

**GENERAL & FINANCIAL REPORT FOR CLASSWORK FOR THE GENERAL SECTION OF THE
SCHOOL OF SPIRITUAL SCIENCE**

TO AGM ANTHROPOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN AUSTRALIA, APRIL 2023

The past year has been a year of consolidation for the work of Class in Australia. For many of us in Australia it has been a relief to be able to return to our rhythm of monthly Class Lessons post Covid restrictions. It has been a joyful experience to be able to meet together to give and receive a Lesson as the spoken word living creatively within the room. The Class Lessons were brought into the world after the Christmas Conference through Rudolf Steiner. They fulfilled the will of the spiritual world, the will of Michael, the Spirit of our Times to meet the esoteric striving of human beings on earth. Taking part in Class Lessons and the conversations and artistic work that arise from it, helps members to strengthen co-working, build community, inspire initiative and provide impetus for vocational work in the world. This work also enlivens collaboration and initiative in study groups, branch work and the Anthroposophical Society. In this way the Classwork can live as the esoteric heart of the School of Spiritual Science and imbue the endeavours of the Anthroposophical Society.

Since the AGM of the Anthroposophical Society last year, the Class Holders have had 2 opportunities to meet together – in May last year in Canberra and in March this year in Melbourne. Such meetings give us the opportunity to share our thoughts, questions and strivings in relation to the holding of Class in Australia and also to connect with the strivings of the Classwork worldwide. At both meetings there were offerings of Eurythmy and Speech, lectures and Class Lessons. These events were open to Class Members as well as Class Holders.

Last year financial support was given for 3 Class Holders (Helen Vogel, Jane Bradshaw & Glenn Rawlinson) to attend the International Conference for Class Holders held at the Goetheanum over 5 days in October/November last year. These meetings are such a wonderful opportunity to connect person to person with the worldwide impulse of Spiritual Science. We took part in an English speaking conversation group with Class Holders from many countries – US, UK, New Zealand, Israel, Taiwan, Belarus and others. It was fascinating and inspiring to realise that although we all face differing challenges in our lives – floods, fires, war, political upheaval etc we find Anthroposophy and the pursuing of the Class content through the Class lessons gives us strength and insight to cope with what surrounds us and also to be open and giving to those around us who are suffering. The unique opportunity to share in such an open and honest way was truly a gift for all of us to take back to our own spheres of work.

At our recent Class Holders Meeting in Melbourne, the group voted unanimously to support an initiative to hold a Conference at the end of this year to celebrate and commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the Christmas Conference: **“Recognising and Affirming the Mystery Deed of the Christmas Conference as we continue to Cultivate the Life of the Spirit in our Current Times”**. This will be held at the Michael Centre in Warranwood, Melbourne from 27th to 31st December and will be open to Society members and friends. This initiative will

be held jointly by the Anthroposophical Society and the School of Spiritual Science in Australia. The planning group – Helen Vogel, Marilyn Lewis, Philip Quenby, David Baldwin, Jane Bradshaw, Jennifer West and Birgith Lugosi – is working at present to finalise the content which will offer lectures (The Mystery Deed of the Christmas Conference, The Divine Plan, The Supersensible Michael School, Esoteric Musicology and more to be finalised – art, embryology); Conversation Groups; Workshops (Speech – “The Revelation of the word and Speech through the Epochs”, Eurythmy ; Drama and Art). There will be performances – “The Foundation Stone in Eurythmy”, “The Foundation Stone Rhythms in Eurythmy”, and Drama. Each day we will offer 1 or 2 Class Lessons for Class members.

The planning group’s vision is that this conference opens a possibility of living working together for all members around Australia and a working together of the Society and the Classwork of the School of Spiritual Science as well as the Sections. It will be a possibility for all of us to witness the diversity of Anthroposophical initiative within Australia and how this also reaches to other regions of the world – a living picture of the intent of the Christmas Conference to grow into the future.

Now coming to the more earthly concerns of Finances! Last year we received much less in contributions from members than in former years – from \$13,500 down to \$11,000. We ended the year with a deficit of \$3,367.99 which can be covered by accumulated funds. Our main expenses were:

- travel of Class Holders to Canberra meeting: \$3,864;
- contributions for travel to the Goetheanum for 3 Class Holders: \$4,150;
- Facilitation Group travel to undertake administration: \$2,500;
- contribution towards Administrative costs: \$1,100;
- the holding of Class Intensives: \$2,700

Judith Howard and I met at the beginning of the year to discuss the drop in contributions from members which is affecting both the activities of the Society, and, Classwork in Australia. We see the next 2 years as a period in which the after-effects of Covid lockdowns and downturn generally in the economy will have impacts on the incomings and outgoings of our Finances. The Class Holders agreed at our last meeting that we will endeavour to only hold one in-person meeting this year and perhaps next year too (instead of 2). Already for this year the 1 meeting in Melbourne cost more in travel than 2 meetings in years gone by. Our accumulated funds of around \$40,000 will not last many years if our deficit continues. We have committed to contributing up to \$3,000 from accumulated funds towards the conference at the end of the year as we see this as such an important opportunity to nurture co-working and connection for Anthroposophy in Australia.

As was highlighted for us during the Covid lockdowns, the impacts of not being able to meet in person are huge. Anthroposophy lives when we can gather and share our work. Initiative arises out of this living of Anthroposophy. So much of our work is carried out using our own private funds – a free gifting of time and money which is becoming a greater and greater. To attend the Goetheanum for meetings is a huge expense when only part of an airfare is covered and no contribution available for living costs. To attend meetings in Australia we try

to cover the cost of travel but again Class Holders have to cover their other costs. It is important that members of the Society are aware of this commitment by Class Holders, when they make their annual contribution to the Society. Out of their contribution only \$28 comes to the Classwork in Australia. We do an amazing amount of work for the annual incomings of \$11,000. We prepare and hold Class Lessons, Class meetings, study and conversation times, meetings of Class Holders and Class Intensives all around Australia. It is the same in the Society – an enormous amount of work is carried out on the part of a small group of people who gift a lot of time and funds.

As members I think we should hold this in our consciousness when making our annual financial contribution to the Society. On behalf of the Class Holders and Class Members in Australia I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to you all for your contributions past, present and future.

Helen Vogel

Treasurer

On behalf of the Facilitation Group for Class Holders in Australia Marilyn Lewis, David Baldwin, Helen Vogel, Philip Quenby