



## International Archives at Amani

*Harris Smart writes...*



*Ibu Rahayu and Sharif and Tuti Horthy opened the Zoom broadcast of the inauguration of the International Archives in the USA on July 10.*

On Saturday July 10 the Subud International Archives in the USA was officially launched in its new home in the Amani Events Center, the property of Subud Washington DC.

Ibu Rahayu attended the event by Zoom from her home in Jakarta accompanied by Sharif and Tuti Horthy. She said she did not wish to speak but attended the event as a witness.

However, Sharif defined the importance of the event by telling of a dream he had when he was 18 years old and just out of school. He was already opened and had the important job of looking after the tape unit which recorded Bapak's talks when he came to England.

On the night before Bapak's arrival on a visit to England Sharif had a dream which he says has stayed with him with ever since. It was a dream that came with great clarity early in the morning and unlike other dreams that Sharif has had, the meaning of it was clear to him at once.

In the dream members had gathered to hear Bapak talk, and mattresses had been laid out in the carpark for them to lie on. Bapak and John Bennet, who was then Bapak's interpreter, arrived and sat on chairs on the podium.

Then the podium began to rise as if on a hydraulic lift. It rose into the sky and in the dream Sharif >

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thought how good it was that mattresses had been supplied so that they could lie on their backs and watch Bapak's ascent.

The only trouble was they could not hear Bapak's talk.

Sharif said he understood then that what the dream meant was that he and others were not yet able to understand the import of Bapak's words. His words went "over their heads" In fact Sharif understood that Bapak's words were meant for future generations who would be able to understand what Bapak was saying.

Thus, the importance of archives. To make sure that Bapak's legacy was preserved for those future generations.

*In a recent message, Subud USA said...*

Some 40 years ago, Bapak asked us to create an archive of the history and development of Subud. Since then, Ibu Rahayu has spoken many times about its importance.

"The archives are the source for Subud. They should be preserved for all time...We need a place to preserve Bapak's works. This is really important."

As a result, Subud USA has answered the call to become one of five international archive centers in the world. Over the past year, a team of dedicated volunteers drawn from WSA, Subud USA, and Subud Washington DC has worked diligently to create a world-class permanent archive space that occupies the entire second floor of the Amani Event Center near Washington DC.

After 28 years, over 400 boxes of archive material have just been moved out of storage. Subud USA invites you to experience the inauguration of the Subud USA International Archives at the Amani Center, Washington DC.

This event happened on Saturday, July 10th. It was recorded on Zoom AND IS NOW AVAILABLE ON YOUTUBE AT:

<https://youtu.be/1IPn5KDuf0k>

*In a recent email, Aliza Albornoz, from Seattle writes...*

I came to Washington DC to help Daniela Moneta, a professional Subud archivist, who came from Phoenix to resettle a huge collection (over 500 boxes of Subud documents...letters, periodicals, books, etc.) in their permanent home at SWDC.

Daniela has been working with the archives for the past 30 years. She came for the month of June to organize and place them in their new home in the USA, following Bapak's wish that there >

“ *The importance of archives is to make sure Bapak's legacy is preserved for future generations...* ”



*The Amani Center, Washington DC, new home of the International Archives USA.*



*The archives arrive by U-Haul from Phoenix, Arizona.*



*The archives stored on the second floor of the Amani Center.*



should be 5 locations for the Subud archives in the world: Indonesia, Australia, Japan, the UK and the USA.

[The Zoom event includes...](#)

Opening comments with Ibu Rahayu, Sharif and Tuti

[Keynote Speakers](#)

- Nahum Harlap, Chairman, World Subud Association
- Suyono Sumohadiwidjojo, WSA Executive
- Matthew Moir, Chairman, WSA Archives Subcommittee

[Featured Events](#)

- Archives Virtual Tour
- Archives Website Unveiling
- Update on Recent and Future Events
- Special Guests

## Bapak's Birthday Australian Style

*Harris Smart reports how the Subud group on the North Coast of New South Wales, Australia, celebrated Bapak's birthday...*

This year Mursalin and Marianni New hosted the celebration of Bapak's birthday on Tuesday, June 22, at their house. (A beautiful hand-crafted house designed and built by Mursalin and Marianni). About twenty of us came to mark the occasion. The birthday was celebrated with some uniquely Australian features.

Their son, Osmar, has in recent years become deeply involved in learning the traditional skills and culture of the Aborigines. In Australian society in general there has become a much deeper awareness in recent years of the value of the culture of the First Nation people,

So, the celebration of Bapak's birthday began with Osmar making fire in the traditional aboriginal way, creating a spark by the friction between wood and wood, transferring that spark to embers, and using the embers to start a fire.

The flame represented a focus for all our good energies heading up into the heavens in spirit.

In other respects, the celebration was traditional. We brought food to share, and the traditional rice mountain was cut. We sang the Indonesian version of happy birthday "Panjang umurnya".

Tuesday nights is a regular night for the women to worship so when the meal was finished they went to nearby South Golden Beach to do latihan. We men gathered around the campfire to chat and sing.

Bapak always encouraged us to express our national cultures so I think he would have smiled upon our gathering. It was his 120th birthday.

In the words of "Panjang Umurnya"...

*Long is his age  
 Long is his age  
 Long is his age  
 And treasured  
 And treasured  
 And treasured.*



*Osmar prepares the wood to be used to make fire...*



*The friction of wood on wood produces a spark...*



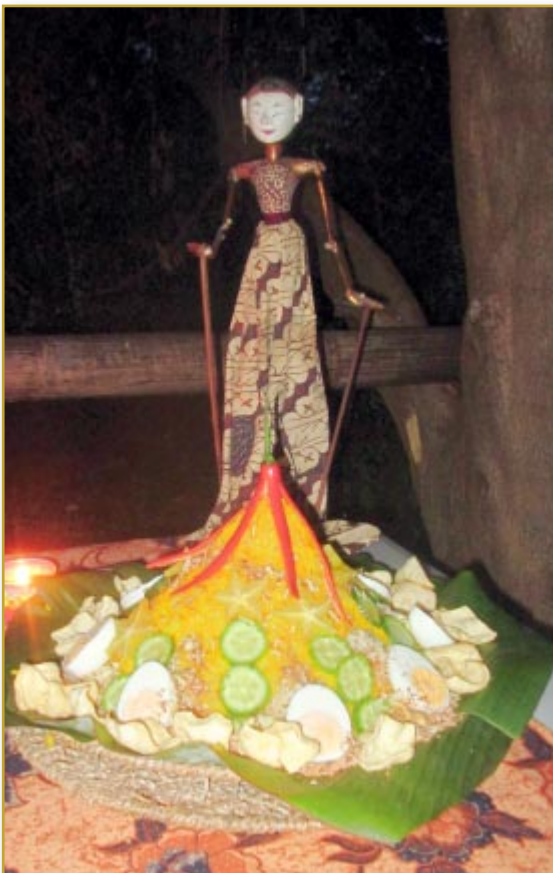
*Which produces a bonfire symbolising our union of energies...*



*Marianni burns off some dead branches...*



*Quiet time before food. Bruce, Mursalin, Zenya...*



*The traditional rice mountain...*



*Singing around the campfire. Bruce, Mursalin, Stuart...*

*Photos by Harris Smart and Marianni New* ●



# A Vision of Bapak...

*Harris Smart interviews Lucida Anderson, long time Cairns Subud member, now a member of North Coast NSW Australia, who had a visionary experience in which she saw Bapak's face long before she heard of the latihan or Subud...*

Lucida was born, Danielle Moana Anderson, in Sydney. Her father was of Maori origin and her mother of Scottish and Irish. Her parents weren't together long, her father moved to Africa when she was a few months old.



*Lucida.*

When she was 8, her mother moved them to Townsville, North Queensland. She grew up there, and while in her teens, was nick-named, Danni, and became a drum kit player. She left home and joined a band touring the region, then aged 20, moved back to Sydney.

*One year, she had this profound experience. She recalls...*

After the Byron Bay Blues Festival, a group of us friends (men, women, Caucasian & Polynesian) went to the Ti-Tree Lake at nearby Suffolk Park. My Fijian friend, Risina, who took us there, said it was a sacred place of the Arakwal people, of the Bundjalung Nation.

We all swam in the lake for a long time, then, for some reason, all the Pakeha's (Caucasians) got out, and who remained were 3 Maori, a Tongan and Fijian. Then, without anyone saying anything, something made us all come together and form a circle in the middle of the lake. We held hands and none of us spoke.

Then after a while, Risina said a prayer... Then we silently acknowledged each other, and dispersed... We'd never done anything like that before, Risina was Rasta/Christian and prayed, but the rest of us weren't really religious and never usually prayed.

When we got out of the water and went to get our towels, I hugged Risina, saying "Thank you for bringing us here."

As I hugged her, I felt this incredible pressure between my stomach and her stomach. This intense feeling. It was so powerful, I pulled back but kept my hands on her shoulders.

As I looked up at her face, her face disappeared and was replaced by a different face... and then another face, and then another and another. There were about a hundred different faces, women and men, all ages, all nations. As one was going out, another was coming in.

During this, my brain was saying, "You can't be seeing this, this can't be happening, this doesn't make sense!" But I kept witnessing it.

I remember the final face the most, because it stayed the longest, and no other face came after it. I thought it was the face of an old Chinese King. A gloriously peaceful smiling face. Then, the pressure between my friend's stomach and my stomach got so strong, overwhelming, I kind of crumbled and fell into her embrace, breaking the vision.

Then, Risina said to me "Ahh, their little princess. They haven't seen you for so long. They're so glad to see you again." To this day, she can't remember any of this at all.

*The next day and night, I had more experiences...*

We were walking to Broken Head Point, through the forest, and I started walking slower and slower, dropping behind, no longer keeping up with my friends. I felt this sort of ethereal feeling, and became really tuned in to the forest.

When I came out from the forest, up on the open grassy cliff-side, everyone had spread out, sitting in groups of two or three. But I got this urge, a feeling like I was being pushed, to go to the edge of the cliff.

I looked down at the smashing waves and knew I wanted to jump into the sea. I scrambled down the cliff and onto the rocks. Then found myself sitting, holding my knees and swaying back and



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forth, saying, "I don't want to be afraid, I don't want to be afraid, I don't want to be afraid anymore."

I don't know why, but I knew I wanted to jump into the ocean. But my mind was saying, "You're crazy, this is dangerous, people drown and get smashed up on the rocks!" But still I wanted to do it, and eventually I jumped in...

*(Editor's Note: There is a Dreamtime legend of the Bundjalung people about the rocks there. It says that they represent three sisters who drowned. The youngest sister got swept out by a current and then the older sisters jumped in to save her, but they all drowned. It's a story they tell the children to discourage them from going into the sea there.)*

The sea was so calm and gentle underneath the surface, but then I had this sudden thought, "Oh no, sharks!" So, I quickly swam to the surface and looked back. I saw the waves smashing on the rocks, and thought how am I going to get out? So, I tried to time it with the waves, and did manage to scramble out without getting hurt, but as soon as I got up, I thought, 'Damn, I've just left with fear'.

So again, I found myself sitting, holding my knees, swaying and repeating "I don't want to be afraid. I don't want to be afraid."

I don't know for how long I sat there wanting to jump into the water again, while my brain was saying, "You might not be so lucky this time, this is still crazy! What are you doing?"

Eventually, I jumped in again... and shouted out (underwater) to the whole ocean, "All you sharks, you're not gonna stop me loving!" And this time, I swam in the deep sea for as long as I wanted. And then, when I felt ready to leave the ocean, she literally picked me up and put my feet down safely on the rocks. (The recent kids movie, *Moana*, showed the exact thing that happened to me, when an ocean wave picks her up and places her back on the boat.)

I then climbed back up the cliff face, and came to my friend Risina who asked where I'd been. I told her what I'd just experienced, and because she'd grown up in New Zealand, she understood the meaning of the word moana (ocean), and she knew it was my second name.

So, she hugged me and said "Oh, Moana!"

This felt like it was a spontaneous initiation into my Maori name, and so from then on, I was no longer Danni, my name was Moana. (Interesting timing of this, for the next day, I drove back to Sydney to 'fill in' on drumkit for a friend of mine. At sound check, I met the percussionist, Danny, who would become the father of my children.)

### That night, in Byron...

We all went to my friend's house in Suffolk Park to sleep 'Maori style' with everyone in the same room on mattresses on the floor. We'd all said Good night, and I was lying there quietly when, again, I felt this huge pressure in my stomach, and saw this enormous column of golden light pouring down into it.

I began to cry because it was so overwhelmingly beautiful. This golden light just kept shooting down from above into my stomach. I started weeping, and was trying to be quiet because everyone was sleeping beside me but eventually, I had to get up and leave. I was sobbing and gasping because it was so amazing and overwhelming.

Then about ten years later, in Cairns, I joined Subud in a completely unconnected way to all of this, (except that the lady who introduced me to Latihan, who's name at the time was Velma, was from Byron Bay.) A year after I was opened, Michaela Schionning gave me a copy of Bapak's autobiography.

When I opened the first page, and saw the photo of Bapak, I instantly recognized him as the final face I saw at the Ti-Tree Lake, who I thought was a Chinese king!" That was him!

Then, when I read about how he had experienced a column of light entering him when he first experienced the Latihan, I understood that this is the right practice for me. I'm on my spiritual path.



*I understood that this was  
the right practice for me.*



*I'm on my spiritual path...*

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# A Dream About Bapak

*Laksar Burra writes from Perth, Western Australia...*

In 1993 I was living in Adelaide. My first wife Arifah heard a voice say, 'come and sing for me in the desert.' Not long after she got a job as the adult educator at the Mutitjulu Community at Uluru (Ayers Rock).



At the time I was doing a BA in Design in Glass and Ceramics at Underdale University in Adelaide. I still had a year to complete the course and really did not want to go to Uluru but knew inside that it was right.

I followed 2 months later and remember driving out of Adelaide in my little Toyota ute stacked to the gunnels with some of our bits and pieces. Tears were streaming down my face because I didn't want to go. I heard a voice say, 'So Laksar you have agreed to come, we have been waiting for you.'

I hadn't a clue what that meant as I also had no idea what I was going to do at Uluru. Shortly after my arrival I got involved with tourism and also set up some glass workshops with some of the Aboriginal designers, both at Uluru and Adelaide.

They resulted in major glass works going into the Uluru Kata Tjuta Cultural Centre (which was being built at the time) and the Sails in the Desert 5-star hotel. I really wanted to see if it would be possible to work collaboratively with the Aboriginal designers bringing two spiritualities together.

I Spoke to Gregg Burgess, the architect of the new cultural Centre that was being built, if he was in favour of a feature piece of glass being made to be installed in the new building.

I asked Diana James who had been in the centre for 20 years, an artist in her own right who also spoke Pitjantjatjara. There were 5 artists involved, 3 Aboriginal women designers, Diana and me.

I didn't apply for any art funding as I felt it would be near impossible to get. Instead I worked my butt off for 6 weeks prior, making enough money to pay for a return airfare to Adelaide and the use of the university's art facility at Underdale. We got together at the Mutitjulu training facility to confirm all of our ideas for the design. We had several meetings, but nothing came together. The day before I was due to fly out Diana suggested we meet again but it looked as though nothing would come together.

Kerry Williams, the director of Maraku Arts and Crafts (an Aboriginal Art business based at Mutitjulu) wanted to talk to me about something. I left the room for about 20 minutes and on my return the design was in place, with all of our contributions in place.

What I realised then is that in order for something to happen there are times you have to leave the space. With the design in place I flew down to Adelaide the next day.



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I was exhausted and wasn't sure I had the energy to make the piece. It was about 2 sq. metres of glass fired in a kiln and I had 3-4 days to make it. There was little or no room for mistakes because firing a large glass work in a kiln is a risky business.



*It was Bapak looking like an Aboriginal man...*



I had an early morning dream before going into the university at 6.00am to start work. In the dream there was a tall Aboriginal man helping me make and complete the artwork. As he was walking away I said, 'who the hell are you then?' He turned round and came towards me and embraced me and said, 'My son, my son, my son.' It was Bapak but looking like an Aboriginal man.

Well, I was infused with energy and the glass work was made. A few weeks later it arrived at Uluru. The tour operators in the Resort offered to pay for the costs involved in the making of the glass and would then donate it to the cultural Centre at Uluru.

Unfortunately, there were one or two people working in the community who stirred up concerns that we should not work in this collaborative way and wanted me to pull the glass piece apart.

I said no, and decided to pay all the artists 20% of the agreed valuation of the piece to be shared equally. A few week later some Aboriginal elders who lived remotely from Uluru visited the Ayers Rock Resort and I showed them the glass work, Their eyes lit up and they said Wiru Wiru Wiru, meaning beautiful in Pitjantjatjara, and said, 'we must work more in this way.'

Several months later Trish Bain from Arts Network International was out from the UK putting together an Art exhibition from the Commonwealth Institution called 'This Earth for Us Art - Stories and Art from Australia's First People.' She saw the glass collaboration and asked if it could be included in the exhibition which was to be held in London, Bristol and Edinburgh in 2000.

The glass work was titled 'Happily Working Together' and was bought by a Scottish business-woman who saw it as an example of people from differing backgrounds working together. Funnily enough it went back to my place of birth ..Edinburgh.

Dr Dianne Johnson heard about the glass work and included it in her book, 'Lighting the Way: Reconciliation Stories'. She titled the glass work story at Uluru, 'Fire in Ice.'

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## A Healing Journey

*Rohana Darlington writes...*

"It seems that human beings have to go through the experience of suffering in their lives as a test – a necessary test before they can receive something from God that will be useful in their lives."

*Bapak's Talks, Volume 22, Auckland 18 May 1968. Page 29.*

Seeking relief from the emotional suffering of a difficult childhood spent as a refugee in various war zones in the Far East, and life in English boarding schools, I found the healing I needed in the Latihan at an early age.

I was eighteen when I was opened, the only one in our family to join Subud, and it never occurred to me then that I'd later spend twenty years as a therapist working in hospitals helping to relieve other people's suffering.

All my life I've found solace in art and writing and was fortunate in finding work in these areas. Healing from my own earlier difficulties prevented me from even considering work in the medical field at this stage. I certainly never suspected I'd have any aptitude for it.

It was only after I was happily married with a young family when my mother committed suicide, that I was obliged to confront the spiritual lessons of this shocking event. Certainly, it served as a 'necessary test' that was the beginning of a long journey into a completely different career.

After my mother's suicide I'd had a spontaneous experience sitting in our car with my husband Mashud returning from her funeral. During this experience I was lifted up to another realm and witnessed her in a church filled with light, being presented to Jesus and accepted by him in a Holy Communion service which reassured me of her acceptance and safety in the hereafter. She had previously suffered from severe mental illness, and I felt this experience had granted me this insight into her situation.



### Afterwards...

Afterwards I resumed my normal way of life with regular latihans, and my husband and I were preoccupied as investors in all the major Subud enterprises. It was this involvement that played a part in my unexpected change of career. When Anugraha, a major hotel Subud enterprise in England failed, although we were both working, we found ourselves short of money and I was forced to search for whatever local job I could find.

At that time the whole country was in a major recession with inflation rates at 18% and work was scarce. My free-lance design work no longer covered our growing family's expenses, so when I was offered temporary clerical work in the social work department of the local psychiatric hospital typing up patients' case histories, I was pleased and relieved.

It sounded really interesting, and I thought I might learn more there about mental health issues and the reasons people commit suicide. Ibu Rahayu says that "from time to time, God will test you," and I felt this was a test for me to help me to come to terms with my mother's mental health problems.

### After a year...

I learned a lot in that hospital and after a year I was offered a different permanent job in another general hospital as manager of a new creative activities project for the patients. It was felt my art experience would be helpful to them and the charity that employed me to work there offered to train me.

At the same time, I continued with my own part-time free-lance design work so I felt happy that I could combine both kinds of employment. I was put in charge of recruiting a team of volunteers and together we organized a program of activities for Out-Patients in a daily clinic and also for In-Patients on the Rehab Wards.

The great thing about this project was I was allowed complete freedom to design the individual activities that best suited each person. I was given in-house training by the hospital but otherwise could run the project exactly as I wished, provided I sent regular reports to the local Health Authority who funded the work. Occupational

Therapists in the hospital had little time to do these kind of activities as they were so busy arranging discharge plans for the patients, so I was welcomed as a useful extra member of the clinical team.

We offered art and crafts sessions, music and movement, gardening, poetry and creative writing, local history, nature videos, reminiscence therapy, games, cooking and nutrition advice. Whatever a patient felt might benefit them was made available, and if it was a subject new to me, I researched it and the local library provided me with materials.

The volunteers were wonderful, and one moment I particularly remember was when a severely depressed patient had just been told she'd have to spend the rest of her life in a wheelchair. I introduced her to one of my volunteers who'd been permanently confined to a wheelchair following medical negligence by another hospital, and they helped each other so much.

The volunteer felt useful helping the new patient and the new patient was helped enormously by someone she felt really understood her. The volunteers were also really helpful when we designed and created a sensory garden for the patients, particularly valued by hearing and visually impaired people.

Every day as I entered the hospital, I felt enveloped with great happiness and was sure that this change of work was right for me and an opportunity to develop psychologically and spiritually. >



*Rohana painting a mural in a hospital corridor. I did this one of a Fountain of Healing mural to cheer patients up as they had to walk along the corridors to practice walking again and the walls were bare and boring!*

“ I was allowed complete freedom to design the individual activities that best suited each person. ”

I had to confront the terrible suffering of so many different kinds in the patients I met there, and I used to have nightmares about their conditions. But gradually as I grew more experienced, I noticed I was given more and more 'tests' to deal with.

#### *A pivotal experience...*

One pivotal experience came when the Ward Sister in charge of the Rehab Ward approached me and asked me if I'd help her with a coma patient. This patient was in a private room away from the others and she asked me if I'd paint a mural in her room so that if she ever woke up, she'd realize how much we staff cared for her well-being and if she died, at least her family would know we'd done our best for her.

Then the Ward Sister explained that the patient had tried to commit suicide but had failed and she'd used the same method that my mother had used. Also, I learned this lady had one son who attended the same school as my own children.

The Ward Sister had no idea about my family background, but I felt God was testing me again to see if I could rise to the occasion and so I agreed to the request. I'd already painted several other murals in the hospital corridors to cheer patients up as they practiced walking along with their walking frames, and these had been well received.

All the time I worked in her room I spoke to her encouragingly, as many coma patients are fully aware but can't communicate. I painted her room as if it was a beautiful island full of flowers and wonderful skies, and as if her bed was a Lilo, floating in the bay with a jetty where she could disembark if she so wished.

Sadly, soon after the painting was finished, she passed away, but her family were very grateful we'd made so much effort for her. The room was afterwards used for infectious patients who needed to be isolated, so they enjoyed the mural too.

#### *After this experience...*

I was asked to help other coma patients, and by now, my interest in healing had developed to the stage that I'd decided to train as a homeopath in my spare time. I was fully qualified in this healing method by then and had already opened a homeopathy clinic in the hospital's Occupational Health Department for staff.

The Rehab Ward's consultant agreed to allow me, with the family's permission, to treat a new coma patient who'd been electrocuted at work and whose body had been forced into a fetal position so that he couldn't unlock his arms or legs.



*The patient's painting of their local town. I did this with the patients to decorate their garden room which led from the Rehab Ward into the new Sensory Garden.*

*We made this painting as a group project, as it is of their town. They all said which parts of the town they liked best, as part of a local history project, and to help those with memory problems as part of a Reminiscence Therapy project.*

*Then we sketched out details and got their approval, and then I painted it for them as they watched. If they wished, they could have painted it too, but they said they'd rather watch it grow as I painted it.*

*When it was in place, the patients proudly explained to their visitors which place was which. It's an old mill town and you can see some of the old mills in the background and the flowers from the Sensory Garden in the foreground.*



*A pantomime we put on for the patients and here's the Fairy from the Christmas tree!*



This caused a lot of problems as these parts of him couldn't be washed and infection was setting into the creases of his skin, despite antibiotics and muscle relaxant medication.

I treated him with homeopathy and his arms and legs gradually unlocked, allowing the nurses to clean him properly. At this point his family became alarmed and asked me to discontinue the treatment. Although they were pleased that he could now be washed, they were scared that if I continued to treat him, he'd then become aware of his overall condition and that this would cause him even more suffering.

### The stroke patient...

After this, I was asked to work on several other wards: Orthopedic and Stroke Wards as well as general Rehab. Once more, I felt I was being challenged by other 'texts' from God.

For example, in the Stroke Ward there was a furious patient who'd had a stroke and had been told it was unlikely that he'd ever be able to play the violin again or resume work as conductor of a famous orchestra.

He was so angry he threatened to sue the hospital and staff who were trying their best to help him. He used to whizz round the ward corridors in his wheelchair trying to knock over other recovering patients tottering along using their walking frames.

The staff were at their wits end and asked me to see if I could distract him. I had no idea how to approach him, but when working with patients I've always found it helpful to listen carefully to them, so they feel they are really being heard. I began by asking him about his orchestra.

Fortunately, he responded positively and so I saw him every day to hear all about his musical work, and he gradually began to calm down. It was such a good lesson on how if you can stay quiet within and really be at one with the person in need, it can help to resolve crisis situations.

### The locked psychiatric ward...

Soon afterwards, the hospital asked me if I'd like to work on the locked Ward in the Psychiatric hospital with patients who'd been Sectioned under the Mental Health Act and were obliged to stay as in-patients for a minimum of 28 days.

I felt this was yet another spiritual 'test' as most of these people had tried to commit suicide but had failed. I wondered if I could cope with this latest challenge though, as some of the patients were violent and I'm not very physically strong.

The hospital trained me in how to work with aggressive patients and with those recovering from suicide, and with some trepidation I started work. This whole experience underlined the theme that suicide has played out in my life, and I'm so grateful to God for offering me this opportunity to learn from it.

I worked in the hospital for over twenty years, learning all the time. At one point, just as I was about to go on duty in the Orthopedic Ward, I fell down some stairs at home and we had to call an ambulance.

I found myself with a fractured leg as a patient in the same ward I was supposed to be working >



*A photo of me with two patients with their painting of their town.*



*Part of the wall in coma patient's room which shows flowers sky and hills. In the right hand corner, you can just see the patient's bed, it seems as if its floating in the sea by the terrace pillars.*

on. This event gave me such insight into the hospital experience from the patients' perspective, and to realize how vulnerable and powerless many of them felt.

### The most important learning...

I worked in these wards until I was made redundant following an epidemic of MRSA, an infection that was really difficult to eradicate from hospitals at that time. The hospital then decided to close the creative activities project as it was peripatetic, and they felt infection would be spread too easily by myself and my volunteers continually moving from ward to ward.

From a mental health point of view, this was a disastrous decision, as we were a much-appreciated lifeline for patients, but from my point of view I felt the time had come for me to retire as I was now 68. Our four children had all moved south and invited us to move nearer them and our grandchildren.

If I had to say what I've learned most from these spiritual 'tests' it was to stay inwardly quiet enough to allow myself to be filled with kindness and love beyond my usual capacity. And that these painful experiences can lead to personal transformation if you can face the opportunity they offer with courage and trustful acceptance.

### While writing this article for Subud Voice...

One morning I was woken by a clear dream of my deceased father. He was holding a Bible and looked at me intently, as if trying to communicate a message to me. I couldn't understand what this message could be, until I remembered that his parents, my grandparents, had spent their lives establishing a new local branch of an Evangelical Christian church in their neighborhood in England, with several social work projects.

The church had even written a book about it called *Doing and Daring*.

As I'd lived mostly in the Far East until I was thirteen and they died before then, I scarcely knew them, only meeting them on a brief visit to England when I was eight.

The theme of my father's message seemed to be I should remember Jesus's command to heal the sick, and that my work in the hospital has been a continuation of this family social work tradition.

Since then, I've organized SIHA workshops at the UK congress and am continuing with my professional free-lance artwork again. I've also been using my healthcare experience to help my husband Mashud recover from a recent near-fatal car crash.

To my surprise, my own development has meant I've been able to, as Bapak says in the quote above, to 'receive something from God that has been useful in my life'.

I thank God that Mashud's now convalescing well and we're enjoying a peaceful life in the country, despite the pandemic.



*A painting made by a patient who had never painted since her school days, but now wanted to have a go!*



*Patient's collage...*



*MP and Mayor admiring patients' work at a celebration event. I hope this conveys some of the happy times we had.*



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# Facing Death with Equanimity

By Harris Smart...



*A famous scene from Ingmar Bergman's film The Seventh Seal. Death and a knight play chess. Make a friend of death. You can't avoid him so try to make friends with him. Try to understand him and appreciate his good qualities. Don't be negative, carping, critical or fearful.*

## **Losing our fear of death can have great benefits for our life now...**

Many people are so afraid of death that they cannot bear to look at it. Even just the word "death" terrifies them.

But there are actually benefits to be obtained by being able to look death directly in the face.

In the traditional religion, it was suggested that from time to time, people should "memento mori", that is "remember the last things". In other words, reflect on the fact that you will die.

If you can look death in the eye, you will find that it can alter your attitudes in a very positive way. It can actually have a profoundly beneficial effect not only on how you face death, but also on how you live your life now.

Strangely enough, there is nothing more exhilarating than befriending death. That is, to no longer hold death in fear and loathing, but to accept the reality of death in a relaxed way.

This is a well-known principle. We hear many stories about people who have faced death, and who then feel an increased appetite for life. How many times have you hear of someone who survived a near death experience such as an airplane disaster, and they say, "This has altered my life forever. From now I am going to value every moment of my life as a precious gift. I am just so grateful for life."

*I never found life so exciting...*

I had a friend who fell down a crevasse while climbing in the Himalayas. Fortunately, a rope pulled him up with a jerk and he was saved, but to say the least, that experience shook him up.

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He told me, “I never found life so exciting. It was like all my senses had been rinsed clean. I saw colours with amazing clarity. I heard sounds I had never heard before. Every sensation was sharp and distinct. Drinking a hot cup of tea sent waves of ecstasy through my body. I was super-sensitive to everything.”

Yes, to face death, seems to be life-enhancing. Still, of course, we find it hard to do it until we are forced to do so by falling down a crevasse or getting caught in an airplane disaster.

### An Inevitable Fact of Life

I had an amusing experience recently. In order to supplement my income, I need to do odd jobs from time to time. (Alas I am not one of those who prepared well financially for my retirement – more of a grasshopper than an ant, I am afraid.)

One such odd job recently was to act out the role of a patient with an illness for medical students doing their examinations. I was supposed to be a heart patient and in the course of acting out the illness, I discovered that I actually have some early warning signs of a heart problem.

So that brings death just that little bit closer. I always thought it would be the big C. that would take me away, as it did my mother and father, but now it looks like it might be the old ticker that lets me down.

So, this morning I started thinking about preparing for death. That does not mean I will die today, tomorrow, next week, in a month's time, in a year's time or 20 years' time. No, but the more I am able to look calmly at my situation, the better I will be able to prepare for it. It is hard to plan well for something that is surrounded by panic for you.

I started to think about practical things, Wills, and things that might need to be tidied up and so on. I was really able to put myself into a state of looking at death with equanimity and considering what would need to be done to prepare for it.

I also realized that if I lived in a state of being well-prepared for death, I would also live my current life in a different way. Probably a more calm and relaxed way. I would realize the futility of certain efforts that I make, and just give them up and be better off for it.

An awareness of death, “memento mori”. really, puts me in touch with the fundamental things in my life. Often, I am off chasing glitter while I lose sight of where the gold really is in my life. I can get caught up in all kinds of superficial interests and I may lose touch with the fundamentals of life like health, financial security, and the key relationships in with spouse and children.

### A Calm Certainty

I am fortunate in that I have the calm certainty of the existence of a soul or spirit that will continue after my death. I believe that life goes on, perhaps in some ways not so different from the way it is now. I do not feel terrified about it, as some people do who feel they have only extinction to look forward to.

And sometimes religion does not help, because it can fill people with a dread of death, because there might be something unpleasant waiting on the other side. Perhaps there is suffering on the other side, but I do not think we have to imagine a “lake of fire” or all the other fearsome visions of “hell” that have been inflicted on us in the past..

I suspect that our spirit suffers “over there” in much the same way as we suffer over here when we do something wrong or get ourselves caught up in trouble of one kind or another. Perhaps we feel the effects of our wrong actions more intensely over there because we are no longer surrounded by a physical shell, and things will strike our spirit directly.

Anyway, I know that I am fortunate to have that “calm certainty” that my life will continue after death, and also that it will essentially be an OK experience. Sure, a few things may have to be cleaned up in me. I may have to be taken off to the workshop to have some essential maintenance done. I may need to go to a sanitarium for a while to regain my spiritual health. Whatever... I am sure all essential services are provided on the other side.

I think this certainty of an ongoing life that is OK helps in facing death. But I'm sure there are >

“ *Look at death in a relaxed way. It is going to come whether you like it or not.* ”



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many people who do not have a belief in an immortal soul, or a life after death, who also manage to face death with equanimity. If you are a believer, or a nonbeliever, the experience of looking at death can be a salutary one. "Memento Mori" works just as well the atheists as it does for religious people.

So, don't turn away from death in fear and loathing. Try and calm your feelings. Look at death in a relaxed way. It is going to come, whether you like it or not. Death is inevitable so you might as well get used to his presence. Look at him calmly, quietly. He is not so bad. This is his role. He could say, "Sorry you don't like me, but this is what I have been assigned to do in the great scheme of things. This too is a necessity, a natural part of life."

### Have a talk to Death...

Tell him of your fears. Tell him how you hate to leave this wonderful world and all the people you love, and all the things you have become attached to.

“ Have a talk to death.  
He is your friend. ”

I have found, since I have started talking to him, that he is a great help. He really listens. He does not just push his own point of view. You will find in him a wise counselor.

Befriend Death. He is your companion. Have a joke with Death. He does not mind. He is not offended. He has a sense of humour. He can take it.

I was having a chat with death the other day and he told me that he is really sick of his "Grim Reaper" image. It is entirely out of date and much too scary, he told me. He is looking for a new, softer, more user-friendly image.

Something suited to the new age where death is no longer something to be feared, but simply a vehicle of transition between two states of being. Now and later, this side and the other side. In old mythologies death was depicted as a boatman, ferrying souls across to the other side of the river.

"That is all I am," he tells me. "A transition, a transformation. Things that once seemed fearsome or dreadful when seen in their true light are necessary, natural and welcome, even enjoyable and exhilarating."

In the awareness of death, and the inner and outer preparation for death, I am sure many good things can come to you.

### My father's experience...

My father went away to the Second World War and when he returned, he began his studies to become a school-teacher. Then he felt suddenly ill, went into a coma and was found to have a brain tumor that couldn't be operated on. He died in three weeks.

After his death, my mother went to collect his things from the hospital. A man who had been in the same ward as my father told her that just before he died, my father sat up in bed and said, "I must go into the other room now."

It was as simple as that. As easy as that. Stepping from one room into another. ●

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## The Palm of Victory

*Ismail Fido writes about how as well as their immediate catastrophic effects the impacts of war continuing for generations...*

There is a Latin motto "Qui palmam meruit ferat". (Let him/her who is worthy of the (victor's) palm bear it.)

It is the motto of many educational institutions, including Upper Canada College, a famous boys' school in Toronto whose alumni include the author, academic, former newspaper editor and actor, the late Robertson Davies, the sort of person I would've liked to have seen join Subud.

Life has been challenging recently and, by the Grace of God, I think I may have gained the Palm of Victory. I feel exhausted but elated. I have lived through Hell, and Hell isn't a nice place, believe me!

The major part/consideration/demand on my life of the last four years or more, fortunately rapidly receding into the mists of "What Has Been", was my wife's Alzheimer's and my doomed >



*"Illness can monster you, like the Great Wave off Kanagawa."  
(The Great Wave off Kanagawa by Katsushika Hokusai 1760-1849)*

attempt to halt it a little like a latter day Horatius at the Bridge. Horatius was successful. I was not.

The Alzheimer's was the Everest of the ill health my wife suffered for many years. How many? At least all of the 32 years I've known her.

Some suffer periods of ill health. Others suffer lifetimes. Rita has suffered a cocktail of mental and physical problems since I've known her.

It was bizarre. I used to joke that one of my major hobbies was attending my wife's medical appointments with her when it was totally unnecessary.

### Illness can...

Illness can monster you, like the Great Wave off Kanagawa. It can also change your joy to sadness and your sadness and its effect can monster others. I must confess all this has had a dire effect on me.

Rita is now being well looked after in a decent nursing home. Our lives can now proceed separately, as they must. God is very good. Rita is very happy in her new home in the joyful second childhood Alzheimer's sometimes brings.

There are still medical and psychological problems which must be faced, but I think Rita is now in latihan 24/7 and under the protection of Almighty God. I am also free of my Sisyphean fate of being her carer/helpmeet/whatever. It was awful. It almost destroyed me.

Rita – and I don't think she'd mind me saying this if it could possibly help others – was an abused child. Abused not sexually, thank God, but psychologically and physically.

Both Rita's parents were badly affected by the hellish evil launched by Adolf Hitler on Europe.

The late Roland Blauensteiner, whose family were definitely not adherents of the Nazi philosophy, told us exactly what happened in Austria during the Anschluss when he was a young, impressionable and innocent boy.



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That helped me understand what happened to both Rita's parents and through them, to Rita.

### Rita's Father...

Rita's father was born in Nemours near Paris. At 16 he became a bicycle courier for the Resistance. He was neither caught nor tortured by the Gestapo and their French collaborators, but he knew those who were. This had a horrific effect on him.

Viola, Rita's late mother, was a Russian from the Urals. She was taken as a young girl, with her family, to work in the slave labour camps where so many Europeans were taken to work in the factories to help the German war effort.

I will not go into details of the horrors of the camp I have heard, but it made me feel very proud that my father, was an officer of the storied Grenadiers regiment of the British Indian Army played such a large part in defeating the Axis.

### The ordeal...

I think what I've been trying to say in this article is that my marriage, including our mutual struggle with Rita's Alzheimer's, has been what the Jungian analyst Adolf Guggenbuhl-Craig in his book "Marriage, dead or alive" has called the ordeal which has helped make me a man: a real one.

For this I am grateful for the gift of Subud, including Bapak and Ibu Rahayu; my wonderful family scattered across the globe; my lifelong friends; my many mentors, including the staffs of Xavier College and Melbourne Grammar School in my time there; several wonderful tutors at Melbourne University and so many others.

Recently, with Rita's problems, I could have really fallen off my tree and gone into a fatal psychological nosedive. The fact that I am not a defeated mess, I attribute to God working through real love and support in real people. As a rather stiff upper lip character, it makes me feel quite emotional.

The Brisbane Subud Group, through its historical progress, recently found itself without a functional Men Helpers' group. When you wanted to test on important matters, it was impossible to do so. Not a good place to be. Subud without facilities for testing is not Subud.

Fortunately, I was able to get onto Harris and Irwan in Northern NSW and to do some simultaneous latihan and testing with them. Thanks guys! You literally saved my bacon. Saving The Fido's bacon is something he does not forget.

Something quite monumental happened to Subud Brisbane last month. That was the visit here by the entire National Helpers' Dewan. I think it cleaned out most of our Augean Stables. I am grappling to put into words the effect on me. Sometimes words fail you. Like now!


A deep inner experience...

Reshad Feild, who some older Subud members may know from their own long and sometimes painful spiritual search, had a deep inner experience at the tomb of the great Sufi, Sheikh Bayram Wali in Ankara. When Reshad told his mentor Bulent Rauf about the experience, the latter replied "May you never recover!"

For those in this Subud group who were capable of being deeply moved spiritually, this National Helpers' visit was a bit like Reshad Field's experience. May we never recover!

I wanted to do something to thank the National Helpers for what they had done, so I commissioned the local Cheesecake Shop to bake a really great cake and I asked Rasjad to ask Liliana if she would cut it on behalf of the National Helpers. She did and it was a great moment.

I think we needed a ceremony like that to mark the occasion. Perhaps it's my military and Raj administrative ancestry. But it worked, like the topping off ceremony when a tall building is completed.



# The Benefit and Use of the Latihan

*Dr Rachman Mitchell writes from Perth, Australia, about how the latihan and testing can help us to solve the everyday problems that arise in our lives...*

Bapak has given hundreds of talks under the above heading and maybe it was that number because we have clearly been very slow in understanding what he meant. It is better “I” take ownership of the above and not say we. I have little excuse after 63 years of latihan.

In relation to my heading “use and benefit” I reminded myself of two bits of advice that Bapak gave in the carrying out of our latihan.

1 Be aware of what the spontaneous movements in your latihan are showing you.

2 Be aware and present at your front door when the Divine Postman knocks to give you a personal message.



## Testing about an unresolved issue...

At this point I need to thank my NH brothers Rashad Johnson and Steven Armytage for leading a testing session at a kejiwaan meeting this last weekend that helped me understand. There has been in my mind an unresolved issue

There has been in my mind an unresolved issue in our group for the last eighteen months from a change in the plans to upgrade the facilities at our hall. It involved a considerable amount of anger that had ricocheted around our group and which I had very much “taken to heart”.

I asked whether I could test this question and received a very clear movement containing both the feeling and thought of handing this problem over to the One above us. Then I remembered that I had been making this movement for some time, but I had not been so aware of the content and its meaning.

In other words, my inner self had been showing me all along that this problem which I had “taken to heart” was not my problem or responsibility and that this tendency in me to take on responsibilities that were not my business had a long history that I needed to be more aware of. Also, it was taking me away from the responsibilities that were mine. I was relieved of a huge weight.

## Struggling with critical thoughts about others...

My second experience which illustrates about “use and benefit” came during Ramadan when I had been struggling with critical and judgemental thoughts of others and failing despite trying.

I was sitting in my study at around 3 am wondering how I was going to deal with this inner and unwelcome hobgoblin that had settled on the perch of my inner feeling.

Out of the blue my right hand came up to my heart and grabbed this little demon and flung him rightwards into the far distance. Then the same happened on the left side.

I then asked what should replace these two creatures that had been so happy in my heart and immediately my voice spoke my name ‘Abdurrachman’



*Be present at your front door when the Divine Postman knocks to give you a personal message...*



Whether the account of these experiences will be of any help to you, I do not know but I thank again Bapak, whose birthday we celebrated recently, for not only passing on to us the Latihan which leads us both to the spontaneous worship of the Almighty and of a true knowledge of our own self, but also for all his talks and impersonal care of us.



# God Stopped the Flood, Where Doctors Failed

*Subagio, originally from Indonesia but resident in Australia, for many years writes about how the latihan helped with a health problem...*

There was a period in my married life when my word was a 'Gospel' to my wife.

Her faith and confidence in me had been built on her personal experiences and observation through a long period of time. She had by then been a witness to a number of my receiving for some fifteen years.

It was in the early eighties that my wife had a period problem. She was experiencing flooding that would not stop for months. She had seen doctors about her problem and none of them had been able to help. She then one day asked me if I would do testing if I would be able to receive an answer to her health problem.

I said to my wife; "I do not normally do formal testing, to be honest I never seem to be able to receive a clear-cut answer at formal testing, but I will send your problem above and just wait if I could then receive an answer in one form or another. It may take days or weeks, or I may never receive an answer at all".

I 'sent' my wife's problem 'above', and never did formal testing about it. I left it entirely to God's "discretion". If He thought that I should know the answer, I believe He would let me know one way or another that I would understand. If He does not think I should know, then obviously I would not receive any answer.

That has always been my attitude of surrender. If God thinks I should know, He will steal the moment on me when I am empty and let me know the answer to my question.

## Receiving

In the shower is one of the many common places when one can enjoy having a quiescent mind.

One day, when I was in the shower, an imperative instruction sentence was "spoken" in my mind.

The sentence went "HAVE A BATH!!!" and at that very instant my mind was connected to my wife with her "flooding" problem.

My instant understanding of the message was that "Your wife's flooding problem will go away if she takes a hot bath in the evening".

When I came out of the shower, I told my wife of my experience and suggested that she should have a hot bath in the evening if she wants the flooding to stop.

She said, "But I do not like having a bath".

I knew she was sincere in what she said, and somehow, I was able to say.

"Well, if you do not want to have a hot bath, have a hot shower in the evening then".

My wife was happy with the suggestion. That evening she ventured to have a hot shower.

And do you know what? God is merciful, my wife's flooding stopped the very next day, and thereafter ever.

God is not only merciful, but He is also generous, understanding and accommodating too. He lets you bargain with Him provided you are sincere.

In this instance He let my wife have a hot shower instead of a hot bath for her healing.

Thank you, God!



*He lets you bargain with Him, provided you are sincere...*



*What the doctors can't do, God can do.  
Was it a coincidence?  
Was it a wild imagination?  
Was it a true receiving?  
The Truth is between God and me alone.  
My wife is a living witness.  
It did work, and that is what matters.*

# THE PASSING OF ROHAN WARNESURIYA

*Marcus Mackay writes...*

Rohan Warnesuriya died peacefully on the morning of Saturday July 19 in Perth, where he had lived for the past five decades.

He was one of the earliest Subud members to be opened in Australia. He served as a helper and National Helper in Subud. He leaves behind two sons and his previous wife. He was a modest, but a very talented man. May God Bless Rohan on his journey.

[Tribute to Rohan from Lawrence Smith of the Perth, Australia, Subud group...](#)

I first met Rohan in 1973 when I arrived in Perth. To me, Rohan was a friend & a seeker, or as he expressed it, a seeker after The Highest Good – the Buddhist portrayal of heaven (Nirvana) being more abstract than what Westerners tend to regard as a more personal Godhead

Having said that, in his final years, as a sort of Internationalist, he enjoyed very much the fellowship that was expressed, and that he felt among some local Christian sects & communities, and, at the end, at Hilltop.

From an early age he'd been impressed by his School headmaster's even-handedness with the religious round. Each day a different religion would be selected around which to base that morning's Assembly, complete with the appropriate prayers and texts.

Throughout his life, although born into Buddhism, he sought many Masters, and one that he found as his first, and was most impressed by, was Jiddu Krishnamurti.

The core of Krishnamurti's teaching could be put this way: "Mankind can't come to Truth through any organization, through any creed, through any dogma, priest or ritual, nor through any philosophical knowledge or psychological technique. But simply through deeply investigating one's [heart &] mind."

This appealed to Rohan's sense of freedom, independence & creativity; a clear responsibility for himself, for his clarified heart & mind through self-inquiry, self-insight, truth-seeking – and through relating & aiming himself towards That Highest Good he could imagine. He applied this to his art & his architecture.

Later he would be attracted to the ideas and concepts of George Gurdjieff. Gurdjieff was a rather mysterious Greek Armenian who came to the West before the Russian Revolution of 1917 & influenced many French, British and American artists and intellectuals of the time. He was a philosopher, a mystic, a spiritual teacher and composer. Many of Gurdjieff's ideas and sayings could be called 'Ageless Wisdom', and 'Esoteric Christianity', ideas which excited & intrigued Rohan and tickled his funny bone. The world that Gurdjieff portrayed and the techniques he taught were far more colourful, dynamic and at times outrageous, than the comparative coolness, even coldness, of Krishnamurti.

The Gurdjieff work, like that of Krishnamurti, was about in-



*Rohan at Hilltop*



*Rohan's painting...*

“ A modest and very talented man...”



quiring into self, giving up one's fantasies and illusions thus converting your energy into something deeper at your core, thus awakening and widening the inner experience & discovering a more vivid relationship to the wider Cosmos – to be truly immediate & Present, to be more vividly 'here & now'.

Then Rohan discovered Subud which completed his searching. With Subud he said he'd found what he'd been looking for all his life. He'd found a personal way of contacting and being spontaneously refreshed, inspired, enlivened – perhaps even purified – by what he'd always called "The Highest Good. Praise be to God."

[Tribute to Rohan from the University of Melbourne Alumni profiles website .  
https://msd.unimelb.edu.au/alumni/alumni-profiles/rohan-gamini-warnesuriya](https://msd.unimelb.edu.au/alumni/alumni-profiles/rohan-gamini-warnesuriya)

Rohan (Gamini) Warnesuriya

Just after ANZAC Day 2013, in a coffee shop in Perth, I met a remarkable man – another of our graduates whose life has taken an unpredictable path. Born and raised in what was then Ceylon, Rohan (then called Gamini) Warnesuriya could be described as a self-made man with so many talents that throughout his life it has been hard for him to choose between architecture, planning, business management and his first love, art.

Rohan's arrival in Australia in 1958 was thanks to the celebrated Colombo Plan\*. Coming to Australia was life changing in many ways, enabling him to explore interests both creative and philosophical. As a member of the celebrated '43 group of artists from Ceylon, Rohan's art was sought after by galleries and in 1959 he shared the prestigious Perth International Prize for Contemporary Art with noted artist Robert Juniper.

A talented student, Rohan was allowed by Professor Brian Lewis to complete his B. Arch. in less than the mandated 5 years, to return to fulfil his obligations to the Ceylonese Government, which, after he contributed designs for the Supreme Court, sent him to Leeds in the UK for further training. In the UK, he completed a post graduate diploma in Town Planning, and was awarded a United Nations Fellowship in Town and Country Planning across Europe, following which he returned to become Deputy Director of the Department of Planning.

His growing interest in Subud\*\*, led him in 1970 to look for a change of pace, and led him back to Australia. On arrival in Perth, he was appointed Chief Planner of the Housing Commission of Western Australia, in which capacity he served for 20 years. He also planned the South Hedland new Town in the Pilbarra Region.

Following retirement in 1988, Rohan studied Japanese, continued to paint and exercise every day. Each year he has travelled the world to Subud Congresses and now that he is 85 and slowing down, he remembers fondly the many people at the University of Melbourne who helped a young immigrant find his feet and his centre.

Among these he pays tribute to Ray Berg, Doug Alexander, Eric Westbrook (NGV Director), and Darcy(Lamont) Lear (fellow ABP student and Subud member). Above all, he cites the author and teacher JK Ewers, who led him to Subud and inspired his spiritual life.

\* *The Colombo Plan occupies a prominent place in the history of Australia's relations with Asia, where it is best remembered for sponsoring thousands of Asian students to study or train in Aus-*



*Rohan's painting...*



*Rohan's painting...*

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tralian tertiary institutions, between 1949 and 1957 (DFAT)

\*\* Rohan says that: *Subud is an association of people who follow the Latihan Kejiwaan, an exercise of surrender to the divine force within each one of us.*

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## PASSING OF PAULA COLLETTE

Paula Collette died peacefully on Tuesday morning (29th of June 2021) in Adelaide.

She was born in 1926 in Kandy, Ceylon. Paula was opened in 1958 along with her husband Leonard Collette in Colombo. They were both founding members of the Ceylon group.

She lived the last 60 years in Australia between Sydney and Melbourne, and latterly Adelaide, serving as a helper at the local and national level.

She leaves behind three children Noelaine, Melinda & Kenneth, and granddaughter Saskia. Paula was much loved and will be greatly missed. ●



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## THE PASSING OF RIDWAN DOBSON

He thought outside the box... from [www.subudworldnews.com](http://www.subudworldnews.com)2021

Ridwan Dobson, a Subud pioneer from the early days in the UK, passed on in the early hours of June 28, 2021, in Indonesia.

He is well remembered for his creativity, intelligence and the multitude of projects he was involved with over the years, where he would find unusual solutions for engineering topics, especially in Indonesia where he was also a strong proponent of Bapak's vision for Kalimantan. His friend Wayne Lerrigo summarises it by saying: "Ridwan not only thought outside the box, he found many new boxes to play with."

To list a few things he was involved in: the designing of the shell-shaped sun screens for the PTS Widjojo building; floating jetties for seaplanes; mini hydro power plants; restaurants; houses (such as Simon Guerrand's iron wood house in Rungan Sari); a water bottling plant; Yummy milk products with his wife at the time, Hermina; a cement factory... the list goes on even more.

He is also remembered for his good humour, easy smile, twinkling eyes, and a capacity to forgive and forget. He will not be forgotten, however.

Paloma de la Viña remembers when Ridwan was in Spain years ago, building houses, swimming pools and garden walkways, using elegant paving stones imprinted with leaves, flowers and other pictures.

With great generosity of spirit, he also helped her when she arrived in Palangkaraya, Kalimantan, in 2000, as a volunteer working on the World Congress that was to be held in 2001 in Kalimantan, introducing her to government officials and Dayak leaders.

He also organised a trip for her to Sampit, taking a truckload of rice and sanitary products to a refugee camp there: "I only have good memories of Ridwan, and I don't feel like I thanked him enough for everything he did for me at the time. Till we meet again, my good friend. May God grant you a good place in heaven." May Ridwan's ongoing journey be blessed.



*Ridwan Dobson*

From Sharif Horthy...

Ridwan and I met when we were 12, both just starting out in the same house in a boarding school in the north of Scotland. British boarding schools are divided into houses - a form of divide and rule. Our house was called Duffus. >



In those days his name was Michael, but I was not supposed to know that, as first names were frowned on in British boys' schools – he was Dobson and I was Horthy. I was a long way from home, but Ridwan lived close by, in Findhorn, a village of sand dunes on the Moray Firth, which later became the unlikely home of the alternative agriculture movement, where people communicated with plants and persuaded them to extraordinary feats of growth.

My early memories of Ridwan were that his enormous appetite for sports – which I absolutely did not share – meant that he always had at least one limb in a cast and mostly got around on crutches. Another was his daily clarinet practice at full volume in the dining room, which pretty much drowned out everything else that went on in Duffus house.

Ridwan and I must have been fairly good friends, as I sometimes got to spend weekends at his parents' place in Findhorn. After a few years of friendship, his unconventional attitude to life and cynical humour convinced me that it was safe for me to share with him my profound interest in the disruptive teachings of George Ivanovitch Gurdjieff. I only did this with one other person in our house: Tim, later Lawrence, Fryer. They both came to share my interest, and so, for a few years, our school harboured a secret cell of three Gurdjieff acolytes.

Of us three, Ridwan left school first, to join the Royal Navy, while Lawrence and I persisted with our more academic orientation.

This gave us the opportunity, upon leaving school, to discover the Gurdjieff group in Coombe Springs, and that led us both to Subud. Although, as far as I know, neither of us made a special effort to keep in touch with Ridwan, he evidently figured out that something strange had happened to us.

Throughout my first couple of years in Subud I would receive regular postcards from Ridwan, from the most remote places on earth, asking for the address of the local Subud group so he could get opened in Hong Kong, Fiji or wherever. I tried my best but the speed of communication in those days meant that this never worked. It was only when he gave up the Navy and returned to England to start a family, that he finally got opened.

As always, he went all in, and was soon running an enterprise employing a group of young Subud members, making pine furniture and doing renovations in South West England...

Dear Ridwan, may God guide you on your journey home!



*Gordonstoun School...*



*Ridwan with team of architects...*



*Arifin and Rosdina with Wijaya Kusuma flowers that bloom for one night only...*

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### From another Ridwan...

I first met Ridwan in 1975 at Kenfield Hall in the UK. He was installing a solar heating system he had invented for swimming pools. It was an intricate system of hosepipes that he put under a concrete perimeter surrounding the pool that used the pool pump to circulate the water under the in-ground concrete deck.

In 1985 I worked with Ridwan in the GRC factory he had developed to manufacture the sun-screens for the S Widjojo building. He started the GRC industry in Indonesia.

We began every day with breakfast at his house in Wisma Subud, often testing "what will be the effect inwardly and outwardly of eating this food?"

He had a wonderful sense of humour and wry smile particularly when discussing his roots in Scotland and his school, Gordonstoun, near Inverness.

He was an exceptionally gifted engineer who came up with many novel but always cost effective and inspired solutions. He had trained as a British Royal Navy Engineer at Dartmouth. He attributed being creative and inventive to his BRN Engineer training to produce innovative solutions made with no inputs, quickly!

He developed laminated timber beams first using one in S Widjojo and then using them for economical housing projects. He continued building swimming pools without walls, just using a flexible lining against compacted earth. More recently he developed an ingenious solution for cost-effective retaining walls for use on the steep slopes of the mountains around Lembang near Bandung where he lived.

Ridwan was very committed to the latihan and he loved testing to resolve every dilemma! He was willing to immediately, without hesitating test his favourite questions "How does Bapak look upon this?" "What will be the effect on Subud if we do this?" "How do the angels look upon this?" He would readily test your talent or "how is this for your inner and outer?"

He developed and ran the Yummy dairy business introducing the production of good quality yoghurt and cheese to Indonesia with Hermina. He later sold the business which is still operating today with their products in all the big supermarkets. He became an Indonesian citizen after he married Hartini and left Kalimantan to live in Bandung.

He would often call to tell me how proud he was of his son Arifin's Masters in Astrophysics or the latest international competition Arifin had just won. He was extremely proud of his daughter Rosi (Rosdina) qualifying and practising as a Civil Engineer from ITB.

### And from Marcus Bolt...

I met Ridwan in 1970 and he invited me to stay at his home for a few weeks. It was a roller coaster time with lots of laughs and fun. I loved the way Ridwan would sit at the table, then suddenly go quiet because he was testing about something or other. (And I often fell for it... one night it was pouring with rain and Ridwan went into testing mode, then opened his eyes and said, 'It's your turn to put the chickens away...')

I remember that he was inordinantly fond of Lucia's home made black-currant jam, and when he discovered it was also my favourite, he hid his cache... later he told me ruefully that he had been 'punished' for this bit of 'meanness', because, apparently, the whole year's stock had gone mouldy.

I also worked with Ridwan professionally, helping out with the marketing of some of his remarkable inventions (the plumbed-in combination lavatory seat and bidet, and, most brilliant of all, the solar heated swimming pool system, mentioned above by the other Ridwan).

We created a sales brochure together and I helped with the name and designing a logo. The product was called SolarPave.

We seem to lose touch in the late 70s, but I occasionally bumped into him over the years at UK and World Congresses. It was always the same, as though yesterday was the last time I saw him. Straight into jokes, pranks and larks, always augmented by Ridwan's infectious laughter.

And that's how I'd like to remember him.





# FAMILY TIES...

*This month's featured poet is Haryanti Stuart from Sydney, Australia. She has a large extended family and many of her poems deal with the theme of family...*

Haryanti has had long and varied careers both inside Subud and out. She has been a journalist, writer and copywriter. In Subud she has been a helper and held positions as Chair of the Canberra group and Committee Councillor for Subud Australia.

As well as her life in Australia she was part of the legendary Brecon Subud group. As Sydney secretary, she helped organise the first live-in week together, with Bapak and his party staying nearby, enabling members to have a more intense experience. She writes... How to condense more than eight decades of living, fifty of them in Subud into anything that has meaning?

The eldest of three girls, I was born and educated in Sydney. We moved a lot, but the one constant was my school, Abbotsleigh. We were taught by a remarkable lot of women, headed by an even more remarkable principal, who reiterated, year after year, how very lucky we were to be students there, and to take out into the world the values instilled in us. A love of learning, of decency, of service.

I've been married three times, but earned my widow's weeds, and have six children, twenty-one grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. I feel blessed – by life's riches, and by all I've learnt from the difficult times. In my late sixties, I moved to Brecon, in Wales, and experienced a lifestyle grounded in community, enriched by poets and painters, sculptors and musicians; a place imbued with a spiritual dimension that was palpable.

Back in Australia I delight in being with family – and listening to grandchildren who've been brought up in a different world to mine and face a very different future. I love hearing their views.

In Subud I've held many positions, including being helper – all accepted as my way of saying thank you for the latihan.



*This photo, taken by Haryanti Stuart's daughter Lillian Stuart, shows "about two thirds" of Haryanti's extended family.*

## ON MY MOTHER'S DEATH

I know you tried ...so hard,  
I know you cared, but  
you didn't have the faintest idea  
how to show me. Not as affection anyway,  
and definitely not with words.

Until the very end. Almost  
the last hour.  
When, speech gone, and peaceful  
at last, you stretched out your  
hands, and circled my face so gently  
that tears spilled over.  
And then we both knew that  
love was there,  
and forgiveness,  
on both sides.

I sang to you. Not with words,  
Just quiet gentle sounds that came  
of their own accord.  
My last gift to you before we parted.

Six hours later you left this world,  
and my sister put  
three jonquils  
on your breast:  
one for each daughter.  
You'd said how beautiful they smelled.  
So we were  
glad to give them to you, and wondered  
if you were close enough to know.

## PARTINGS

So many little deaths.  
The first at birth.  
I ask, "Please don't cut the cord.  
Not yet.  
Wait until the pulsing stops".  
This conduit is too intimate  
to sunder with so crude an instrument.

Months later, suckling you  
before your weaning,  
tears fall unbidden, as I wrap  
layers of protection round  
my heart, holding tight this tender,  
final offering  
of my cells to yours.

These are the first of many partings:  
day at school, first sleepover,  
first time behind the wheel.  
Trivial in themselves, but each a step  
to that wrenching day when  
child leaves home, a child no more.

But under all the tears such  
joy, as you make your  
eager steps across bridges  
built solid with my love.

As you grow older, so do I.  
Will I be ready to cross the  
bridge from this  
world's journey to the next,  
as I in turn part finally from you?

The  
first fist-  
curl round a  
little finger  
enslaves forever, ensures forgiveness -  
no matter the sleepless hours ahead, no  
matter the tears  
shed. Love is  
here to  
stay.

## FAMILIES

Families are the most amazing, incredible,  
Aggravating, wonderful things.  
The world in microcosm.  
The way everyone in them shares...  
thoughts, feelings, little kindnesses, a smile,  
and the infuriating habits  
that lodge in the centre;  
the irritant in the pearl.  
But when all's said and done, it's the pearl that lasts.  
A lustrous continuum to smooth the spurs and round the corners,  
layer upon layer till the whole is strong.

*(Written after bedding down 23 family members during one  
Christmas in Canberra)*

## HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF

From half a world away my daughter rang.  
She there in Australia, me here in Wales.  
"I'm building a drystone wall", she said.  
"My first attempt. The children  
will want to run along it, so  
I'm building it low and strong, curving around  
my vegetable garden.  
It looks so good".

Years ago, across the seas from here in Wales,  
back there in Australia,  
I built a long low curving  
drystone wall, wide and strong.  
My children sped, arms outstretched  
for balance as they flew along  
its length. It was my first attempt and  
it looked so good.

Now she lives just minutes from that home  
where she was born in far Australia,  
while I live here in Wales, remembering  
across the seas a different land that  
shaped us both, mother and daughter.  
Impelled by Celtic forbears to build,  
each in our time, a drystone wall.  
It feels so good.



# DEVELOPING BUCELAS

*Taken from Zone 3's Project & Properties issue 11, June 2021...*

During the Zone 3 council meeting in May, delegates were excited to hear about the new development and investment plans for the Bucelas Subud Centre in Portugal. The following article is based on the presentation given by Anali Lopes, Subud Portugal Chair.

The Bucelas Subud Centre is located in a rural area north of Lisbon, and is a 30 minute drive from Subud Portugal's Lisbon House. The property was purchased in two stages in 1975 and the 1980s, and has a history of enterprise ventures, including rural projects, artistic retreats, and it has been used as a film production location.

The most recent enterprise to be established at Bucelas is the Arts & Crafts workshop in 2019 (featured in Projects & Properties Issue 4), coordinated by resident artist, Lucas Almeida. The workshop is now operational, and the enterprise is also looking for new projects and partnerships. Bucelas consists of eight major buildings and over five hectares of land. Over the years, the condition of several buildings has deteriorated and investment and repairs are now needed.

In 2019 Subud Portugal met with the local council to obtain a permit for 'Local Lodgement' (touristic accommodation) for Albergaria and so they could start working on an investment plan.

To read the full story and many others from Zone 3 and beyond, please click and download [Projects and Properties Issue 11](#)



Also in this issue...

- Talks with the Area 2 IHs - get to know Howard Ray in the fifth of a series of interviews with the International Helpers
  - Projects - learn about Harman and Mirabelle Viviana Scott's innovative 'Visioning Spaces' project, and Jamil Hugenholtz introduces his 'Soul Families' programme
  - Properties - find out about the exciting development plans in Portugal, and how a spiritual journey has culminated in a property project in Poland
  - Subud Culture - SICA Britain shares about some of its recent activities, and Raymond Lee is working with some of Subud Indonesia's youth to cultivate mediation and effective communication skills
  - Shared experiences - read about the Subud France congress, how the Orgiva WhatsApp group supported members observing Ramadan, and about choosing Subud names
- Enjoy a great read, and a visual treat!

## I love God's little touches

Random flowers in the meadow,  
A young child's chuckle while I'm deep in thought.

A rainbow – but where is the rain?  
Ten pelicans on the shore instead of two,  
Two kisses from you when one would do.

I love God's little touches –  
Cheeky kookaburras waking me at dawn,  
A day full of worries that came to nought.  
Someone laughed, even though in pain?  
A stranger knocked, or could it be you?  
Two hugs for me when I'm feeling blue.



I love God's little touches –  
And I love you.

*Poem by Dahlan Simpson*

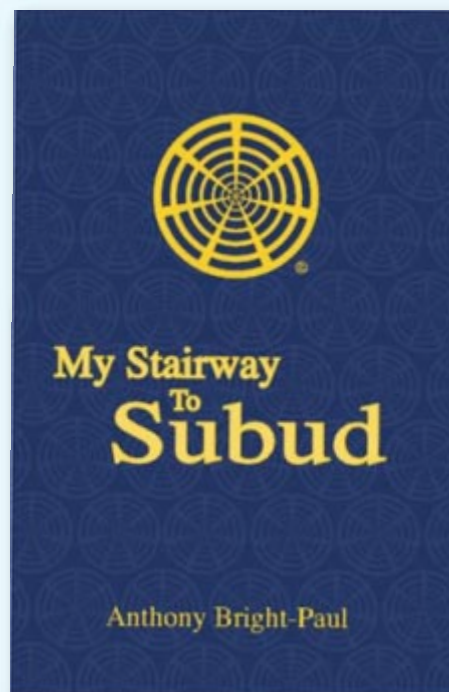
## A D V E R T I S E M E N T S

Much of *My Stairway to Subud* first appeared as the record of a young man in the early 1950s searching for values and inner understanding. At various times he was an admirer of Mahatma Gandhi, a student with the Sri Ramakrishna Vedanta Society, then a follower of G.I. Gurdjieff for seven years under the direction of J.G. Bennett, author of *The Dramatic Universe* and *What are we living for?* – His search reached an explosive climax when Pak Subuh, the founder of the international spiritual movement Subud, came to England in 1957.

Anthony Bright-Paul gives an acutely observed account of the Gurdjieff methods as performed and practised at Coombe Springs with John Bennett, and a first-hand account of both the euphoria and the upheaval caused by the arrival of Pak Subuh who brought with him the latihan kejiwaan, the spiritual training of Subud.

Because he was so devoted to the ideas of Gurdjieff, and to John Bennett personally, the story of his initial resistance to Subud, and then his complete reversal, makes poignant and dramatic reading. His chronicle of the early days in Subud in the western world is unique for its detail of this period. Available from SPI at: [www.subudbooks.com](http://www.subudbooks.com)

**PRICE £10.00** incl P&P UK (*plus Postage rest of world*).





# THE JOURNEY OF LITTLE TWIG

*An inspirational children's story, written by Lynnelle Stewart (Subud USA) and illustrated by Rosanna Mount (Subud UK).*

EXCITING NEWS! AMAZON can now PRINT the story of Little Twig's adventures WITHIN AUSTRALIA. Kindle ebook also available.

## Ruth Taylor

This inspiring and moving story about heroism and self discovery is beautifully told, with delightful illustrations that capture the inner and outer journey of Little Twig. This is a wonderful gift to current and future generations. Thank you, Lynnelle and Rosanna.

## Victoria Stiles

A story of courage and determination. This is a magnificently told story of a courageous young man. The illustrations are colorful, bright and help tell the story of Little Twig. As a former teacher, I would highly recommend this book!! It would be an excellent addition to any classroom! If you are looking for a gift for a young person, this is a perfect gift!!!

## Lucy Houbart

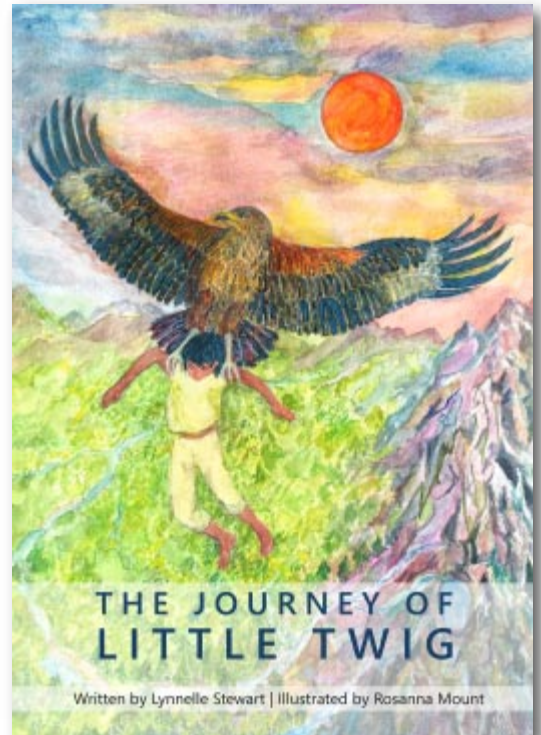
I think it is a book that gives inspiration and comfort to both adults and children...could be read many times over without losing the impact of its powerful message.

## Hasana Birk

A story written from the soul that will leave its imprint on all who join Little Twig in his quest to save his people and discover his true self. The Journey of Little Twig will delight both "our wondrous children and their wise elders". I hope it is the first of a series.

## NOW AVAILABLE ON AMAZON

The creation and publication of The Journey of Little Twig is an ongoing harmonious and cooperative project involving the talents of several SUBUD members. It is available on Amazon in countries around the world as both a paperback book and eBook for Amazon Kindle; currently in English. If you enjoy it, PLEASE help us build interest, and support sales, by POSTING A POSITIVE REVIEW on Amazon.



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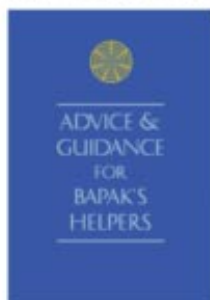
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