

YOUR SUBUD AUSTRALIA E-NEWS  
MARCH 2008

Please send any submissions for the April E-News to Sebastian N:  
<sebnich@gmail.com>  
Submissions due March 29.

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NOTES FROM THE CHAIR

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This is the second edition of our monthly email newsletter. Kudos to Sebastian N on his energy in keeping deadlines. When we play music together, he often plays the bass, which has the same function in a band: to keep everyone in synch.

Just a week ago, I climbed Mount Warning. Two hours up, and two hours back down again. From the top, the view wasn't obscured by clouds: it was a view of clouds. The climb to the top was at first exhilarating, but became increasingly challenging. The descent was joyful.

I was there as part of the Wollumbin Regional Gathering, held at Gunnebah. Part of the regional gathering was the conclusion of the SICA AGM. I was pleased to see that SICA has now shifted from a focus on administration, to a focus on getting things done. There are many plans afoot, which you'll hear about from Sebastian F, direct. At the end of the meeting, I raised an idea which had started with a conversations with Murray C before Innsbruck, and was then reinforced by an Adelaide Congress Open Space conversation initiated by Ludmilla S.

The basic idea is to run a year long process to elicit new descriptions of Subud; ones that come from members' own insights and perceptions; descriptions that are in synch with Australian culture and in synch with contemporary senses of spirituality. This process now has the support of SICA Australia. It will run for 2008. In 2009, if Murray's original vision goes ahead, it will be followed by a worldwide competition leading up to the 2009 World Congress to be held in New Zealand in 2010. In Australia, we'll be looking to follow it up with SICA-organised public competitions on themes of broader public interest.

Tied to this theme of communication, Bavali H of the Perth Group has stepped forward to be the editor of the website. Karim Eagle M will continue to serve as our webmaster. The National Committee has put together some draft management guidelines and policies, which we will be circulating to Council during March.

As some of you may know, I'm a Buddhist sympathizer. I say "sympathizer" because I am not a Buddhist—that requires adopting a set of commitments and practices—but I do admire the many things that they do well. One thing they do well is being undogmatic,

nice expressed in the first two of Thich Nhat Hanh's 14 Precepts for Engaged Buddhism:

- 1 Do not be idolatrous about or bound to any doctrine, theory, or ideology, even Buddhist ones. Buddhist systems of thought are guiding means; they are not absolute truth.
- 2 Do not think the knowledge you presently possess is changeless, absolute truth. Avoid being narrow minded and bound to present views. Learn and practice nonattachment from views in order to be open to receive others' viewpoints. Truth is found in life and not merely in conceptual knowledge. Be ready to learn throughout your entire life and to observe reality in yourself and in the world at all times.

We aim to have no dogma, and this is why I like to learn from the experience who practice living without dogma. I like the way that Buddhists communicate—without attachment to particular words, or forms of language. They communicate for effect, not for form. I'm hoping that initiatives like the new website, and the New Descriptions competition, will allow us to tell our own story in an effective way: a communication that reaches people, and is understood.

Best

David W  
Chair of Subud Australia

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FROM THE EDITOR

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Thank you, to all those who sent congratulations and feedback following the first edition of the E-News. I have received some questions regarding the decision to write people's names using only a last initial. This decision was taken as a means to protect people's privacy with the view to eventually archiving the E-News on the Subud Australia website once it has been updated. I appreciate your understanding and understand your appreciation.

This month, I am proud to offer the new E-Fiction section which begins a story that will be authored each month by a different, and anonymous, Australian Subud author.

Once again, there is a more printer-friendly version of the E-News attached for those not on email.

I hope you enjoy.

Sebastian N

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NEWS FROM ACROSS AUSTRALIA

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Adelaide – Imron C

Post congress and our exposure to the wider issues facing Subud.

These days, the Adelaide group has taken up a little re-examining of itself. In the light of powerful symbolic indicators like- exploding hot water heaters, sudden major leaks in the underground piping from the mains, inexplicable blocked drains, a neighbor breathing fence posts down our neck and so forth, we have taken a philosophic road and will be having a Californian-Style Priorities Process to set ourselves a new Great Path (chairman Mao) to get things in order, build our 'family feeling', our bank account, and the severely lagging male membership. We will let you know how this goes of course.

Alice Springs – Mardijah S

Alice Springs' members always welcome visitors and can usually let people stay. If you plan a trip through the centre - contact Mardijah on <maridjah@greenbeetle.org>

Brisbane- Hilton B

The regional gathering at Gunnebah was a great success. I was surprised by the diverse distribution of the attendees with members from Sunshine Coast, Brisbane and Wollumbin to as far away as Sydney and Melbourne. Due to work commitments I was only able to attend the second evening and final day of the gathering. This didn't really give me enough time to catch up with everyone and meet all the unknown faces, but there is always next time. The entertainment on the second evening was provided by a good selection of the attendees. The children put on some lively and original performances.

Darwin – Elinor M

It's been very wet in Darwin as in most of Northern Australia. The benefit is the temperatures are cooler and the gardens grow wildly. Our hall garden is looking good. The group has grown by one new member opened in February. We are planning a kejiwaan session this Sunday 1 March. We welcome contact with members from other Australian groups and can offer short-term accommodation to visitors. Love from Darwin.

Melbourne – Rohana F

Osanna Vaughan, the Chair of the World Subud Association (WSA), is visiting Melbourne in her official capacity during the first week of March. Osanna has the following itinerary:

March 1 Saturday - visit to Burnham Beeches, and lunch. You are welcome to join us.

March 2 Sunday - visit to the Melbourne Heatherton Subud house for latihan and get together and lunch.

March 3/4 Monday-Tuesday - visit to Mildura to see projects in which over ten Subud members from all over Australia are involved.

March 5 Wednesday - leave Melbourne for Perth, continuing on to Kalimantan, for the Kalimantan Development gathering.

...and this from Halima G – Melbourne Congress 2009 Coordinator

The confirmed dates for the Congress will be Saturday 3 to Saturday 10 January 2009. We are examining 3 potential venues, one in the Melbourne CBD, and two within an hour's drive of the CBD. We hope to be able to confirm the venue within the next few weeks. We are excited about the possibilities that each venue offers.

We would ask all members to start thinking about any particular activities that they would like to participate in, assist with or help lead during the Congress - we will be actively seeking input from all members Australia-wide on these issues as the Congress approaches.

So please ask all members to pencil in the above dates, and to stay tuned for updates soon!

#### Perth – Bavali H Perth Happenings

·A highlight from December 1st and 2nd 2007 was the visit by three National Helpers, Lydia, Rochmana and Luqman, who joined us at Hilltop Farm for a relaxing and enriching Kejiwaan day. Hilltop Farm, in the hills outside Perth, provides 180 degree uninterrupted views and is a perfect setting for the expansiveness of latihan and testing. Over 30 people, including lots of children, enjoyed the open skies and fellowship.

·On December 16th, 2007, after latihan, the annual Christmas party was held at Alfiah and Simon B's home with a good turnout, shared food and laughter.

·Perth had twelve members plus children attend the Adelaide Congress, bringing back new ideas and energy. On January 23rd a great de-brief was held by those who had attended Congress sharing their own views - general consensus was it was a good congress and changes are in the air.

·This led to a February 3rd workshop after Latihan, where Sophia B led a group of 18 people through an in depth look at 'Talking About Subud', a topic raised at the Adelaide Congress. We split into pairs to share personal stories of times we'd felt good about talking to someone about Subud, how it came up, what we chose to talk about and how we did this.

Freeman W delighted with his demonstration of how he shares his experience of Subud, answering very tricky questions from Salamah P, who role-played an inquisitive, insistent and emphatic young person.

Comments from those present, on how they talk about Subud:

-I adjust what I say and the language I use to the person's level of interest.

-To be effective, whatever I say must be real

-It works best for me if I've thought before hand what I might share

-I answer questions openly but don't try and make the person interested.

-Previously I worried the other person might think I was proselytizing, but now I speak openly and honestly and never evade an opening.

-I talk about the benefits that I enjoy through Latihan, and I speak from my heart.

- When I share about what sparks me then there is a high level of energy communicated.
- I mention Subud as a 'Spiritual Movement' and then leave an opening so the other person can ask questions. It helps if I allow myself to pause first so I connect inside and then I may be surprised by the words that flow.
- I feel I will need to verbalise my own experience first before I can share this with others.
- I'm quiet and say nothing until it comes up, being aware of my own individual testing on what to say.
- I check first on the appropriateness for myself, the other and the situation before I put the feeling into words, and mostly it's a 'No'.

#### Perth Enterprise

·Perth members on February 17th were treated to a power point presentation by Freeman W on Computronics Corporation, an enterprise which was recently purchased by a consortium of investors headed by Sachlan F. The company is an electronics manufacturer established 32 years ago. It is leading supplier of precision agricultural equipment and electronic display signs. It has over 350 distributors in Australia and exports its products into several overseas markets. The company was relisted on the stock market in January. Several million Computronics shares have very generously been gifted to Susila Dharma Australia. Freeman communicated the excitement of working in a company that has great potential for expansion.

·At the same gathering, Lena W spoke about Epiphany Arts, a venture she has established with Elenor Sin the Murwillimbah area of NSW that provides a monthly showcase for quality performing artists. The Arts evenings include dinner, a social gathering and then uninterrupted time dedicated to the performance. Established and emerging artists from the local region as well as interstate now line up to perform. The response from both the public and performers has been tremendously positive.

#### Perth Sponsorship:

·Perth sponsors the educational expenses of a Dayak girl at the B.C.U School in Kalimantan. Her name is Susilawati (Sila for short), she was seven on September 4th, and her favourite colour is pink. Funds are raised for Sila's schooling by selling soup after latihan on the first Sunday of each month and the goal is to raise \$2000 each year for 4 more years.

#### Congratulations:

- Sophia B won the Australian Human Resources Institute Leadership Award as the best individual practitioner in her field of human resource management for 2007 in Western Australia.
- Brianna R recently tested in as a Candidate helper
- Ethan D has completed his diploma in Business Management (FLM)
- Heidi B, Aisah and Howard's older daughter, was opened in mid-February.

#### Sunshine – Bereny H

Only one of our members was able to attend this last weekend's Subud gathering at Gunnebah and we haven't met up yet to ask them what went on etc.!

After 3 months of amazing rain and lower than normal summer temperatures on the Sunshine Coast, the last weekend of summer provided us with an absolute scorcher 39.4 degrees with very high humidity, so masses flocked to the beaches and others went into shopping centres and others stayed at home, either in their pools or air conditioning. Personally I say, roll on winter! Group-wise, we're puddling along very nicely, thank you. Rochana W and Anne S are holidaying up here with some of our members for a few weeks before returning to Tasmania.

Sydney – Vivienne J

In brief, for JAN/FEB:

1. We updated the group on Adelaide congress, introducing mental health policy & conflict resolution concept
2. Arif M visited the group to update on international congress
3. We had our monthly Sunday lunch - raised \$180 (thanks Mardiah & Dewi)
4. Bought a coffee machine to sell espresso coffee with cake at the hall as a fundraiser...will keep you informed re: how successful this is.

Wollumbin – Hanna T

It's been raining solidly here for about 2-3 months. But miraculously the sun came out last weekend and shone on our gathering at Gunnebah. It was a lovely event and seemed to be enjoyed by all. Great food, great company, great vibes, great latihan, great discussions.....a simple recipe for success really! Thank you again to our hosts at Gunnebah and the Wollumbin members who contributed their time and energy.

Make sure you consider coming here for the SICA Easter weekend event – it's an opportunity to express yourself in friendly and beautiful environment.

Other main news is that we are looking at ways to create a northern latihan venue. The majority of our active members live on the 'north side', but we don't want to disrupt group dynamics too much – we are having discussions and trying to find the best approach forward.

Gunnebah is a beautiful location, with a really great feeling about it. I would like to congratulate the six-member Gunnebah team on providing such a lovely place. They will definitely be seeing more of us in the future. I would encourage people who missed out on this opportunity, to join in the SICA workshops that will be held at Gunnebah during the Easter weekend.

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## NEW PEOPLE IN JOBS

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Bavali H– (two jobs) Subud Australia website editor. Bavali has also begun to research conducting a Subud Australia survey. More on this to come.

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WING UPDATES

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SICA - Subud International Cultural Association – Sebastian F

The 2008 SICA AGM took place at Gunnebah on Sat 23 Feb.

All voting member groups in Subud Australia voted unanimously to appoint Ruth M, Harris S and Hanna T as the new SICA Board - to join ex-officio members David W and Sebastian F.

Harris S was officially confirmed as the Vice Chair and Roseanna J as Secretary.

Rohana & Sachlan Fraval agreed to continue as Public Fund Administrators.

SICA is still looking for a Treasurer.

SICA welcomes new voting member – North Shore Group Sydney - under Chair Helena C.

Current SICA Reps:

Lucas L - Subud Brisbane

Reyna H - Subud Sunshine Coast

Alena K - Subud Wollongong

Full minutes will be circulated shortly by Sebastian F

All group Chairs are encouraged to look for a SICA Rep to join in the initiatives and energy that SICA is aiming to create in 2008, commencing with the Easter 'Create 08' gathering at Gunnebah over Easter weekend.

Bookings/accommodation info –

Contact Leonora R <leonora01@gmail.com>

with your accommodation and meal requirements

OR telephone Leonora at Gunnebah 02 6679 1565

SICA Program info –

Sebastian F: flynnz@iinet.net.au

07 3399 6299 ~ 0414 986 240

Workshops at Create 08 will be facilitated by Hamilton B, Lucas L, Alena K and Sebastian F.

We hope to experience benefits as practicing artists but above all this is an experience (with lots of fun!) for non-professional people to deepen, develop and share their unique expressiveness - whatever that may be.....come and experience the uniquely beautiful and serene surrounds of Gunnebah.

Susila Dharma – Renee G writes...

Dear Sebastian N,

in five Minutes I am being driven to the Airport to take a flight to Oslo, Norway, together with Alex B. We are taking the ICDP course with Ruqman H and Laila A. I hope that in

the meantime lots of members in Subud Australia will have taken the decision to take the course here in Australia, as soon as Laila will be able to come.

In the meantime love to everybody

Renee

SD Chair Australia

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## NATIONAL HELPER UPDATE– Minh S

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Our next visit could be Tasmania and Sunshine Coast. We need to work out between us and the groups, which is the best time for all of us.

Recently, Luqman W and Lydia S have attended the Regional Gathering at Gunnebah.

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## PEOPLE

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Members in the news:

Rosamund DS was in the Sydney Morning Herald, as a witness to the Hilton bombing. Click the following link to view the article:

<http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/a-smile-a-morning-hello-and-their-world-exploded/2008/02/13/1202760398954.html>

Another article, also in the SMH, features the work of Rosamund and husband, Gavin DS, as activists:

<http://www.smh.com.au/news/environment/age-shall-not-weary-them/2007/07/09/1183833431930.html?page=fullpage>

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## E-FICTION 1

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"Sarah and the Moon"

Sarah sighed as she moved her head away from the telescope sight. "I can't believe how beautiful and bright it is tonight. Look, Julian, it fills the whole field of vision!"

She moved aside to let Julian take her place at the telescope. She watched him adjust the focus and shift the instrument, ever so slightly, to realign the sighting. Then her gaze returned skyward to the large nearly-white sphere above her. The markings that now combined to make the face of the Man in the Moon, she had just seen as a myriad craters, seas and valleys in the magnification of the telescope. It was a sight that never ceased to amaze her.

Sarah took the few steps to the balcony railings, while Julian continued with his lunar observation. Their small house was pleasantly situated atop a rise above the coastal dunes, affording them an uninterrupted view both skywards and seawards – an ideal location for scientists such as themselves. The only drawback to this idyllic situation was their remoteness from the nearest Subud group. They were both as dedicated to following this spiritual journey as they were to their work. This resulted in a visit to the group only once every couple of months, work permitting.

Both lectured at the nearby university – Julian as a physicist and Sarah in marine biology – and they shared a passion in the study of lunar effects on the ocean.

As she stood looking down towards the ocean, Sarah noticed several figures moving along the shoreline. Fishermen! It was an ideal time for fishing, with plenty of moonlight and an incoming tide. Suddenly, she wanted to be down there too, feeling the sand squeezing up between her toes, and smelling the salt from the breaking waves. She had always felt the lure of the sea, ever since she could remember, and it had been natural for her to choose a profession that embraced her feelings.

"Julian, I'm going down to the shore," she called over her shoulder, as she made her way to the balcony steps. A mumbled acknowledgement was all that was forthcoming from behind the telescope.

Quickly finding the pathway that led to the top of the dunes, Sarah could feel the freshness of the sea breeze increase as she got closer to the beach. She paused on a rise, and looked up at the round full moon that was climbing higher and higher over the ocean in front of her. Looking like a bridal veil, its reflection in the water traced a wide sparkling path from the horizon almost to the shore, and the fishermen were casting their lines into its light. Sarah marveled once more at the magic of the scene before her. How perfect! No wonder she loved living here!

There was, however, one small cloud hovering on her horizon.

Julian had been offered a post as senior lecturer at another University, far from the sea. It would certainly be a step-up for him, and he was presently considering the move. He was finding it very difficult to come to a decision – he too loved their present location. What was the right thing to do?

The couple was due to visit the group for latihan next week, and Julian had requested some testing with the helpers at that time. If it turned out to be right for Julian to make a move and accept the post, Sarah was not sure whether she could willingly follow.

She shook her head to clear away the brooding thoughts.

Best not to preempt the testing . . . stay in the moment and enjoy what she had now.

Her musing was distracted by sudden movements down on the beach in front of her. One of the fishermen began calling out to the others, but the words were indistinguishable from where Sarah was standing. She could see that his long rod was bent severely, and there was obviously a lot of strain on his line. The others quickly secured their own lines and went to the aid of their friend, who was now struggling to hold onto his fishing tackle. One of them had a gaff, another a large net and they stood by as the line was slowly reeled in, inch by inch.

Sarah started moving down the path between the dunes towards the fishermen. The moonlight was so bright that she could easily see what was happening. Her walk soon

turned into a run as she saw a large turtle emerging from the waves near the fisherman. The man with the gaff was approaching it, his arm raised in the air.

"No! No!" she yelled at the top of her voice, as she raced in the direction of the group of men.

The surprise of a voice coming out of nowhere caused them all to turn abruptly – to see a female figure moving quickly towards them through the moonlight. She was panting when she reached them, but managed to say,

"Please let me see what you have there. I am a marine biologist, and have been tagging turtles for many years. This could be one of them."

"Finders keepers, lady. This'un's mine. And don't you go reportin' nothing' to nobody – else, I'll know where to find ya!"

The burly fisherman stood head and shoulders over Sarah. He and his mates had been planning on a meal of fresh turtle soup. No way would they allow their illegal plans be scuppered by this slip of a girl!

Sarah was no wimp, but the men were intimidating, and she knew better than to take on such an aggressive group. She risked their anger when she bent down to look more closely at the beleaguered turtle.

It was a green. The fisherman's hook had caught onto a mass of fishing line and torn plastic that was caught around the animal's head. It was in fairly poor shape, which explained how the man had managed to land it so easily.

How she wished she could slice away the offending rubbish – and save its life – but she didn't even have a knife. Then she looked around its shell for a tag.

Yes, there it was. It seemed that this was one green turtle she would no longer be able to track. She felt powerless – there was nothing she could do. She started taking deep breaths and tried to quieten her racing thoughts. Silently, she prayed that Julian might just have spotted the commotion at the sea shore and do . . . something . . . anything, to help. She looked on helplessly as the big man once again approached the hapless turtle, gaff still grasped firmly in hand.

In her mind's eye she could already see the pristine path of light on the water changing colour and a red hue seeping insidiously along its length and out to sea . . .

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## CALENDAR

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March 13 Ibu Rahayu's 10th Windhu ('windhu', I believe, is a Javanese term for an 8 year cycle)

March 15-17 Visioning Workshop on Subud and the Development of Kalimantan, Rungan Sari

March 21st - 23rd "Create 08!" SICA Gathering at Gunnebah, NSW

May - 50 year Anniversary of Subud in Australia!

"J.G.Bennett, Elizabeth, and the children, George and Ben, arrived in Sydney on May 7, 1958. The first openings happened on the same day. Over one hundred were opened in first week. Bapak and party arrived on May 28, 1958." - from Harlinah L

World Latihan Times\* (in Sydney, forgive me for not doing the math):

March 2 Sydney 7am

April 6 Sydney 1pm

May 4 Sydney 8pm

\*taken from the great events calendar at the Subud World News website.

<http://www.subudworldnews.com/index1.php>

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