeper inclination to feel into the experiences of the people who I've been led to meet at this particular stage in their lives. This does not in any way mean speculating about their karma or our connection but just holding lightly the awareness that it is THEM that I have met and at THIS stage in their life.

What I find I receive from this is a greatly increased felt sense of every life as a unique work of art (some of these people have had extraordinary life trials, hardships and periods of grace).

So far two clients I had been seeing have died (not due to anything done by me). In one instance I spent more time in conversation with the wife, daughter and son of the dying man and it was a privilege to accompany them for a short time through this process with my anthroposophical understandings between or behind the words rather than overtly in them. The dying man, only loosely bound to his body, seemed to have some awareness of this.

I spent a fourteen-hour respite shift with the other dying client to give her sons a break. During this time I gave medication, prepared meals and cups of tea, fed and walked the dog, took calls from palliative care nurses to arrange visits...

She slept a lot but was at other times very awake and keen to engage, asking at what age my parents died and from what and about other clients' conditions.

Because of her condition (advanced brain cancer) she would lose words and in struggling to find words lose the thought she was trying to express. Then she would become tired and need to sleep again.

Another client who I see for one-hour visits twice a week calls himself an atheist and delights in telling people that he doesn't believe in God, fairies or Santa Claus. He even has a bible full of comments in the margins, mostly criticism of what he perceives as the cruel, petty, tyrannical God of the Old Testament.

When we discuss history and current events his attitudes and perceptions (though he would deny it) are fundamentally genuinely Christian, and the contrast I perceive between his stated world view and his human and social impulses is poignant and instructive. It's a great privilege to be encountering the people I do and when I read about the efforts made by some modern techno utopians to improve humanity so that we don't have to experience illness and death it, not surprisingly, again gives me pause for thought.

Der Bau: Essays on the architecture and sculpture of the first Goetheanum by Carl Kemper

An initiative

By Peter Stewart

Dear Friends
For many years now, *Der Bau* (trans. “The Building”), a comprehensive work on the architecture and sculpture of the first Goetheanum, has existed in the German language. The double-domed first Goetheanum was a new mystery temple, an artistic expression in built form of Rudolf Steiner’s anthroposophy, truly, like all sacred architecture, a built cosmology.

While the First World War raged to the north and west, a community of artists and workers on the Dornach hill laboured under Rudolf Steiner’s direction to build this

gesamtkunstwerk, this complete work of art, encompassing sculpturally formed architecture, carved coloured windows and painted ceiling murals, all representing the spiritual evolution of humanity. The building depicted Steiner’s teachings in artistic form, and aimed not just at beauty, but was a lesson to awaken new capacities by calling on the viewer to enter actively with artistic perception into, for example, the metamorphic sequence of the seven columns in the main

auditorium. Tragically it was destroyed by fire on New Year’s Eve 1922.

Carl Kemper worked as a wood carver on the first Goetheanum, and later contributed to the completion and design of the second Goetheanum, solving critical design problems which had been left unresolved at the time of Steiner’s death. Carl Kemper also guided students to an understanding of metamorphosis through his work teaching at the sculpture school at the Goetheanum. Drawn from the extensive material contained in his estate, models, drawings and notes on lectures, *Der Bau* was compiled by his friends after his death to

capture Kemper’s important insights and explorations into the architecture and sculpture of the First Goetheanum, and make them available to all. The book is divided into three sections. The first deals



The first Goetheanum from the south-west

with the language of forms in the Goetheanum – what comes to be expressed in the organically sculptured interior and exterior architecture, the metamorphic sequence of the planetary columns, with their unique capitals and bases which represent “facts of the spiritual world”, and Kemper’s explorations of the

planetary seals. The second section deals with the theme of metamorphosis, Steiner's important contribution extending Goethe's scientific understanding of the living into the realm of the artistic, bringing form into movement to express qualities of life and development. The concluding section presents Kemper's investigations into the geometry of the ground plan – the underlying proportions and relationships between the two intersecting circles of the auditorium and the stage area, and how these are geometrically constructed to generate the positions of the columns in the two spaces.

As we approach 2022 and the 100th anniversary of the destruction of the first Goetheanum, it is time

for such an important work to find its way into the English language, and its insights and depth of understanding be made available for students of anthroposophy from the English-speaking section of the world. The German publisher Verlag Freies Geistesleben is in support of an English edition, and I am currently negotiating with Dr Frederick Amrine, a translator of anthroposophical works, and a publisher to help realise this initiative. To help cover the costs of the translation, approximately \$5000(US), I am looking at setting up a crowdfunding appeal. If you would like to see *Der Bau* reach an English-reading audience and are interested in contributing to this project please contact me via peterstewart12@hotmail.com.

The Goetheanum (Der Bau)

Essays on the architecture and sculpture of the first Goetheanum by Carl Kemper

Edited by Hilde Raske in collaboration with Albert von Baravalle, Friedrich Häusler, Heinrich Kern and Georg Unger

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Coffs/Bellingen/ Dorrigo/Nambucca

* The study group at Charlotte's Health Retreat has completed the study of Steiner's Occult Physiology but are revising this. We have also commenced our study of Spiritual Science and Medicine. We meet on a Tuesday, week about in Bellingen and Nambucca Heads.

All enquiries are welcome. Mobile 0402 469 699
Home 6655 1158.

Every second Wednesday evening we also gather to work on the Apocalyptic Seals in relief in clay. 5.30-7pm followed by a shared meal.

Address 195 North bank Rd Bellingen 2454

* The fortnightly Nambucca Study Group continues, working recently on Steiner's *Riddles of Philosophy*. Contact Fran Bond on 6568 7795 to join this lively study group on every second Wednesday night 7.30 to 9.30pm.

* On the last Monday of the month the Inner Work

Path Study group meets in Bellingen, 7- 8.30pm.

Contact Maggie on 0402 212 077 if you would like to join this committed group.

* An inquisitive 13 are enthusiastically meeting for Rudolf Steiner's 'Agriculture Lecture' study every two weeks at the BAA offices on Noble Street in Bellingen. A strong 'study group hygiene', with emphasis on practicing 'Goethean Communication', has resulted in a closely facilitated and a freeing opportunity for all. Contact Alan Johnson 0434 414 434 or John Hodgkinson 0412 578 679 if you would like to join us. All are welcome.

Taree/Hastings

* A monthly study group held in Taree draws participants from the Manning and Hastings areas. The group has been working with Good and Evil Spirits and Their Influence on Humanity. New members are welcome. For more information contact Cheryl Meyer phone 6551 8926. A First Class group also meets locally and seasonal festivals are celebrated during the year.