Vital Years Conference 2016
Australian Association for Rudolf Steiner Early Childhood Education

Tarremah Steiner School Hobart, Tasmania
Tues 5th to Sat 9th July 2016
CRADLE OF A HEALTHY LIFE
Understanding and Nurturing the Young Child in Body, Soul and Spirit
The Vital Years

In 1985, Lesley Carlton (nee Long) instigated the first 'Vital Years" conference after realising that there was a lack of training available for Steiner early childhood teachers.

She invited Margaret Myerkort from the United Kingdom for a 10 day intensive seminar. Susan Haris then continued the work by supporting biennial conferences in different regions around Australia.

When the Australian Association for Rudolf Steiner Early Childhood Education Inc was formed in 1991, they took on the care of this initiative. The conference to be held in Tasmania 2016 will be the 16th Vital Years conference.

We are delighted to welcome Anthroposophic paediatrician Dr Lakshmi Prasanna, from Seattle USA, for her third Vital Years, along with our own Dr Renate Long-Breipohl and Leanne Moraes as our guest speakers.

They will be supported by our many wonderful workshop leaders.

About Our Guest Speakers

Dr Lakshmi Prasanna

Dr Lakshmi Prasanna is a neonatologist paediatrician with 25 years' experience. She met Anthroposophy through Steiner Education nearly 20 years ago and has worked with it as her guiding philosophy ever since.

In India she has been actively involved with Steiner Education as a school doctor and a school board member.

She also holds the position of President of the Anthroposophical Society, India Chapter.

In Australia and New Zealand, Dr Lakshmi travels and works with several Steiner Schools as well as working as a trainer of various Anthroposophical students and professionals.

Dr Lakshmi uses an integrated approach towards child development and treatment which includes consultation, teacher training, child development workshops for parents, and family meetings.

Dr Renate Long-Breipohl

Renate was a Kindergarten Teacher at the Samford Valley Steiner School in Brisbane between 1989 and 1997.

She then moved to Sydney to take on the role of Coordinator and Senior Tutor in the Early Childhood Training courses at the Sydney Rudolf Steiner College (formerly Parsifal College).

Renate has lectured widely in Australia and the South East Pacific region as well as being a presenter at international early childhood conferences.

She is a member of the committee of the Australian Association for Rudolf Steiner Early Childhood Education and is currently the regional representative for the Sydney/Southern NSW/and Canberra regions.

Leanne Moraes

Leanne is currently chairperson of the Australian Association of Rudolf Steiner Early Childhood Education and has been a kindergarten teacher all of her adult life.

She is currently working at the Melbourne Rudolf Steiner School in a mixed age kindergarten. Leanne is the mother of three children and is soon to be a grandmother.

Leanne is interested in the whole of the young child's life: pre-birth, infancy and early childhood as well as focussing on support for today's parents.

The Australian Association for Rudolf Steiner Early Childhood Education

The Australian Association for Rudolf Steiner Early Childhood Education is a supporting member of the International Association of Rudolf Steiner Early Childhood Education. IASWCE primarily helps and assists projects in third world countries where there are needs and wishes for Waldorf and Steiner Early Childhood initiatives.

The International Association of Steiner Waldorf Early Childhood Education

The Australian Association for Rudolf Steiner Early Childhood Education is a supporting member of the International Association of Steiner Waldorf Early Childhood Education. IASWCE primarily helps and assists projects in third world countries where there are needs and wishes for Waldorf and Steiner Early Childhood initiatives.
The lectures, workshops, lunches, dinner on Tuesday night, the morning and afternoon teas, and market place (shops) will be at Tarremah, which is located at Huntingfield, about 15 kilometres south of picturesque Hobart, via the Southern Outlet. Tarremah is a beautiful, purpose built Steiner School, situated close to a nature reserve and overlooking the D’Entrecasteaux Channel. There are short nature walks nearby and the beautiful native school gardens for those who like to take in some fresh air and enjoy the setting.

Buses will be provided to transport delegates to and from the conference venue. Please note that the accommodation at the 2016 Vital Years IS different to what has been offered at previous conferences.

The Hobart MidCity Hotel, located on the corner of Elizabeth and Bathurst Streets in central Hobart, has been booked to provide accommodation, which includes breakfast, and most of the dinners for this conference. 

**YOU MUST RING THE HOTEL** (PHONE: 03 6234 6333 or email: bookings@hobartmidcity.com.au) **TO MAKE YOUR OWN BOOKING AND PAYMENT. PLEASE DEAL DIRECTLY WITH THE HOTEL.**

The hotel can cater for all styles of accommodation and offers rooms for one, twin share, and triple or quad share rooms. Each room has its own bathroom and bar fridge. Obviously, the more delegates that share, the more economical it will be for those delegates. We encourage you to plan your room requirements with your friends and colleagues to suit your preference. If you prefer a room to yourself, then that is definitely possible.

The accommodation package includes a daily continental breakfast (with porridge as an option as well) and dinner every night except Tuesday. Apart from the first night (Tuesday 5th July) all evening activities will take place at the hotel. Fresh towels can be provided daily on request, and all rooms have fridges for storing any extra goodies. The hotel is in the city centre and is a short walk to shops, the museum and art gallery, restaurants and cafes, Salamanca Market and Constitution Dock. There are views over the city and Mount Wellington (which may have a sprinkle of snow). If you wish to enjoy Hobart before and/or after the conference, single, twin and double rooms will be available to be booked at the **SAME DISCOUNTED RATE** (subject to availability).

**Meals**

At the conference venue (Tarremah) food will be provided by local caterers who source much of their food locally and organically. All breakfasts and 3 of the dinners will be provided by the hotel.

Meals throughout the conference will be vegetarian and we are able to cater for most dietary requirements **IF GIVEN SUFFICIENT NOTICE.** However, you may prefer to bring a few personal supplies, if you are on a strict dietary regime.

**IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE** that if you have specific dietary needs, you must notify the hotel **SEPARATELY** when booking.

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# Workshops

All those enrolled in the conference may participate in TWO workshops; **ONE from List A and One from List B**. Each workshop will be spread over three 90 minutes sessions throughout the week. An extra payment may be required for materials (TO BE PAID DIRECTLY TO THE PRESENTER), and you may be asked to bring along supplies in some cases (*e.g.* coloured pencils). As there are limited places per workshop, please indicate three choices from List A and three choices from List B, in order of preference. We will do our best to find you a place in your preferred workshops.

## Workshops A

### 1A Floor Play – the Child and the Art of Placement

**Paulene Hanna**

Floor play offers a rich sensory pathway for unique childhood expression. A special aspect of Steiner Kindergarten, play can be observed in the sometimes solitary, but often socially, connected building that expands to cover a large part of the floor during any free play session. In this workshop we will expand our understanding of what it means to a child to be the initiator with the placement of objects in daily activity, as well as what it means to be expressive, to tell their own stories, through this particular form of play. We will explore the teacher’s role in encouraging this imaginative placement play. We will acknowledge its place in the curriculum and look at the connections with other forms of expression that can be observed. LOCATION: Fantail kindergarten

### 2A Caring and Supporting the Young Child using Anthroposophic Nursing Therapies

**Jen O’Bryan**

Working with the Anthroposophic picture of health – that being of balance in body, soul and spirit - this workshop will demonstrate and give practical experience of the nursing therapies to support that harmony in the small child. Working with children who are anxious, sensitive, or overwhelmed by school will be a theme. Participants are also welcome to bring case studies of children they are currently working with to discuss. Therapeutic footbaths, medicinal herb organ compresses and body oiling will be demonstrated and participants will have an opportunity to practice some of these therapies on each other. Participants will leave with a compress cloth and a sample of bath milk for footbaths, and some practical notes on the nursing therapies to use at home and work. LOCATION: Pipit Kindergarten

### 3A The Voice

**Gerry Josephson**

Using exercises given by Rudolf Steiner to the first Waldorf teachers, we will explore how you can improve the use of your voice in teaching. LOCATION: Honeysuckle Room

### 4A Making Freestanding Story Dolls

**Sharmian Deenenvilliger**

In this workshop we will complete a beautiful hand dyed, felted, archetypal storytelling doll. You will acquire the construction skill necessary to make this doll and also I hope to fire your imagination to fill your kindergarten, playgroup and homes with dolls for storytelling. Cost for materials of $25 is to be paid directly to presenter. LOCATION: Class Two.
5A Making Simple Dolls  
Nelly Hampel
In this workshop we will be making three small simple dolls of different styles and methods: one in each session. Cost for materials of $30 is to be paid directly to presenter. LOCATION: Class One

6A Nurturing young children through songs in the Mood of the Fifth and lyre playing  
Renate Long-Breipohl
This workshop will have a reflective and experiential part, through singing and playing the seven string pentatonic children’s lyre. Please bring your seven string lyre if you have one. LOCATION: Class Four

7A Creating Outdoor Experiences for children  
Brioni Pridham
In this workshop we will explore how to develop our outside areas and program. We will look at building relationships with the landscape, nature, meaningful activities and enriching open ended creative play. Participants will have the opportunity to experience simple nature based activities while developing an understanding about how this supports the wholesome development of the young child. We will also follow the evolution of Bush Kindy at the Mount Barker Waldorf School, now in its seventh year. LOCATION: Class Five

8A Wet Felted Advent Calendars  
Kristy Brake
In this workshop you will make a heavenly background by wet felting pure Tasmanian fleece and then sewing on the golden rungs of a ladder that the Christ Child ‘climbs’ down reaching the manger by Christmas Day. Cost for materials of $15 is to be paid directly to presenter. Please bring spare socks in case of water spills on the floor. LOCATION: Class Six

9A Elemental Beings  
Susan Wishart
Who are these seemingly elusive creatures and can they help us in our work? In this workshop, we will name a few of them and endeavour to understand them. We will create something beautiful in the process, so bring along a few leftover children's paintings, if you have any, and some coloured pencils. LOCATION: Class Seven

10A Enjoying Morning Circle  
Hannah Gauci
In this workshop we will be seeking to understand the value of morning circle for young children within the daily rhythm of the kindergarten. We will discover ways to create a joyful morning circle, consider content, rhythm, gesture, movement and music, and pick up some useful tips for working with children in a group. This workshop will include movement so wear comfortable clothes and footwear. Cost for notes of $5 is to be paid directly to presenter. LOCATION: Class Eight

Workshops B

1B Craft in the Kindergarten  
Ute Ten Hampel
This workshop will be practical as well as talking about the craft we do in kindergarten. Should there be craft in kindergarten? How do we prepare for waxwork, painting, baking, felting, winding wools? We look at your assistant's tasks in these areas as well. Cost for materials of $20 is to be paid directly to presenter and please bring pencil and paper for taking notes. LOCATION: Fantail Kindergarten

2B Playgroup as a Living Organism  
Ebba Bodame
We will be looking at the spiritual and practical life of a playgroup and preparing stories as a guide through the cycle of the playgroup year. Participants will be experiencing stories and connected circles for a parent/child group. LOCATION: Pipit Kindergarten

3B The Inner Work of the Teacher  
Rod Tomlinson
'A teacher can accomplish a great deal through self-development'. [Fifth lecture in Roots of Education by Rudolf Steiner (GA309)] The struggle is to bring humanity, authenticity and integrity to the often challenging situations with others in a school. Openness and listening to and understanding the other, a sympathetic soul gesture, often opens the way to resolution and reconciliation from seemingly intractable confrontations or conflicts in the workplace. In this workshop we will approach these questions through Steiner’s original indications, through discussion, practical and artistic activities. LOCATION: Honeysuckle Room

4B Dry on Dry – Colour Weaving with Fleece  
Rosie Tomlinson
Create a pictorial scene for children in felt using simple dry felting techniques. We will do some designing with block crayons on drawing paper prior to felting to help refine our pictorial ideas. Learn basic skills to give conscious thought to scenes and images that may be suitable for young children in our care. We will complete a needle felted project. Bring along any pictures or ideas for inspiration. All materials provided; no experience necessary. Cost for materials of $25 is to be paid directly to presenter. LOCATION: Class Three

5B Getting Creative with Knitting  
Paulene Hanna
Knitting is a sociable activity – it is portable and can be a very expressive medium for busy teachers who want to nurture their artistic side. In this workshop we will become playful and imaginative with knitting. Paulene will share her experience of interweaving colourful pure wools to knit a story. It’s about letting go of rules and preconceptions and more about being free, imaginative and experimental with this wonderful age old skill. We will learn how to introduce many colours in a free and artistic way that is not at all stressful and does not require anything more than basic skill and the desire to express oneself creatively. For this workshop only basic knitting skills are needed. Cast on - plain - purl and away we go! Please bring 5ply pure wool and size 4 or 3.75 plain or circular needles: OR $15 to cover provision of these materials. LOCATION: Class Four
6B Kindergarten - A Very Special Place
Leanne Moraes
This workshop is for or teachers new to Steiner early childhood education. We will explore the physical, soul and spiritual dimensions and different aspects of daily life in the kindergarten and how we can create an environment which supports the child in the first seven years. We will look at the rhythmical aspect to the program: exploration of story, song and verse; practice gesture, voice, movement and soul stillness; forming authentic relationships; and; developing our faculties to assist our work in relation to guiding the child. LOCATION: Class Five

7B Festivals – A Turning Point in Time
Susan Wishart
True festivals exist to celebrate the spirit, but ‘What Spirit?’ you might ask and ‘How do I find time to do it justice?’ In this workshop, we will try to connect ourselves to the spiritual impulse behind festivals as indicated by Rudolf Steiner. We start by looking at a bit of what he said.... Cost for materials of $10 is to be paid directly to presenter. LOCATION: Class Seven

8B From Line to Surface (Painting and Drawing)
Jenny Groves
The workshop will be divided into two sections. The first is the development of children’s drawings through their incarnation processes from around age 2 until they enter the abstraction of formal learning. As the line becomes an inadequate expression for the child, the realm of colour opens. The second part of the workshop will be looking at colour as the medium of soul expression in the younger child. Please bring coloured pencils. LOCATION: Class Eight

9B Hand Gestures: Inviting the Child to Move
Heather Van Zyl
In many children we find a great yearning for objective, loving touch; for bodily awareness and bodily limits that help them to incarnate entirely, right down into their fingertips and toes. When a child feels comfortable in his or her body and is well incarnated, then healthy, nurturing contact with the outside world can be established – with, people, animals, plants and things in the surroundings. We will explore some of the Ellersiek Hand Gesture games where the hand invites rhythmic movement, provokes the imagination, and nurtures the sense of contact and wellbeing. LOCATION: Music Room

Conference information

The Market Place
This is our new term for the shops! Karin Adams of Lyrebird Steiner Inspired Products, Hobart, is the Market Place Coordinator. There will be a designated area on campus with a variety of stalls, which will be open each day at morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea and prior to dinner (please refer to the program for times). Please note that most stalls will be cash only.

Arrival and Departure
For transport from and to the airport, the Hobart MidCity Hotel will have their IT department set up a link for their Airporter Service at a discounted rate, so that the guests can book and pay online directly.
Hotel check in time is from 2.00pm and check out time is by 10.00am. For your convenience, the Hobart Midcity Hotel has offered to hold any luggage prior to check in and after checkout.
There is also at taxi rank at the Hobart airport; a taxi into the city costs approximately $60.

Getting to and from Tarremah
There will be daily buses to take participants to and from Tarremah and the Hobart Midcity Hotel. There is no separate cost for this.

Registration
Details for registration (for the conference only) are available on the SEA website www.steinereducation.edu.au or the Tarremah Steiner School website www.tarremah.tas.edu.au and our Facebook page – Vital Years Conference 2016.
Also don’t forget to look at these sites for regular conference updates!
If you have difficulty with any of this, then please contact Sally Port by either mobile phone: 0402129865 or email: sallyport321@hotmail.com.
Registration for the conference has opened and strictly closes on May 21st 2016. The cost for the Vital Years 2016 Conference is $350.
Casual entry on a daily basis to the Main Lecture, Morning Tea and Discussion Groups is $40 each day pp and is available at the hall door just prior to the lecture.
Evening Activities

Tuesday 5th Dinner will be at Tarremah Steiner School prior to the opening lecture, which will be presented also at the school by Leanne Moreas. Participants will be bussed back to the hotel.

Wednesday 6th Dinner will be at the Hobart Midcity Hotel. This will be followed by Special Interest Groups.

Thursday 7th Dinner will be at the Hobart Midcity Hotel. The Australian Association for Rudolf Steiner Early Childhood Education will be holding their AGM. There are changes to be made to the constitution: everyone is invited and encouraged to attend. Your votes will be appreciated!

Friday 8th Dinner will be at the Hobart Midcity Hotel. This will be the Australian Sharing evening. Share the joys of your work with each other. Please bring something to contribute, perform or display, such as morning circle, story, puppet show, verse, photographs, etc. Remember to bring any props you may need. Usually a very entertaining evening and not to be missed! (Please check timetable for times and venues).

“Nimble fingers …” Please feel welcome to bring along your current craft project for relaxation in free time or to share ideas!