

Anthroposophical Society in Australia

News from the General Secretary

Issue No. 4, February 2024

Questions and challenges confront representatives

The world-wide country representatives are preparing for our meetings in Dornach in April.

We recognise that this is a group where we can discuss specific challenges and tasks about our role together. The country Societies consciously working together form the World Anthroposophical Society, “the world” understood here as a worldwide space (and by doing so, these Societies enable the archangels to work together, a real contribution to peace).

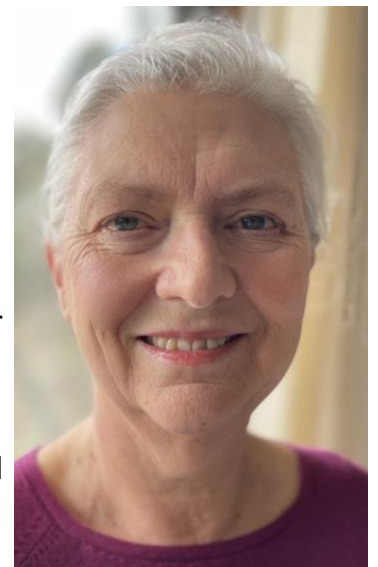
The General Anthroposophical Society with the Goetheanum and its sections is also the World Anthroposophical Society, here the centre and periphery intermingle as the world situation in which we live, at this, the time of the consciousness soul.

In our meetings, we bring recognition to include those anthroposophists who have crossed the threshold, thus enhancing our striving community.

I would like to share a snippet of our discussions that lie beyond the practical deliberations connected with more earthly processes.

Questions and conversations include:

- How do we develop our capacities as country representatives (simultaneously we deepen our understanding of Anthroposophy and the world in general).
- What seeds from the Christmas conference, relevant to the task of a country representative, may be waiting to germinate at this critical 100-year mark? We all know that seeds can be dormant for a long time. Rudolf Steiner at the Christmas conference asked those present “to prepare to receive countless seeds for the future . . .”
- Do our “country Societies” fully reflect the intentions of the 1923 statutes? Are they as open, free, modern, non-sectarian, non-hierarchical, non-fanatical etc. as Steiner wanted?
- In 1923 Rudolf Steiner said: “The daughters have been extremely neglectful of the mother.” In the context of initiatives taken forward. Can we better manage the (growing) gap between daughters and the mother (Anthroposophia) in that the “source” is recognised and re-enlivened? Are there any success stories that we can learn from to help us enliven Anthroposophy in our country’s institutions?
- Recognising Archangelic working: Why have a country Society? What, beyond a require-



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ment under local national legislation for a constitution if funds and accounts are maintained, makes a country Society? What kind of organ is each country within the organism of the worldwide General Anthroposophical Society?

- How does the spiritual being of such a Society come about, how does it connect to a constellation of individuals forming a Society? Is there a connection to a folk spirit, or not? Rudolf Steiner could only renew the Anthroposophical Society after establishing a circle of Country (not national) Societies that would form the vessel within which the renewal could take place. This also seems to link to the task Rudolf Steiner gave to the first of the General Secretaries (Country Representative) to cultivate the inner and outer life (the esoteric and exoteric life) with those who share their specific languages and cultures. The multi-cultural identity and language diversity, blended with the ancient wisdom of the aboriginal people in many countries, means we are already a “melting pot” beyond language and culture. The realisation of a Michaelic world culture is a critical step needed to connect the folk souls of a people, to Michael. How do we remain open to the “Spirit of our earthly habitation that the light of our age is revealed”? Does the folk soul have an intimate relationship with the landscape? The borders as such are excluded.
- What of the countries that have anthroposophists and no Society yet ... Ukraine, Israel, Japan, Asia, East Africa? We know that only a small part of those active and studying Anthroposophy are members of the Society. Would they benefit from the brotherliness of a form, or does a Society invite authoritarianism?

Exquisite tolerance and courage are needed for these questions.

The road to experiencing the truth is still a long one. When we speak, we still have to learn to penetrate the concepts and not just want to explain them. Sociologists keep describing anthroposophy as a new-age religion. We have great tasks ahead of us.

When the Goetheanum fire broke out in 1922, the question arose for the insurance company: “Is the Goetheanum a temple, a theatre or the seat of the AAG and the School?”

The question is still being asked today.

Suggested reading.

<https://rsarchive.org/Lectures/GA064/English/Singles/19141127p01.html>

From the Goetheanum:

Snips from a report --

Matthias Girke will resign at the AGM and Stefan Hasler will be appointed to the new Executive Board and confirmed by the AGM.

Trends in the preparation of the General Assembly after the 6th Members Forum.

Two opposing tendencies have emerged from the dialogue rounds.

On the one hand, members want the board to make clear statements about the WHO, for example. WHO is still a burning issue in the Medical Section. The developments are sensitive. If the pandemic treaty is agreed upon in May, they will have to look again at whether and for how long the collaboration is still good and sustainable. It could be that the section will then have to rethink its position. So far, the recognition of training in anthroposophic medicine by the WHO has had a positive effect. The debate in our circles, however, tends to show atomising tendencies.

On the other hand, members do not want the board to take a position, as only members should share their diverse views. The board should not decide anything without involving the members. The board does not see itself primarily as an administrative board but as a management and initiative board.

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The Executive is frequently criticised, which depletes its strength and creativity. However, there

were many positive events in 2023 and it is important to highlight these. A proposal was drawn up from the table discussions to appoint an advisory board of two member representatives to the Goetheanum communication group to support their work. An initial period of one year has been suggested for this. The same applies to the Weleda issue. The suggestion that members join as advisory councillors for certain topics could be a good idea but needs to be tested.

The table discussions are a good way of debating sensitive issues with the members and working on solutions based on consensus.

In general, it is becoming apparent that the members want to have a greater say. The image of Goetheanum leadership is not always accepted and the School is still missing from the overall picture for many members.

The World Conference was almost sold out, but the Christmas Conference was completely sold out and the hall was full. Even if some expectations were not met, all the positive aspects should also be considered. It was important that this commemoration could take place at the Goetheanum.

Only 200 to 300 people came to the working groups in the afternoons, although it was precisely there that the research in the sections was specifically discussed. There is a lack of scientific rationale in our Society, which R. Steiner expressly emphasises in his letters to members.

Our Society should also engage with its opponents where possible. A public stance is needed on certain issues, for example when right-wing extremism and racism are linked to biodynamic agriculture and R. Steiner.

As a member of society, the fate of the institutions must also be taken much more into account to be able to support and help, out of a sense of responsibility. In the UK, for example, more co-operation between the Society and the work fields is being sought.

Many members want to feel good in the AAG, which is justified but do not want a society that goes out into the world. Many people experience a "powerlessness test that we have to go through". We must strive by studying and acting more, otherwise we often remain in the background like sleepwalkers. Our task is to form a place of struggle, of searching, because the needs of the time are so great. If the AAG is to continue to develop, we must want it and this requires a common will. In many respects, we are still a community of faith.

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There is a meeting on Zoom on 28th February 2024 to continue conversations to present at the AGM and 'Futures' event in May 2024 at Linuwel School. The topics include our ASinA Constitution and the current relationship as a country Anthroposophical Society. Your Branch reps will be attending. If you have any questions or are interested in attending please contact me or your Branch rep. generalsecretary.asina@gmail.com or 0438442906

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The next and third conference on the GAS constitutional question will take place at the Goetheanum from February 23rd to 25th. This is in CEST and a Zoom link is provided. Please see the website for more information. I will provide you feedback for the meeting in next month's newsletter.

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Stand by for a Journal in late March on the Australian Christmas Conference.

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Anyone who requires a paper copy of the newsletters and Journal can contact me or your Branch rep, and it will be colour-printed and posted to you in Doc. form.

Former Tasmania Branch member David Tresemer crossed the threshold in the United States on February 12.

David, who was a member of the Tasmania Branch for many years, lived on Flinders Island but moved to USA several years ago and became prominent in anthroposophical activities there.

Colours of Australia



This photo is from my trip to the Watarrka National Park, home to King's Canyon, 710 sq kilometres, and to the Luitja and Arrente peoples for more than 20,000 years. These ground stones are used for Aboriginal dot painting and body painting. A beautiful expression of the colours of the landscape.

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