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Dear fellow-members of the TS and TOS around the world,

We hope you'll find this edition of our international TOS electronic newsletter interesting and helpful in providing you with ideas for service activities and keeping you in touch with other TOS groups and issues related to our TOS areas of service. This edition has a 'green' flavour as we focus on current discussions and action on environmental and animal welfare concerns.

Remember that the newsletter is designed to be read while you are connected to the internet.

Please also consider sending photographs of your TOS activities and news items that might be of interest to fellow TOS members. We would welcome your contributions by email to the editors at carolyn.tosinternational@gmail.com.

With best wishes,

Carolyn, Diana and Geoffrey



(L. to R.) Carolyn Harrod is the National Coordinator of the TOS in Australia, Geoffrey Harrod is the International TOS Webmaster and Diana Dunningham Chapotin is the International Secretary of the TOS.

The sole source of peace in the family, the country and the world is altruism – love and compassion.

– His Holiness the Dalai Lama

The International Secretary of the TOS in action

Our TOS International Secretary engages in a lot of TOS-related correspondence but doesn't spend all her time with her fingers glued to the computer keyboard! Like many of us, Diana spends time out defending causes that reflect her theosophical convictions.

One of her passions is green politics and at the latest anti-nuclear action in which Diana participated she was interviewed by Reuters, Agence France Presse, Swiss and Japanese television crews and a number of journalists for French radio.

Diana's principal area of activism, however, is animal protection and she participates in a range of campaigns and supports a number of organisations working in this area.

We bring you photos of some of her actions in France in recent months. [Read more...](#)



Gratitude for the Geoffrey Hodson Memorial Scholarship Fund

In last December's issue of this newsletter, we reported on the modest endowment fund the TOS in New Zealand has set up in the Philippines, the interest from which pays for the education of a child at the Golden Link College in suburban Manila.

The fund, you may recall, is called The Geoffrey Hodson Memorial Scholarship Fund after the well-known theosophical author who was a president of the TOS in New Zealand and the founding president of the NZ Vegetarian Society.

The President of the TS in the Philippines, Dr Roselmo Doval-Santos, recently wrote to Renée Sell, the Coordinator of the TOS in New Zealand, about the Fund. Renée found what he had to say so touching and inspiring that she sent it to the international TOS to be shared with all. [Read more...](#)



*Roselmo Doval-Santos,
President of the TS in the Philippines*

What's new on the International TOS website?

Our **Latest News** this month brings you a conversation between Vicente Hao Chin, Jr and John Kern about the international project that has been running for three years now through the good offices of the TOS in America to raise funds for the theosophically-oriented Golden Link College in the Philippines. It is thanks to a matching grant from the Kern Foundation that our donations are doubled each year. Vicente is the College's Chairperson and John Kern is the founder and Director of the Kern Foundation.



Look out for our new collection of "Ten fundraising ideas that work". You'll find them in the For Members section of our website.

The new **Featured Article** is by Joy Mills. In it she asks, "How can we combine the neutrality of the Theosophical Society with the need to respond to burning issues?" She challenges us to put Theosophy into action. *"The vigour and vitality of the Society arise out of the lives of its members; its impact upon the world, its transformative power, its regenerative force, are all dependent upon what we, its members, bring to this movement and upon the manner in which we act out daily the implications of the principles to which we have given an inner allegiance... [We should] so act that all will know that for us, as for the Adept Brothers, the term 'Universal Brotherhood' is no idle phrase."*

One of our international projects is to put together a compilation of fundraising ideas that have worked for groups. Thanks to the TOS members who shared their stories of successful fundraising events and activities, we've added a new document to the **For Members** section of our website: *Ten fundraising ideas that work*. You'll notice a new item on the menu bar of our website, **From the archives**. In this web update we're sharing a leaflet on Animal Welfare, originally published by the London Theosophical Order of Service in 1966.

There are also additions to the TOS photo gallery and the Inspiration section. Go to <http://international.theoservice.org>

The human side of climate change

As we hear the stories of subsistence farmers around the world, facing the challenges of growing crops in environments that have changed markedly, we are confronted with questions about how we can best respond. Globally, sea levels are rising, seasons are changing, and in some cases, distinct seasons are disappearing altogether. The result for many families living on the edge of survival is hunger, scarcity of drinkable water, health problems and ruined livelihoods. This is the human side of the phenomenon that is climate change. According to international welfare groups:

- 50 million more people are likely to be forced into hunger by 2050 due to climate change – about 75% of that number will be in Africa
- over half of the four billion people in Asia (60% of the world's population) live near the coast, making them directly vulnerable to sea level rise.

We bring you stories from the tiny nation of Kiribati in the Pacific, and from South-East Asia, Africa and Bangladesh. [Read more....](#)



Building a new sea wall to protect a village

A million trees and counting

2011 is the International Year of Forests when the UN is asking us to think about and visit our forests, home to so many of the world's species.

Forests provide shelter to people and habitat to biodiversity; are a source of food, medicine and clean water; and play a vital role in maintaining a stable global climate and environment. All of these elements taken together reinforce the message that forests are vital to the survival and well-being of people everywhere, all 7 billion of us. For instance, did you know that it is estimated that 20% of the world's greenhouse gases come from forest destruction? Carbon is trapped in trees, their roots and the soil and is released into the atmosphere when forests are destroyed.

We share ideas from several TOS groups who are promoting the importance of forests. [Read more....](#)



2011 – International year of Forests

Ditch meat and save the earth

We are often reminded that, for the good of the planet, each of us needs to reduce our carbon footprint. By now we all know that we can use less energy by switching off lights, by heating our homes to a lower temperature, by using our cars less and by eating food that is grown locally.

However, did you know that one of the quickest, simplest and most effective ways of helping our planet is to reduce the amount of meat we eat? Giving up meat for just one day a week can make a significant difference. It's estimated that even in countries with small populations like Australia, giving up meat for one day a week would save over six million tonnes of greenhouse gases in a year.

Reducing our consumption of meat also has other benefits.

- It can help us share resources more equitably.
- It helps animals.
- It's good for our cost of living.
- It's good for our health.

[Read more](#)



Help end live animal export from Australia

In May 2011, a joint investigation by two Australian peak animal welfare groups into the fate of cattle exported to Indonesia was made public. Video of the horrific slaughtering practices in Indonesian abattoirs was shown on prime time television.

The evidence gathered by investigators from Animals Australia and the RSPCA showed cattle subjected to torture such as eye gouging, kicking, tail twisting, leg breaking, and arduous and prolonged killings with little skill and blunt knives.

As a result of an immediate and overwhelming public outcry, the Australian Government placed a ban on live animal export to Indonesia.

The Australian Government, however, lifted the suspension of live animal trade to Indonesia in July 2011, without any guarantee that animals will be treated with respect and care and that they will at least be stunned before slaughter.

Over the past three decades, more than 160 million animals have been sent from Australia to a grim fate in the live export trade. If you would like to support the campaign to end live animal export from Australia

[Read more](#)



TOS members visit the HPB Hostel at Adyar

In our last newsletter, George and Gailene Wester of Perth, Australia shared their photos of the information stands and sale stalls that are set up at the international convention of the TS at Adyar, Chennai in India every December to raise awareness of social issues and the TS's humanitarian service projects.

In this issue we publish the photos the Westers took at one of these projects, the HPB Hostel, which operates in Besant Gardens under the umbrella of the Olcott Education Society. The hostel, named after H.P. Blavatsky, houses about 25 boys aged from 10 to 16 from poor, mostly fisher families. They are given free board and lodging and they attend the Olcott School. They are also given parental care by the Warden and general guidance in studies and activities. In addition to the academic school program, their daily activities include yoga, meditation, exercise, games, prayer and listening to wholesome stories. The boys also do gardening work around the Hostel building.

[Read more](#)



Teaosophy in England

For several years now, a simple and enjoyable fundraising activity has been organised three or four times a year by UK TOS Treasurer, Greta Walker, and former TS National Treasurer, George McNamara. They hold **Theosophical Tea Parties (the "Tea-and-coffeecal Society")** at TS HQ in London. Each meeting has a theme such as "countries we have lived in", but theosophy, life, the universe and everything are also discussed! Before or after the gathering, people are free to visit the TS Library which has an outstanding collection of books.

The last gathering had the Theosophical Order of Service itself as its theme, with the goal of interesting people in helping to establish the TOS better in London. Active TOS worker, Cornelia Crowther, came along and former TS General Secretary, Colin Price, was kind enough to come in and answer questions on Theosophy from the enquirers present. [Read more](#)



The starfish story

Enjoy this story with the simple message that even the smallest act of kindness and compassion can make a difference.

[Read more](#)



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- If you do not want to receive future newsletters you can easily unsubscribe. All that is needed is a blank message to tos.intouch@gmail.com with 'Unsubscribe TOS e-newsletter' in the subject line.



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The International Secretary of the TOS in action

Our TOS International Secretary engages in a lot of TOS-related correspondence but doesn't spend all her time with her fingers glued to the computer keyboard! Like many of us, Diana spends time out defending causes that reflect her theosophical convictions. We bring you photos of some of her actions in France in recent months.



One of Diana's passions is green politics. She has been demonstrating against the use of nuclear weapons and power for decades and recalls the very long period when France was testing bombs at Mururoa Atoll in the South Pacific and when the French people were quite indifferent or even hostile to protest action in the streets.

To the left, we see Diana at a march that took place in Paris on June 11 2011, exactly three months after the terrible accident at Fukushima. She was accompanied by her husband, Michel, who is President of the TOS in France.

Media interest at the latest anti-nuclear action in which Diana participated would seem to indicate that attitudes are evolving in France. She spoke to Reuters, Agence France Presse, Swiss and Japanese television crews and a number of journalists for French radio.

Asked by the Japanese interviewers what message she had for the Japanese people, she said: "France and Japan have something in common: their citizens have been programmed over the years to believe that they cannot live without nuclear energy. And yet we know that we have no choice but to make our way out of dependence on nuclear energy by consuming less energy and finding renewable sources. French citizens are finally waking up to this imperative. They are deeply concerned for the Japanese people at this distressing time and they send their loving support."



Diana's principal area of activism, however, is animal protection. After the anti-nuclear march on June 11, Diana ran to a nearby area of Paris just in time to join the annual "Veggie-Pride" march.

To the left we see Diana. A vegetarian since birth, she has been a vegan for well over 20 years. She says she finds it easy nowadays to find plant-based protein.

In campaigning for the use of alternative methods of research to vivisection, costumes are sometime used. While some people snicker at such costumes, Diana and her fellow campaigners find that acting out dramatic scenarios in the street generally attracts sympathetic attention.



This action was designed to increase awareness of the cruelty involved in the production of duck-liver pâté, considered a delicacy in France.

Children and adults alike love friendly interaction and during World Vegetarian Day activities respond joyfully to Michel's humorous costumes. So far, the Parisian public has enjoyed him dressed as a rabbit, a carrot, a flasher and a repentant butcher!





When particularly dynamic and successful animal welfare campaigners in Austria were jailed for three months in 2008 and unjustly charged with criminal activity, a great deal of effort went into supporting them until they were exonerated this past May in a trial lasting over a year.

Diana's poster says "You can't cut the wings off angels".

No sooner were the Austrians acquitted than twelve Spanish animal rights activists were arrested and charged with criminal activity.



Human rights for Spanish animal rights activists!

The campaign in defence of the Spanish will undoubtedly continue to take Diana's time in the months to come. We wish her every success....



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Here is Rosel's message:

Dear Renée,

Your donors probably do not have a full idea of how immensely important the Geoffrey Hodson scholarship is to the beneficiary of the Fund. After the New Zealand experience with the Christchurch earthquake, you might wish to share with the donors that in the Philippines, we get two or three disasters of this proportion a year, through earthquakes, flooding, typhoons or even from violent insurgency (Islamic fundamentalism).

The sharing of the message of Theosophy is vital. One of the best ways to spread Theosophy is by action. Action speaks volumes, as you well know. The information on the assistance you are giving the Manila urban poor children spreads like wildfire in our depressed communities. It wins the Theosophical Society, your country and of course Geoffrey Hodson much goodwill and admiration.



Roselmo Doval-Santos, President of the TS in the Philippines



Renée Sell, National Coordinator of the TOS in New Zealand

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The human side of climate change

As we hear the stories of subsistence farmers around the world, facing the challenges of growing crops in environments that have changed markedly, we are confronted with questions about how we can best respond. Globally, sea levels are rising, seasons are changing, and in some cases, distinct seasons are disappearing altogether. The result for many families living on the edge of survival is hunger, scarcity of drinkable water, health problems and ruined livelihoods. This is the human side of the phenomenon that is climate change.

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Kiribati

Climate change has already had a major impact on the people of the Kiribati nation, made up of dozens of tiny islands and atolls in the Pacific Ocean.

In the king tides of 2004, many families lost their houses and gardens only to have their replanted gardens destroyed in the floods of 2009. Where their original homes stood is now beach, coconut palms that once lined the beaches are dying because of salt water intrusion and people are struggling to re-establish their food gardens as the soil is becoming too salty to grow crops.



Building a new sea wall to protect a village

With typical resilience, the people of these islands are fighting to survive. They are building sea walls as protection from high tides; they are rebuilding homes back from the shoreline, but this is difficult when so many of the islands are narrow or small; they are planting new types of salt-resistant vegetables in raised beds and containers; and they are harvesting rainwater as community wells turn brackish.

Most difficult of all is the emotional cost of deciding which communities they will protect from the sea because they don't have the resources or the capacity to protect all of them. And the future doesn't look hopeful – Kiribati may become unliveable within 50 to 60 years due to sea level rise.



South-East Asia and Africa

In some South-East Asian countries and African countries such as Ethiopia, Malawi and Uganda, communities are impacted, not by sea level changes, but by drastic changes in seasonal patterns. The wet season is now so unpredictable that farmers have no confidence in planting crops. Worse still, if the rains do come they can be destructive and result in bad floods.

Because women tend to do the jobs that are most affected by changes in weather, they are feeling the greatest pressure.

It tends to be women who grow the family's food, fetch fuel and water, and bring up the children. So when clean water becomes harder to find during a drought, or when crops are destroyed by floods, it's up to women to find solutions.

As impacts from climate change worsen, women and their communities are finding new and innovative ways to cope. Some are trying to earn a living by

collecting water and firewood for people in the nearest town. Communities are campaigning for water boreholes closer to their villages since this can shorten their daily walk from 7 hours down to 30 minutes, for example. They are trying to grow new crops which can survive with less rain and are more resilient to changing weather patterns. They are also learning ways of preserving food supplies for longer periods.

Increasing toxicity of cassava in Africa

According to a report in *New Scientist* (July 2009), one of Africa's most important crops is likely to become increasingly toxic as a result of carbon emissions.

Cassava is a staple for more than half a billion of the world's poorest people. It is promoted by UN agencies such as the Food and Agriculture Organisation as a saviour for Africa because it grows well in droughts. But now research at Monash University in Melbourne, Australia, shows that increasing carbon dioxide in the air boosts cyanide levels in its leaves.

Cassava leaves and roots both contain a chemical that breaks down to release toxic hydrogen cyanide when chewed or crushed. Villagers grind cassava roots to make flour, which can then be processed to remove cyanide, but leaves are often eaten raw. The cyanide can cause a condition called konzo that permanently paralyses the legs. One study found that nine percent of Nigerians suffer some form of cyanide poisoning from eating cassava.

Because cassava is such an important crop at a time of less predictable rain, the researchers have identified an urgent need to develop varieties that produce less cyanide.



Bangladesh

Across Bangladesh millions of people are reliant on stable weather patterns for their food, livelihoods and safety. Approximately 63% of Bangladesh's labour force works in the agriculture and fishing sector. This means that even small changes in the climate can destroy the very lands and crops which provide both food and work for almost two thirds of the population.

As the annual monsoon rains are getting heavier and more unpredictable, communities are learning to be better prepared for when the floods come. They are gradually putting warning systems in place and strategies to ensure that the floods won't wipe out food supplies.

So what can we do? Firstly, we can take responsibility for reducing our own carbon footprint. We can also support international initiatives that work with communities to assist them to cope with environmental changes. These initiatives need to be well thought out. They must take into account potential social and environmental impacts to ensure that any steps taken to tackle climate change also support poverty reduction in an environmentally safe way.

For more information on the way climate change is affecting rural communities, visit the Oxfam website - <http://www.oxfam.org.au/climate-change>

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A million trees and counting

2011 is the International Year of Forests when the UN is asking us to think about and visit our forests, home to so many of the world's species.

Forests provide shelter to people and habitat to biodiversity; are a source of food, medicine and clean water; and play a vital role in maintaining a stable global climate and environment. All of these elements taken together reinforce the message that forests are vital to the survival and well-being of people everywhere, all 7 billion of us.

Did you know that it is estimated that 20% of the world's greenhouse gases come from forest destruction?

Carbon is trapped in trees, their roots and the soil and is released into the atmosphere when forests are destroyed.



So what are you, your TOS group and your community doing?

In one community in Australia, the local Council and environmental groups are working together on a **2 Million Trees** project. So far, over 1,300,000 trees have been planted around the city to create natural habitat and help support the city's biodiversity. The trees have been carefully selected to fit with existing habitat and they extend wildlife corridors as well as providing food and shelter for native animals. The community is confident that they will reach their aim of planting 2 million trees by the end of 2011. The main challenge is caring for all these little trees until they are established – and TOS members are helping.

For many years, members of the Brisbane TOS group in Australia have worked with their local environmental group and City Council on a project to re-vegetate an old industrial site along a creek. They have seen wonderful changes with the original waste-land now covered with trees, shrubs and native grasses, providing a home to a wide variety of birds and small animals.

Have you planted a tree this year?

You could check out what your local environmental groups are doing and join in some of their activities. It's an excellent way of networking and letting people know about the TOS.

Raise awareness of the importance of forests

One TOS group is organising a one-day seminar entitled, *Healing from the Forest*. They have invited guest speakers to present short talks or workshops. Topics include: Using Essential Oils from the Forest; Forests Help Heal Our Planet; and The Spiritual Dimension of Forests. After lunch, the day will conclude with a creative workshop, Exploring Our Personal Responses to the Forest, led by two artists.

Another TOS group has organised a public afternoon talk. They have invited an experienced speaker from a local conservation group to give an illustrated talk about how people can use forests in sustainable ways.



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Ditch meat and save the earth

We are often reminded that, for the good of the planet, each of us needs to reduce our carbon footprint. By now we all know that we can use less energy by switching off lights, by heating our homes to a lower temperature, by using our cars less and by eating food that is grown locally.

However, did you know that one of the quickest, simplest and most effective ways of helping our planet is to reduce the amount of meat we eat? Giving up meat for just one day a week can make a significant difference. It's estimated that even in countries with small populations like Australia, giving up meat for one day a week would save over six million tonnes of greenhouse gases in a year.



Why does giving up meat make a difference?

It is far more efficient to grow food to feed people directly. For every kilogram of feed a cow eats, and every 11,000 litres of water used, we get back just one burger. Producing one kilogram of beef takes over 50,000 litres of water. Compare that with the 1550 litres of water it takes to produce one kilogram of rice.

It's not just that cattle use enormous quantities of water and eat more food than they produce as meat. Livestock are also a major source of methane, which is as damaging a greenhouse gas as carbon dioxide. We're talking here of all animals raised for food – pigs, goats, hens, sheep, etc.

Scientists at the Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency estimated that cutting back on meat could wipe \$20 trillion from the cost of fighting climate change through decreasing greenhouse gases, creating carbon sinks in the form of unused farmland and by reducing the need for technologies such as 'clean coal'. (*New Scientist*, Feb. 2009)

What are the other benefits of eating less meat?

- **It can help us share resources more equitably.** It is generally agreed that the world can produce enough food for everyone. However, almost 50% of the world's cereals are being used for animal feed.
- **It helps animals.** Over 60 billion animals are reared for food every year worldwide. Animal welfare groups around the world have documented widespread cruelty towards animals used for food production. Eating less meat means that fewer animals suffer and are slaughtered.
- **It's good for our cost of living.** Vegetables, nuts and pulses generally cost less than meat so having less meat in our diet is likely to save us money.
- **It's good for our health.** A healthy diet is one that is abundant in plant-based foods. Studies show that reducing meat consumption often leads to decreases in heart disease, colon cancer, breast cancer and obesity.

When giving up meat for just one day a week can make this difference, imagine what you could achieve by reducing your consumption of meat even more!





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Help end live animal export from Australia

In May 2011, a joint investigation by two Australian peak animal welfare groups into the fate of cattle exported to Indonesia was made public.

Video of the horrific slaughtering practices in Indonesian abattoirs was shown on prime time television.

The evidence gathered by investigators from Animals Australia and the RSPCA showed cattle subjected to torture such as eye gouging, kicking, tail twisting, leg breaking, and arduous and prolonged killings with little skill and blunt knives.

[See the video](#) here and [download a fact sheet](#).



As a result of an immediate and overwhelming public outcry, the Australian Government placed a ban on live animal export to Indonesia until "the Government establishes sufficient safeguards to ensure there is verifiable and transparent supply chain assurance (of animal welfare) up to and including the point of slaughter for every consignment leaving Australia."



The Australian Government, however, lifted the suspension of live animal trade to Indonesia in July 2011, without any guarantee that animals will be treated with respect and care and that they will at least be stunned before slaughter. Given that this trade has been going on for more than eighteen years and that the cattle and meat industry report that they have been working with Indonesian slaughterhouses during this time to improve animal welfare conditions, it is difficult to believe that animal welfare standards will now be enforced.

Animal welfare groups within Australia as well as several independent Members of Parliament and the Australian Green Party are advocating for a total ban on live animal exports from Australia. This includes sending animals to the Middle East where slaughtering practices are as horrific as those in Indonesia.

Over the past three decades, more than 160 million animals have been sent from Australia to a grim fate in the live export trade. If you would like to support the campaign to end live animal export from Australia, please write to the Prime Minister of Australia, Julia Gillard and the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Senator Joe Ludwig, c/- Parliament House, Canberra, ACT 2600, Australia.

A [sample letter](#) is provided here, in Word format so you can alter it.

Alternatively, send the email letter on the campaign website to end this shocking treatment of animals: <http://www.banliveexport.com/>



TOS members visit the HPB Hostel at Adyar

In our last newsletter, George and Gailene Wester of Perth, Australia shared their photos of the information stands and sale stalls that are set up at the international convention of the TS at Adyar, Chennai in India every December to raise awareness of social issues and the TS's humanitarian service projects.

In this issue we publish the photos the Westers took at one of these projects, the HPB Hostel, which operates in Besant Gardens under the umbrella of the Olcott Education Society.



The hostel, named after H.P. Blavatsky, houses about 25 boys aged from 10 to 16 from poor, mostly fisher families. They are given free board and lodging and they attend the Olcott School. They are also given parental care by the Warden and general guidance in studies and activities. In addition to their academic program, their daily activities include yoga, meditation, exercise, games, prayer and listening to wholesome stories. The boys also do gardening work around the Hostel building.

On Christmas Eve 2010, a group of members visited the boys, bringing Christmas gifts for them.



Here we see (right to left) Dušan Zagar (Slovenia), Agnes Gaasemyr (Norway) and Blanka Blaj Borštnar (Slovenia) arriving at the hostel with the traditional decorations in the entrance way to welcome them.



(Right to left) Agnes, Dušan, his wife Breda and Gailene distribute presents, including stationery for the boys' studies.



The members from Slovenia also gave clothing to the boys, which we see them modelling happily here. The lady in red toward the left is Vijaya Ravindran, the boys' house mother.

The TOS members from Western Australia donated 4,000 rupees towards a new display pinup board for the interior of the Hostel (the board is now installed). They also gave the boys a small koala each.



Here we see George clipping a koala onto a boy's shirt.



On New Year's Eve, the same group returned to visit the boys, this time accompanied by Janet and Cameron Sri Ram from the USA. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves.



Cameron – front left – is a great grandson of N. Sri Ram, former International President of the TS. Shrivani Kumar – front right – is the son of house mother, Vijaya.



The box on the table here contains a Happy New Year cake – a tradition in the area – that was shared by all.

The next time you visit Adyar, consider visiting the boys at the HPB Hostel. You will meet them anyway since they volunteer their help at the international convention by distributing the daily bulletins to the delegates.

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Theosophical Order of Service International Newsletter

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They hold **Theosophical Tea Parties (the "Tea-and-coffeeal Society")** at TS HQ in London. Each meeting has a theme such as "countries we have lived in", but theosophy, life, the universe and everything are also discussed! Before or after the gathering, people are free to visit the TS Library which has an outstanding collection of books.



The next tea party will take place on October 26. Cornelia has been invited to show the video she has made of Adyar and to tell people about the International Headquarters.

Cornelia (photo on the right) is good at setting the relaxed and informal atmosphere that is a key to the success of the tea parties.

The last gathering had the Theosophical Order of Service itself as its theme, with the goal of interesting people in helping to establish the TOS better in London. Active TOS worker, Cornelia Crowther, came along and former TS General Secretary, Colin Price, was kind enough to come in and answer questions on Theosophy from the enquirers present. About 14 or 15 people turned up and the sum of £23.20 (US\$37) was collected in donations. Every bit helps!

TS HQ in London is a very beautiful place. The members warmly invite TS visitors from out of town to visit the building and attend one of their Tea-osophy parties.



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The starfish story

Once upon a time, there was a wise man who used to go to the ocean to do his writing. He had a habit of walking on the beach before he began his work.

One day, as he was walking along the shore, he looked down the beach and saw a human figure moving like a dancer. He smiled to himself at the thought of someone who would dance to the day, and so, he walked faster to catch up.

As he got closer, he noticed that the figure was that of a young man, and that what he was doing was not dancing at all. The young man was reaching down to the shore, picking up small objects and throwing them into the ocean.



He came closer still and called out, "Good morning. May I ask what it is that you are doing?"

The young man paused, looked up, and replied, "Throwing starfish into the ocean."

"I must ask, then, why are you throwing starfish into the ocean?" asked the somewhat startled wise man. To this, the young man replied, "The sun is up and the tide is going out. If I don't throw them in, they'll die." Upon hearing this, the wise man commented, "But, young man, do you not realise that there are miles and miles of beach and there are starfish along every mile? You can't possibly make a difference!"

At this, the young man bent down, picked up yet another starfish, and threw it back into the ocean. As it met the water, he said, "I made a difference to that one!"