

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN PORTLAND

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A Branch of the Theosophical Society in America

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SUNDAY AFTERNOON PUBLIC PROGRAMS

2010-2011 SEASON (Part 2, February - May)

Hours: 2:30 P.M. to 5:00 P.M. unless otherwise noted

All programs begin promptly at 3:00 P.M. unless otherwise noted

The door is open by 2:30 P.M. for your convenience

Please arrive early so as to avoid disrupting the presentation and others in the audience

The Enduring Tradition: 100 Years of Theosophy in Portland

The Theosophical Society in Portland will be celebrating its 100th anniversary in 2011! Our Lodge was chartered by the Theosophical Society in America on August 10, 1911.

A weekend seminar with national speakers and a celebration is scheduled for September 24-25, 2011. As details are finalized, information will be posted at the Lodge and on the national website at www.theosophical.org under the Membership/Local Groups/Oregon/Portland Branch tabs. Stay tuned!

Leading up to and following this important event, we will be featuring special presentations on some key figures in Theosophy, such as N. Sri Ram, Jinarajadasa, C. W. Leadbeater, Geoffrey Hodson, and Manly Hall. We are very excited about our Centennial and hope that you will join us for these programs.

Basic Concepts of Theosophy

Group Study. A number of our programs will be devoted to a basic concept of Theosophy presented in an informal format led by a branch member. As a group, we will study and discuss some of these influential concepts. All levels of interest are welcome.

February 6 **Basic Concepts of Theosophy – DHARMA – Group Study**

The concept of Dharma can be defined as duty, sometimes law, sometimes morality, and sometimes righteousness. As Annie Besant says in her book on the subject, "Morality is an individual thing and varies with the dharma of the individual....Hence, what is right for one is wrong for another. There is nothing absolute in a conditioned universe." And, as Krishna said in the Bhagavad Gita, "Better is one's own Dharma, though destitute of merit, than the well executed Dharma of another ...". In light of the complexity of the present world situation with many individuals, nations and religions struggling to co-exist, our discussion will address the absolute and relative levels of Dharma, from the perspective of the individual to the state.

February 13 **NEOPYTHAGOREAN NUMBER THEORY AS SEEN IN THE HISTORICAL TAROT** - *Michael S. Howard*

One source for the meanings of numbers is ancient Neopythagoreanism, specifically a text first known in 15th century Italy, on the first ten numbers. It is also a theory about the evolution of spirit in and beyond the cosmos. This text, Mike contends, shaped the design of at least one 15th century tarot deck, which also happens to be the source for 40% of the number cards in the Rider-Waite deck. Later the same text influenced fortune-telling as done with both regular and tarot decks. Mike will present the essence of the theory, as found in this ancient text and a couple others, with examples from the historical tarot, and places to go to read more.

Michael S. Howard, Ph.D. graduated from Reed College and has Ph.D.'s from Cornell University (philosophy) and Pacifica Graduate Institute (clinical psychology). He has taught at the State University of New York at Albany and Portland State University. He is a long-time member of the Queen of Heaven Gnostic Church in Portland, where he gives occasional slide presentations on spiritual themes. He is employed as a mental health professional.

February 20 **DAILY LIFE AS SPIRITUAL PRACTICE – a 35-minute video with Ravi Ravindra**

We cannot escape from daily life. And living the spiritual life is not something we do to escape from the routine and boredom of everyday life. Everyday life is also full of challenges and struggles. Ravi Ravindra gives a reflective inquiry into the question of how it is possible for daily life to become an aid to the spiritual life rather

than an obstacle to it. He also addresses the common failing of procrastination. Why do we so often postpone a serious attempt at living the spiritual life? We often say we will begin tomorrow, but tomorrow may not come. If not now, when? There may not be a better time than now to begin.

Ravi Ravindra was born in India and received his B.S. and a Master of Technology from the Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur. He then obtained a Master of Science and a Ph.D. in physics from the University of Toronto and a Master of Arts in philosophy from Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia, Canada.

February 27 **THE COMMON DENOMINATOR: THEOSOPHY AND SOME VERY FAMOUS PEOPLE**— *Lee Haga*

What is one thing that Thomas Edison, Henry Ford, Maria Montessori, Piet Mondrian, Scriabin, and many other notables all have in common? At some point in their lives, they each became Theosophists. Why were they attracted to this intellectual, yet spiritual path, and how did Theosophy influence their discoveries and pursuits in their various professions?

Lee Haga, an artist and long-time member of the Portland Lodge of the Theosophical Society, will briefly survey their accomplishments in the light of various theosophical concepts and principles which may have guided them in their remarkable lives.

March 6 **Basic Concepts of Theosophy – LIFE AFTER DEATH - Group Study**

Theosophy holds that our real self is no more dead after we leave our physical body than it was before death. And like some of the world's major religions, Theosophy talks about a heaven world or Devachan. In today's study group, we will discuss how Theosophy explains the process of dying and entering into life after death in terms of man's "higher" bodies or fields.

March 20 **A BIOGRAPHY OF MANLY PALMER HALL – Leslie Rainey**

Manly Palmer Hall, author of *The Secret Teachings of All Ages* when he was 27, became a prolific writer and speaker on ancient philosophies, mysticism and magic. A world-renowned luminary and occult scholar of the 20th century, he founded the Philosophical Research Society in Los Angeles. This lecture will cover his works, his most interesting life and the controversy surrounding his death.

Leslie Rainey is the librarian of the Portland Lodge and a student of Theosophy.

March 27 **KARMA, REINCARNATION AND ASTROLOGY – Judith Hill**

The great psychic-prophet Edgar Cayce often described distinct astrological influences when discussing reincarnation and karma. Does the birth chart really say anything about our past lives, and if so, how? Many of our talents, strengths, weaknesses and fears appear to be inborn. If these are the fruit of past lives, then how is this related to our present astrological birth chart? Join life-time astrologer Judith Hill for one of her favorite subjects.

Judith Hill is an award winning author of eight books, internationally published researcher and has performed over 6000 personal astrological readings in her life time as a consulting astrologer. Her talks are intriguing, fascinating and fact filled.

April 3 **Basic Concepts of Theosophy – MEDITATION - Group Study**

It has been said that prayer is when we talk to God, and meditation is when God talks to us. By quieting the "monkey mind," the lower mind that flits constantly between details and attachments of our daily lives, we can strengthen the higher mind to help us realize our true spiritual being. A steady practice of meditation can increasingly shift our focus from the physical plane to the higher planes to help us achieve this Realization. A discussion of various types and importance of meditation will be beneficial for neophytes and experienced meditators alike.

April 10 **SPIRITUAL CINEMA - three short videos followed by group discussion**

Out of Proportion: A short film which reminds us that we need to keep our emotions in balance and face our fears, or our lives are going to get out of proportion.

In God We Trust: In this incredibly clever short film on the afterlife, Karma points out how to work the system, as Robert breaks all the rules.

Career Suicide: Frustrated in life, a frazzled young woman finds no relief in the afterlife. After accidentally falling on a pair of scissors, Sandy finds herself trapped in corporate purgatory where working your way up the ladder just may be the only way out. In this light-hearted, comedic short film, we find that the struggle to discover our true potential is not just an issue during our lifetime - it's an issue after life, too.

April 17 **THE MYSTERIOUS COUNT OF SAINT GERMAIN, THE WESTERN ESOTERIC TRADITION AND THE ALCHEMY OF IMMORTALITY – Steve Herrington**

Just who is the Count of Saint Germain - the mysterious alchemist initiate who first made himself known in pre-revolutionary France? Was he a genius or a fraud, an 'ascended master' or even a vampire? Does he really live forever and if so where is he today? Was he really the reincarnation of Sir Francis Bacon or Christopher Columbus – or even a great priest king from Atlantis or an even earlier civilization?

Acting as a kind of flamboyant ambassador to the French royal court Saint Germain earned a reputation as a talented linguist, historian, perfumist, swordsman and all-around brilliant and entertaining polymath – but was he also secretly the founder of modern Freemasonry, the father of Rosicrucianism, head of the neo-Templars, initiator of Cagliostro, and the author of Shakespeare? Did he have an important role in the founding Theosophy, as well as the Findhorn ecovillage, and even the United States of America? Was Saint Germain good buddies with Elizabeth Claire Prophet and 'Godfre Ray King' and is he appearing covertly in modern films and television programs? Is the Count ultimately a great World savior or the head of the Illuminati?

We'll look at evidence for the Count of Saint Germain's life and 'lives' as well as the secrets of alchemy he had apparently mastered and explore some of the labyrinthine mysteries of the esoteric initiatory text *The Most Holy Trinosophia* which he allegedly wrote. Join us for an in-depth examination of this most enigmatic of esoteric figures who's life appears to intertwine all throughout the hidden corridors of Western history.

Steve Herrington is a local Portland artist, author, and student of multicultural esoteric traditions.

April 24 **Library closed for Easter.**

May 1 **Basic Concepts of Theosophy – POWER OF THOUGHT - Group Study**

An early member of the Theosophical Society wrote that thought "is a power possessed by all, but intelligently used as yet by few." Thought by itself can be used positively or negatively and is one of the ways we generate karma. Today's group study discussion will center on the nature and effects of thought.

May 15 **A BIOGRAPHY OF C. W. LEADBEATER – Steven Marshall**

Much of the biographical material available on Charles W. Leadbeater was reported and written by those who knew him least and appreciated him least. I would like to present the reports of those who knew him best and appreciated him best. I will present photos illustrating the stages of his unfolding spiritual life with the people that he influenced and those who influenced him. Without knowing the people that surrounded him, it is nearly impossible to give a context for learning who C.W. Leadbeater was as a person, a Theosophist and a servant of the Masters. Perhaps, through learning about him as a devotee on the path, we can learn more about ourselves.

Steven Marshall, an ordained priest of the Ecclesia Gnostica and rector of the Queen of Heaven Gnostic Church, has been a member of the Theosophical Society since 2001 and a student of H. P. Blavatsky's *The Secret Doctrine* since childhood. Throughout his life he has immersed himself in learning every esoteric subject presented in her seminal work. A baccalaureate degree in Psychology and a background in Jungian studies has given him a distinctly psychological approach to the occult sciences. He has been published in the *Golden Dawn Journal* Vol. 1 and Vol. 2. He has lectured for the Portland Gnostic Society since 1982.

May 22 **A BIOGRAPHY OF C. JINARAJADASA - Samuel Bell-Stalnaker**

Curuppumullage Jinarajadasa was the fourth International President of the Theosophical Society, serving in that capacity from 1946 until his death in 1953. Educated at Cambridge University in England, he spoke several languages fluently and had a strong knowledge of, and interest in, natural science. The latter interest was reflected in some of his theosophical books, including his best-known work, *First Principles of Theosophy*. Today's speaker will outline the biography of C. Jinarajadasa's life and work and explore his views on Theosophy. (Continued on reverse page.)

Samuel Bell-Stalnaker is an active member of the Portland Lodge of the Theosophical Society and has a Bachelor's degree in arts and sciences from Portland State University.

This is the end of the second half of this season's programs. The program for next fall will be distributed in late summer. A contribution of \$5.00 is appreciated. An informal social hour follows all presentations.

Your donations are critical to funding our Sunday public program series. We turn no one away for lack of funds, yet ask that you be as generous as you can be with your donations. Thank you.

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Telephone: 503-223-6861

LIBRARY HOURS:

Fridays 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Sundays 2:00 - 5:00 p.m.

(but closed from 3:00 - 4:00 p.m. during Sunday public programs)

The library will be closed on Sundays following major holidays.

◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ We welcome book donations. ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆

We have new and used books for sale. Please check with our librarian

The Theosophical World View

The Theosophical Society, while reserving for each member full freedom to interpret those teachings known as theosophy, is dedicated to preserving and realizing the ageless wisdom, which embodies both a world view and a vision of human self-transformation.

This tradition is founded upon certain *fundamental propositions*:

Every existent being—from atom to galaxy—is rooted in the same universal, life-creating Reality. This Reality is all-pervasive, but it can never be summed up in its parts, since it transcends all its expressions. It reveals itself in the purposeful, ordered, and meaningful processes of nature as well as in the deepest recesses of the mind and spirit.

Recognition of the unique value of every living being expresses itself in reverence for life, compassion for all, sympathy with the need of all individuals to find truth for themselves, and respect for all religious traditions. The ways in which these ideals become realities in individual life are both the privileged choice and the responsible act of every human being.

Central to the concerns of theosophy is the *desire to promote understanding and brotherhood* among people of all races, nationalities, philosophies, and religions. Therefore, all people, whatever their race, creed, sex, caste, or color, are invited to participate equally in the life and work of the Society. *The Theosophical Society imposes no dogmas*, but points toward the source of unity beyond all differences. *Devotion to truth, love for all living beings, and commitment to a life of active altruism* are the marks of the true theosophist.