

Candela



Newsletter of the Swedenborg Association of Australia Inc

Organisational Details are provided on the next page

November 2015

ISSUE 82



May the warmth and
of the ^{joy} Christmas
Season
remain with you
throughout
the coming year.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Friends,

It's a pleasure to give you my first message as President and welcome you to the pages of this issue of Candela. It's my grandson's sixth birthday tomorrow and I have a special gift for him, a book about the moths of Australia. It's full of pictures of moths, drawn in colour or photographed life size, and I was impressed that our largest moth is about the size of an adult open hand! I am giving him this book because a few weeks ago a moth settled on him and stayed there and he enjoyed a few hours friendship with it.

Moths – and most insects – have a 'rest' period as a chrysalis over about two weeks leading to the moth's emergence from the tough case it made around itself. There is a complete transformation from the soft grub to the delicate structure of the moth. It was only about twenty years ago that scientists worked out exactly what goes on during this middle-life period of metamorphosis. The cased grub
* * continued on page 2 * *

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Two copies of this Newsletter are being sent to members as usual, the second for giving away.

Next Issue – February 2015

There is a major article about Swedenborg in this edition and some news from the committee. It would be great if you could write about your personal journey with Swedenborg for the next issue. Please send me contributions by **28th January**

Email to ruth@duckworth.me or post to the registered office. *Ruth*

Please Note: The views expressed in this Newsletter are those of each contributor and do not necessarily reflect any particular position of the Swedenborg Association of Australia or its Committee.



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Membership of the Swedenborg Association of Australia Inc. is open to anyone who wishes to pursue an interest in Swedenborg, the man, his science and his spiritual teachings.

For details on how to join, call (02) 9888 1066 or browse www.swedenborg.com.au, go to 'Organisation' in the menu and click on 'Membership.'

** * continued from page 1 * **

secretes enzymes and digests itself and gradually forms new substances which create the utterly different moth with its wings, antennae, legs and furry coat. It pushes and strains, almost like childbirth, until the casing splits, and out it comes and extends its wings. There is an old tale of a man who watched this effort and felt sorry for the hatching insect. He prised off the top end of the case. Out came the moth but it never spread its wings nor ever flew, because the struggle to come out is intended for blood to pump and muscles to strengthen.

This is a perfect illustration of spiritual growth and regeneration. This life we're now living is chrysalis-like, in which we give up gobbling everything we come across for our own self-gratification and through whatever it takes – wake-up calls, self-examination, repentance and the will to change – we are gradually transformed. This asks us to put in the



work and go through the trials of 'breakthrough'. It doesn't just 'happen'.

Unlike gorgeous butterflies, moths don't have a great reputation. Even the name 'moth' has a dowdiness about it, and by and large they're brown and uninteresting. But their fame is in the havoc they create in the pantry and the wardrobe. Jesus Christ described the ruination of hoarding worldly treasure 'where moth and rust corrupt' rather than treasure in heaven 'where neither moth nor rust corrupt'. Moths by and large are also night flyers, which seems to picture how life often looks to us rather than how it truly is. As Paul says, 'Now I see through a glass darkly, but then, face to face.'

But I want to put in a good word for these underrated nocturnal beings. Switch on your porch light and in only a few minutes the moths will come by the dozen, attracted to the light, from out of their darkness. I wonder why moths are drawn to the light – because there may be food there? Is it the chance of making a date with a pretty little moth? I don't think so. Does the light infuriate them? Their behaviour around it doesn't look as if it is bothering them. The oddity is that it draws them, when normally they search for darkness to be in. How strange!

Spiritual life is about being attracted to the Light, to what is true and real and illuminating for us. You hear a truth and you know its place and value. But this is only one half of it because the

purpose of any truth is to help you go and use it for good, in living for the sake of others, doing it for its own sake. Look at your porch light at dawn. The moths aren't still there and you won't see any carcasses on the ground. The moths have gone. They drank in the light and have flown away; taking its empowerment with them, back into the shades they usually dwell in. So may we.

With warm wishes

Julian

(image: Dr John Brackenbury / Science Photo Library)



Afterlife Conference

Melbourne 29th – 31st January
(Friday to Sunday) 2016.

We enjoyed our experience with the first Afterlife Conference in Sydney, so we will be continuing our presence at the Melbourne Conference. There are many benefits in attending. Many of the people attending would know of Swedenborg. This is one of the ideal places to share what we have to offer. We will be displaying various books/CDs/DVDs on the Afterlife for sale. The participants will receive a complimentary book 'Awaken from death' so that they can appreciate some of Swedenborg's insights in their own time. It is a wonderful opportunity to network with people having similar interests. And we will be promoting a greater understanding of the Afterlife via their Facebook Page. If you wish to find out more, their website is

<http://www.afterlifeexplorers.com.au/>

We have a prominent position on the Exhibitor's Page of their website, which is an excellent way of letting people know about the work of the Swedenborg Association. This is what people will read there:

The Swedenborg Association of Australia is a group of individuals who seek to promote, in themselves and in others, an awareness, appreciation and application of the intellectual and spiritual riches that Emanuel Swedenborg revealed.

Kenneth Ring, Author and Founder of the International Association for Near Death Studies said of Swedenborg: "People who have had near-death experiences peek through the door of the afterlife, but Swedenborg explored the whole house." The Swedenborg Association can help interested seekers to explore, understand and apply Swedenborg's teachings through our familiarity with his work. We are happy to recommend books, talks, groups and videos dealing with many aspects of the Afterlife. We enjoy exploring and sharing our understanding of the spiritual realms and how it influences us in our daily life.

Swedenborg's view of Creation, the purpose of our lives, the different levels in our being and so on, helps us to understand ourselves better and undergo a spiritual transformation. So why not connect with us and see what benefits are available.

The program is diverse with many interesting speakers and topics. If you decide to attend please let the organizers know how you found out about it, and come and say hello to the people at the SAA exhibitor's table.

Michael Chester

Secretary's Report

By Alan Hudson

Just a brief introduction, I'm Allan Hudson the new secretary of the SAA. I have been retired from my profession as a Naturopath, Acupuncturist and Massage therapist for around 3 years. I worked at Nature Care College for over 25 years as a clinician, teacher, course development, clinic manager, Faculty Head for Tactile Therapies and Continuing Education. The role of secretary at SAA was not planned but just seemed to happen. Hopefully I can be of use to the association and the membership.

I have taken over from Jan Primrose who stepped down at the AGM. The SAA would like to thank Jan for her excellent work as secretary. Although Jan may have resigned from her position on the committee we are sure her involvement with the work of association will continue.

The new committee voted in at the AGM consists of:

Julian Duckworth	President
Michael Chester	Treasurer/Public Officer
Allan Hudson	Secretary
Jennifer Danckert	
Joe Vandermeer	
Carl Sarelius	
Wayne Kasmar	

Membership

We extend a warm welcome to our new members which also includes myself

Allan Hudson

Penelope Starr

Jonathan Bryce

Currently the SAA has 92 members



SWEDENBORG, AFTERLIFE WITNESS

By Joe Vandermeer

Columbus of the Afterlife

In 1492, Italian navigator Christopher Columbus set sail on Spain's behalf with the aim of finding a westward route to South East Asia, countries then known collectively as the 'Indies'. On his voyage he unwittingly bumped into the Antilles, mistakenly naming it the "West Indies". Columbus was unaware of the immensity of the place he had discovered. Yet his Italian successor Amerigo Vespucci saw at once that the width of the river mouths could only flow from a vast continent and realised that an entirely new continent had been discovered. He promptly announced this to the press, hence America was named after him rather than being called Columbia after his countryman. This was how the New World was found and named.

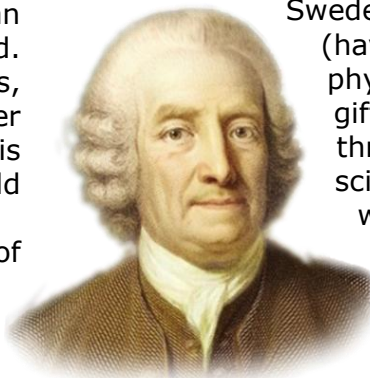


To celebrate the 400th anniversary of Columbus landing in the Americas, a world expo was constructed in Chicago. The World Columbian Exposition of 1893 was designed by architects Daniel H. Burnham and John W. Root, pioneers of the skyscraper. The event was dubbed the Great White City due to its white-washed edifices, laid out like a heavenly city on earth. Burnham and Root's design and



Burnham's subsequent work incorporated representations of the afterlife as described in the writings of Swedish scientist and seer Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772).

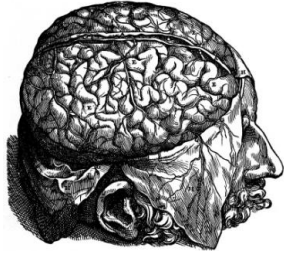
The Chicago event was a showcase for the latest technologies of the world, such as ice cream, the escalator, the Ferris wheel and alternating current power lighting up the streets. Many countries came to present their architecture and culture. Such a unique gathering of countries gave lawyer Charles Bonney the idea to convene a meeting of the world's religions at the expo site. This became the first *World Parliament of Religions*. Bonney was another influential person who was familiar with the afterlife explorations of Swedenborg whose writings promote a universalism across spiritual paths.



Swedenborg was a polymath (having studied mathematics, physics and chemistry) and gifted scientist renowned throughout Europe. As scientist he originally set out with an aim to discover the nature of the soul by delving into the sciences of his day. He was a very practical man who spoke many languages, lodged with craftsmen to learn their techniques and became experienced in many fields. He assisted the king of Sweden, and as member of the Swedish parliament, Swedenborg oversaw the country's mining operations. He wrote about his observations and deductions, whether they be about metallurgy, magnetism, biology, or on practical problems and inventions. He is credited by the Smithsonian as being the first person to design an aeroplane that can actually fly. He built himself a microscope and telescope, designed a musical instrument, and published a magazine on inventions. He visited famous scientist and astronomers like Royal Society members Sir Edmond Halley and John Flamsteed. Swedenborg correctly deduced the formative origins of the stars and planets now known as the nebular theory (the same theory was later echoed by Pierre-Simon Laplace).



In Swedenborg's primary search for the soul, he considered the body an expression of the soul and therefore suspected the body may hold vital clues to the soul's structure. So he embarked on a thorough study of anatomy. During that study he discovered the function of the pituitary, the communication between the brain hemispheres, and many other body and brain functions besides. Yet even this remained inadequate evidence for the soul he was seeking. Next he delved into psychology (not yet a separate discipline in his day), noting and analysing his dreams and states between sleeping and waking. This was a period of intense psychological growth for him. Finally, he embarked on mastery of Hebrew to see what the Bible might have to say about the soul.



Like the unexpected arrival on new shores by Columbus while on a search for a different place, Swedenborg's life too changed abruptly while visiting London in 1745. He had been searching for new insights into the nature of the soul, but abruptly hit land somewhere different than expected. That year in London he experienced a major psychic vision in which he encountered the Divine Creator who granted him the ability to experience and explore the afterlife and talk to people there. All this so that he might document first-hand experiences about that world and reveal the truth about the reality of the afterlife. He was granted an 'access all areas' pass to the country of Spirit (if I might call the afterlife that).

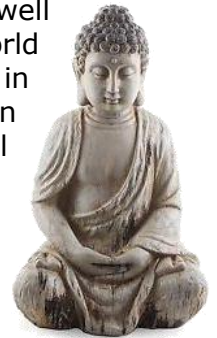
This unexpected and unusual visionary capacity stayed with him for the remainder of his life, while he continued to explore sacred writings and illuminate their forgotten meanings, as if polishing an antique gold lamp to restore it to its former value. What he experienced in the country of Spirit was a guided illustration of the meaning of those scriptures and to enable him to give a complete account of the afterlife's layout, laws and operations, and inhabitants and their lives. He was now also



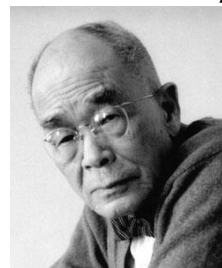
given answers to all that he had sought through his previous scientific endeavours in the foregoing decades.

Buddha of the North

Zen Buddhism was well represented at the 1893 World Parliament of Religions in Chicago. Zen master Soyen Shaku met the scholar Paul Carus there as Carus happened to be looking for someone to help translate some important Buddhist texts into English. Shaku recommended one of his best students, D. T. Suzuki.



Suzuki came to live and study for some years with Carus while translating Eastern spiritual literature from ancient Chinese for publication in the West and also then began his *Outlines of Mahayana Buddhism*. Suzuki became one of the greatest exponents of Zen and Mahayana Buddhism in the West.



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While in the USA, Suzuki met Buddhist scholar Beatrice Lane who had studied philosophy and religion. Her teacher had been William James, who, like his father Henry James Sr, was well versed in Swedenborg's writings. Lane and Suzuki married four years later.

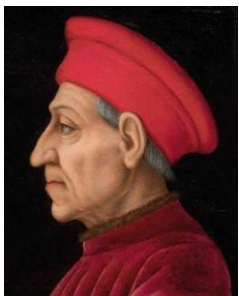
Suzuki saw many similarities between the teachings of the Buddha and Swedenborg. This led to his book entitled *Swedenborg, Buddha of the North*. Both teachers have overlapping insights about fulfilling our potential, on the necessity of cultivating wisdom which combats egotism, on the importance of expressing love through active service to others and engaging with this world. They also both teach that people of any religion can end up in heaven so long as they acknowledge a Divine Being and faithfully practice their religion with a focus on living a good and useful life.



Suzuki sums up Swedenborg as: "Theological revolutionary, traveller of heaven and hell,... great king of the mystical realm, seer unique throughout history,... clear-minded scientist,... all these make Swedenborg".

Plato of the Afterlife

The Ottoman Turks conquered Constantinople in 1453 causing Gemistus Pletho, an influential Greek-speaking educator, to flee to Western Europe where he was welcomed with open arms by founder of the Renaissance Cosimo de' Medici of Florence. Pletho was a Neoplatonic philosopher remembered for pioneering the revival of Greek learning in Europe and so reintroducing Plato's ideas. Pletho persuaded Cosimo to create a new Platonic Academy, with Marsilio Ficino at its helm. Ficino subsequently translated all of Plato's works and the Enneads of Plotinus and other important Neoplatonist works from Greek into Latin.



This reinfusion of Greek language and thereby of Greek thought into Western Europe ultimately reached Erasmus, whose works on the task of Greek and Latin translation eventually led to the production of

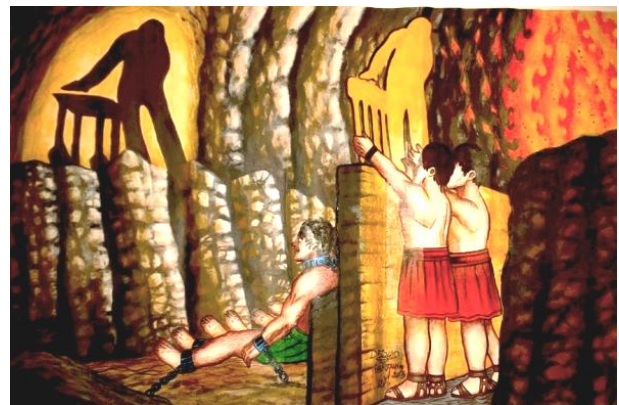
various Bible translations into a more common language so that people other than the scholarly classes could benefit. Printing such Bible translations opened the floodgates of knowledge to the masses while predictably upsetting several vested interests of church and state who scrupulously governed (and profited from) authorised Bible interpretations.

As a result of the migration out of Constantinople, Neoplatonist interests in Europe grew in strength as people saw Plato's ideas as being able to liberate the stuffy intellectual and political climate of the time. Plato offers a fitting illustration for the difficulty of appreciating the afterlife by those who have not been privileged to enter

its borders personally in a near death experience.

His *Allegory of the Cave* is the story of a group of people chained to a cave wall their whole life, unable to turn their heads. The blank wall they face displays shadows from things passing behind them as those things are lit by the bright fire at the rear of the cave. They start giving names to the various shadows. The shadows are as close as these prisoners get to seeing reality. A 'philosopher' (prisoner set free from the cave) begins to understand that the shadows on the cave wall don't make up reality at all, because he can perceive the true form of reality instead of seeing only the shadows that the prisoners can see.

The chains represent our senses which respond to forms of things in the world outside. The cave is our world, the fire our



sun. The path of the freed prisoner is our soul's path to enlightenment. Our world of sight is our intellect's world of opinions, which are at the bottom of the ladder of knowledge. Our world of inner sight is a higher world of understanding which allows us to 'see' things which go beyond natural things, such as a perfect circle (that's also where mathematical ideas live). These higher realities are abstract realities based on the knowledge that comes from reasoning. And abstract reality eventually leads us to understand the forms and the ideals of all things (the world outside the cave).

Swedenborg too regards the chief difficulty as our love and attachment of the world (and of ourselves in it), which prevents us from reaching higher levels of understanding in us. The rational mind needs to be exercised in us if we are ever to become open to a full appreciation of the afterlife and its language and operations.



The rational mind deals with abstracts, concepts which relate to the things experienced by the senses but which are at the same time not of the senses and removed from them. Concepts are the 'objects' of the mind ('mind' is by Swedenborg equated with our spirit). Opening up to these higher levels of thought is part of our spiritual growth.

As Georges Ivanovich Gurdjieff, teacher of esoteric wisdom once said, if we want to escape from the prison of self we must first realise that we are in prison. Then we must make significant efforts and sacrifices and work with others in order to tunnel under the wall so as to escape. And we are incapable of succeeding in that unless we accept the help of those who have escaped before, because only experienced escapees can say in what way escape is possible or send tools, files and other necessary equipment.

Escape from being chained to a purely outer and sensory world reality is an important idea in Plato's allegory. It suggests another reality, that of the country of Spirit, which Swedenborg explored and described so thoroughly.

Rosetta Stone of the Language of Spirit



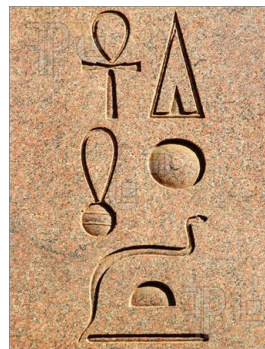
When Gemistus Pletho brought an influx of interest in Greek literature from the East, he reawakened the wisdom of ancient Greek culture for a Renaissance Europe. So too, Swedenborg, in his thorough search of Biblical texts through the lens of its original

Hebrew was given through his spiritual experience to see an ancient meaning, which became, due to it having been lost, also a new meaning.

Swedenborg found that the country of Spirit is populated only with people who have first lived a planetary life. The inner history of all people who have ever lived has been retained in the afterlife. The earliest people were in direct personal and constant communication with that afterlife. Since they were given knowledge whenever they needed it, they never felt scarcity or lack.

They felt and trusted the ongoing providence of the one Divine Creator. These were the people of the Golden Age of most ancient times, who lived a life of goodness and usefulness and of friendship with their fellow beings regardless of differences of opinions that may have existed. These people are referred to as angelic.

The language these early people - who are now in the afterlife - understood was a language of their inner nature, of their soul, their spirit. This language was dream-like and consisted of a representation of external and natural things to illustrate spiritual principles indicating how to live. Swedenborg calls these representational soul language 'correspondences'. For example, the sun emits light and heat. Its light illuminates our environment so that we can see the things in it with our eyes so that we might understand it. The heat provides warmth, which provides a feeling of comfort and helps seeds to grow towards the soil surface and then upward into the sky toward the sun. The sun's light 'corresponds' to truths (knowledges) that we can understand while the sun's warmth 'corresponds' to the good that it provides that we can feel and experience.



When the ancient Egyptians wrote their hieroglyphs, their pictorial writing often expressed itself in such correspondences. As people became more intrigued and preoccupied by the world and worldly things and possessions, status

and egotism, the early knowledge left them, although they still exercised kindness toward each other. To retain the knowledge now required symbols or representations, reminders in the form of rituals and ritual objects, architecture, sculpture and art. The 'flood' refers to a period of history when people lost contact with the charitable kindness toward their neighbour and would do them harm if their knowledge or belief disagreed with their own. A love of control and dominating others and worldly things set in, as well as a growing love of possessions. This is the Representative period of people because they had



representations. Over time however, even these representational things attracted false beliefs and false interpretations, and they became the objects of superstition and magic, or symbols of personal power and wishes for personal power.

Knowledge and understanding of the Egyptian hieroglyphs faded and was lost. More recent people puzzled over their meaning, mostly in vain. Until 1799 when a soldier in Napoleon's expedition to Egypt found a large stone near the town of Rosetta which was inscribed with a decree from King Ptolemy V (196 BC) who lived during the Greek reign of Egypt and wanted to make his decree known to all people and therefore commanded several stone stelae in the three languages which were then still in use. The newest of the three languages is Ancient Greek which we are now still familiar with, the oldest is Ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs, and the middle section was in the transitory language between them called Demotic script.

This gave translators a key or bridge linking modern word meanings back to the old language of the hieroglyphs that they were written in. All the extensive knowledge we have today of the ancient Egyptian language has grown from the clues provided on a single stone. Our knowledge of their hieroglyphs gives us a window into their culture, practices and thinking, which has the potential to influence our thinking (just as happened when Greek language influenced European thought at the birth of the Renaissance).

In the same way Swedenborg's extensive writings on the ancient and sacred language of correspondences revealed to him provide a wonderful key to a better understanding of sacred ancient texts including the Bible, but also helps us to make deeper sense of mythology, even of some fairytales, and of our dreams. In this way, Swedenborg has served us as a Rosetta Stone to uncover the language of our spirit.

Afterlife Touchstone

Swedenborg met many who had lived before him and died to go to the afterlife. Some he spoke with in the country of Spirit for only a few hours or days, but some he conversed with for years. He even met and

talked with such famous people as Aristotle, Isaac Newton, as well as Martin Luther. What Swedenborg wrote is vast in its detail and profound in its quality. His



treatment of the country of Spirit remains consistent and coherent across the decades of his explorations. For me this dismisses any notion that he was tapping into self-generated fantasies, as

these often become inconsistent over such long periods of time. Swedenborg experienced considerable personal hardship and put in an enormous effort to pursue his role as explorer of the afterlife. He demonstrated courage and a willingness to stop if he felt he was not on the right path. Some of his earliest works were stopped by him despite considerable effort he had already put into it. His earliest works he published anonymously, he paid for much of the publishing using his own funds, and gave away many copies of his works. Not the sign of a praise-seeking egotist. The powerful accounts of Swedenborg's writing has influenced a considerable number of bright minds who came after him, who read his works before making significant contributions of their own to society. But more on that below.

Eyewitness Account

Before the birth of the internet, smartphones and Twitter, many families used to gather around the television set to absorb the Eyewitness News.

What does the perspective of an eyewitness add to a news report? A person on the scene helps highlight the reality of a described situation, it becomes more real and personal, more believable. The viewer vicariously sees the event through the eyes of the witness bringing the action closer. The next best thing to seeing it for yourself.

Before I travel to a new country, I like to find travel brochures and books to read written by those who have been there. Its history, its culture, language, habits and customs, festivals and highlights, its beauty and any places to avoid. I trawl the internet for advice and travel stories, and ask my





friends who went there about their personal experiences and impressions. These preliminary activities help me to be better prepared to get the most out of my planned trip and helps to prioritise the most important destinations and activities, as well as reduces the likelihood of unwanted surprises. Lastly, Finally, I'll visit my travel agent to help me work out how to get there and how to get around upon arriving, settle the dates and flights and assess costs, luggage limits, immunisations, accommodation, customs requirements and passport and visa needs.

Eyewitness accounts and experienced travel guides are a useful source of information when assessing and preparing for a new journey. So seeking them out also makes sense for me when preparing to visit the country of Spirit. Not having yet been over there but being certain that one day I will go, I interviewed a number of people who've had Near Death Experiences (NDEs) and read and watched further accounts from survivors of a period of clinical death.

The difficulty with this country of Spirit is that there are not many extensive maps available to us of what to expect there, although there are quite a number of 'maps' describing the various ways there: yoga, the eightfold path, the gospels, the path to Jannah, the Sufi teachings of the poet Rumi, etc.

I found a very comprehensive and useful map describing much of Spirit country and the roads to it in the writings of 17th Century scientist and seer Emanuel Swedenborg, one of the handful of men whose IQ is estimated to have exceeded 200 and who influenced many famous minds like Carl Jung, Goethe, Emerson, Dostoevsky, William Blake, Helen Keller, Australian prime minister Alfred Deakin, Coleridge, Jorge Luis Borges, Arthur Conan Doyle, Henry James, Dr Eben Alexander, Franklin D. Roosevelt, the composer Strindberg, Abraham Lincoln, and many more.

Swedenborg was supervisor of mining in Sweden and a member of the Swedish parliament. His life-long search for the nature and seat of our soul took him on a thorough analysis of the natural world. His naturalist work was famed throughout

Europe. He followed this with a comprehensive look at the anatomy of the human body (making several ground-breaking discoveries like the function of the pituitary). He then took note of his psychological experiences, noting and interpreting his dreams, before embarking on an in-depth study of sacred scriptures for further insight.



Finally, Swedenborg reports that his inner eyes were opened to the world of Spirit and he was led on an experiential tour of it by the Divine, a sort of double vision. The people he spoke with over there had all once lived a planetary life like us. This tour took up the remainder of Swedenborg's long life during which, like a true scientist, he documented his unusual experiences so that others may benefit. His writings were so treasured that they were sent to Australia on the First Fleet. The grand tour of the spirit world he undertook taught him much about the purpose of our natural human life, besides learning how to prepare for the full enjoyment of the afterlife.

"People who have had near-death experiences peek through the door of the after-life, but Swedenborg explored the whole house." - Dr Kenneth Ring, author of *Life After Death* (co-founder and Past President of IANDS)

One of the reasons that Swedenborg's account of the afterlife is valuable is because it is presented directly from his own pen from a single point of view of the entire afterlife realm as he experienced it. His 'map' is therefore extensive and thorough and has only one legend for interpreting his tour experiences using the language of the spirit world, namely the language of *correspondences*. Swedenborg did not rely on conveying his experiences through discipleship or organisations but through the press. He himself wrote out every word for



the printers and personally supervised much of the printing efforts. We find many writings about the afterlife by others in a single work often originate from several historical periods from multiple points of view which can vary widely in their geographic and cultural backgrounds (the Tibetan Book of the Dead and Egyptian Book of the Dead come to mind). Swedenborg's accounts are a marvel of detail of the numerous experiences given to him to illustrate aspects of life as a spirit. His whole body of writings is extensive, giving us plenty of opportunity to assess their sanity and coherence, showing they present a very consistent and sane account of the spirit realm.

"I have been permitted to speak with almost all whom I had ever known in the life of the body; with some for hours, with others for weeks and months, and with others for years, and this principally in order that I might have proof, and that I might testify it." - Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell* 437

I came from a mainstream European spiritual background, from which I understood spiritual life to be at a rather pedestrian pace, restful but without much variety. Instead, Swedenborg paints the picture of a place which is very dynamic, vibrant and fully alive, very much like our own natural world with lots of variety. People are full of the joy of doing things they probably already loved doing when they lived in their natural body, as they continue using similar skills as before to provide uses and benefits to the whole community there.

Swedenborg mentions that people's place of residence in the afterlife is based on the quality of their internal states and intentions, i.e. what a

person loves to pursue the most. This makes his writings a very worthwhile study to see why and how the quality of our motivations and actions can be worked on before we reach the moment when we finally cast off our body. Our attention to this self regeneration ought to assist with

finding ourselves a more agreeable place there.

For Swedenborg what was paramount for an abundant afterlife was to develop a positive close relationship with the Divine Creator, while expressing regard for fellow human beings by practicing what we know, turning our knowledge into acts of usefulness and kindness, without seeking merit for such actions but performing them purely for the joy of doing something good.

The warning contained in Swedenborg's account of the afterlife is that there are locations, regions, and communities there for those whose chief love and motivation was mostly self-centred. They live away from those who love to use their skills to serve others in their community. Yet, all people no matter which end of the spectrum they belong, feel that for them the place they live in the afterlife feels heavenly as it is suited to their main love.

"Swedenborg wasn't trying to scare the reader, he was just reporting, and that is what makes it more frightening and convincing... The possibility of cheating one's way into heaven dims when the internals are opened up in the second state of the world of spirits. This is the way the eternal judgment comes." - Dr Wilson Van Dusen, *The Presence of Other Worlds*.

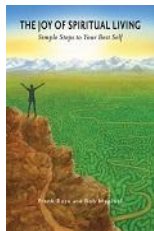
Some NDE accounts, like that of Dr George Ritchie described in his book *Return From Tomorrow*, are extensive, but still only touch the borders of the country of Spirit compared to Swedenborg's long tour of the entire realm. Our contemporary pioneers of NDE experiences still express their debt to Swedenborg, e.g. Dr Raymond Moody (drawn to study NDEs after hearing a lecture by Dr George Ritchie) in his book *Life After Life* includes material on Swedenborg in which Dr Moody stated that he had discovered striking parallels between contemporary near-death-experiences and what Swedenborg had written. Further, he added that none of the people with whom he had talked when compiling his book were even aware of Swedenborg's writings, and asks how is it that Swedenborg's revelations agree so well with the narratives of today's individuals who have come so close to death.





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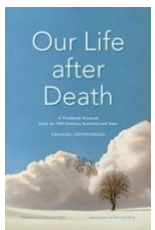


The Lives of Angels by Swedenborg, Translated by George Dole & Lisa Cooper

Release date: 2013, 156 pages, paperback

RRP \$15.00

For decades after his experience of spiritual awakening, Swedenborg visited the afterlife and wrote firsthand accounts of what he saw there. Scattered throughout his writings are descriptions of how angels live—their homes, their language, their communities, and even their relationships. *The Lives of Angels* is a collection of his most striking insights into these heavenly beings.



Our Life after Death by Emanuel Swedenborg, Translated by George F. Dole

Release date: 2014, 148 page, paperback

RRP \$15.00

In this collection of writings from Emanuel Swedenborg's classic *Heaven and Hell*, Swedenborg describes the process of dying as he experienced it personally. He goes on to discuss what happens to newly arrived souls in the afterlife, and how a process of self-discovery allows everyone to find their ideal eternal home.

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- **Brisbane:** Ian Arnold on (07) 3841 2552;
- **Melbourne:** Neville Jarvis on (03) 8555 9116; email: anjarvis72@optusnet.com.au;
- **Sydney region:** Michael Chester on (02) 98881066; email: michael@swedenborg.com.au;

It would be good to establish Groups in other areas. If you can help, please contact Michael Chester.

Our website is updated regularly. Go to meetings on www.swedenborg.com.au for more details. Please let us know if you would like to be informed via email.

Brisbane: New Church Hall, 21 Agars Street, Rosalie.

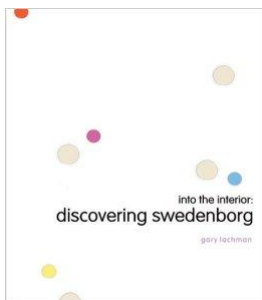
Melbourne: New Church Hall, 426 High Street Road, Mount Waverley.
Last Fridays commencing 8pm.

Sydney: Swedenborg Centre, 1 Avon Road, North Ryde. Commencing 7:45 pm.
Fri 27th Nov **Swedenborg Readings - Regeneration** facilitated by Julian Duckworth

BOOK REVIEW

"Into the Interior: Discovering Swedenborg."

By Gary Lachman.



The Swedenborg Society, London. 2006. 138 pp.

The author, who had written previously on the history of consciousness and the occult, then turned his attention to the life

and thought of Swedenborg. Overall, his book is an impressive achievement, apart from some minor deficiencies. Certainly the essential elements are included, though some readers may differ about emphasis.

A special feature must be the accounts of the interaction between Swedenborg and various notable authors, either as a direct influence or as an interesting comparison. A surprising example is that of George Bernard Shaw, in his "Man and Superman". Another notable comparison is that with William James. Other authors receiving attention include Carl Jung, Rupert Sheldrake and P D Ouspensky.

At the end the book is an excellent index and a helpful summary of each of Swedenborg's main works.

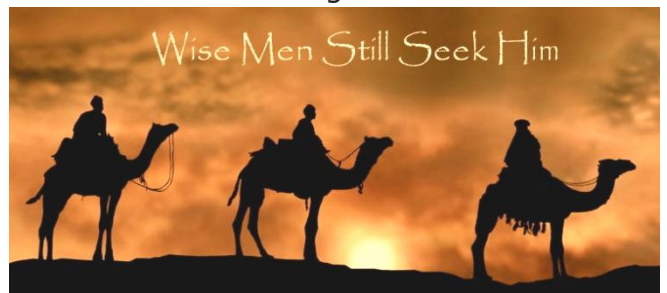
Overall, a commendable coverage and interesting interpretation of Swedenborg's extraordinary achievements, in a book of moderate length.

Geoff Forster

Correspondences

Wise Men

Wise men from the East came seeking the one who had been born king of the Jews. They knew to follow the star, and they found him. The word used is 'magi' which links with magic, mega and magnify. It means an inner wisdom that is not from ordinary knowing. This wisdom comes when we acknowledge that there is a God



who creates all things and who is infinitely present in everything including ourselves and our way of determining the pattern of our life and activity. While the shepherds represent the love of our heart which responds as quickly as it can to be where the Lord is, the wise men represent the longer, steadier journey as we keep following the star of light and truth and we make our lives accord with where it is leading us. One of the important things about the story of the Wise Men is that while the light of the star led them on their journey, this guidance becomes transformed into the living presence of the young child, causing them to fall down and worship him, the Word made flesh, and give him their gifts.