



## IBU RAHAYU TO RETIRE

Most of you will have seen the opening remarks which Ibu Rahayu made at the recent WSA meeting since they have been widely distributed by email.

In these remarks Ibu Rahayu explains that she will no longer be answering members' requests for names and other matters. She says, "In fact, it is time for me to retire; inwardly, I do not feel like going on working."

In the course of the talk she makes very many interesting observations about her work answering members' questions and requests.

She says at one point, "In truth, having a Subud name is not a must. But in practice these days, many

members, if not most of them, ask for a Subud name.

They used to ask for the name of their soul. Wow, if I had to find out the name of each of your souls, I would go crazy."

She refers to a letter received in 2014 which she has not yet been able to answer because in the case of every letter she has to wait until she has truly received an answer and often this can take a long time and she cannot predict when.

She also urges Subud members not to feel obliged to ask for new names since the ones they were given at birth may be entirely suitable for them and if they are comfortable with them, why change?

She mentions that the number of letters she has received if counted may run into the "hundreds – hundreds".

She has appointed a secretariat consisting of Raymond Lee, Sharif and Tuti Horthy to take over the work she has been doing.

She says they have been working as translators for years and years. "That means they are familiar with the problems that arise on this spiritual path, found in the volumes of Bapak's talks."

She asked WSA to provide the money required pointing out that Bapak once recommended that her work should be supported and notes that costs are now less because of the use of emails rather than the postage of former times.

*We are sure that all Subud members will wish to join with us in thanking Ibu Rahayu for her many years of selfless service, her support and guidance to the organization as well as to many individual members. Her constant example of kindness and courtesy, an example of how to be in Subud, for all of us whom she refers to as "Brothers and sisters whom I love and respect..."*



*. Ibu Rahayu at the Christchurch World Congress.  
(Photo Sahlan McKingley)*

### SUBMISSIONS AND DONATIONS

Submissions to Subud Voice on any aspect of Subud life are welcomed. Send to Harris Smart, [subudvoice@gmail.com](mailto:subudvoice@gmail.com) We rely on donations to keep Subud Voice going. You can donate by going to the PAYMENTS button which is located in the toolbar at the top of the page. [www.subudvoice.net](http://www.subudvoice.net)

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# IN THE SHADOW OF THE MOUNTAIN

*Harris Smart writes that he is “transitioning”...*

So, the new year begins, and I am in a new situation A new life in a new place.

For the last 19 years Subud Voice has been coming to you from Melbourne, Australia, where I have been living most recently in the Subud house.

But now as the result of some testing, I am living in Northern New South Wales on Byrill Creek, near the town of Uki (Population, 765 not counting dogs) from where this issue of Subud Voice comes to you.

Yes, this is a rural area, and highly subject to fires in the recent times. Fortunately all around close to us has been spared the fires though one has been burning for weeks now only about 16 km away from where I am writing at this moment, and we know that given the right conditions, the right heat in the right winds, the fires can travel thru forest at 100 km an hour.

But there is a road and a river between us and this fire, so everyone takes comfort in that.

But let me go back to the beginning...

*How it all started, this move...*

So about four months ago I went to a regional gathering in Queensland where with some brother helpers I tested the questions...How was it for me to continue to live in Melbourne? And how was it for me to move to the Northern Rivers?

Well, Melbourne was pleasant enough in a way but actually felt like death, no movement at all. Whereas the Northern Rivers were wonderful. Ecstatic testing and crying out the name of God and raising of arms to heaven and all that sort of thing.

I'd often tested about it before because of feeling some nagging dissatisfaction with Melbourne, but never before had there been a clear result as to where I should go.

So began a process of extracting myself from Melbourne and moving to the Northern Rivers, a process which for some reason I feel is now complete...

*Read how Harris's arrival in the Northern Rivers was marked by a flash of blinding blue light: read how he who never thought he would have the resources to purchase a dog kennel is now the proud owner of a unit in the Mount Warning (Wollumbin) Caravan Park. Read the full story of Harris's move to the Northern Rivers at: <https://www.subudvoice.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/InTheShadowOfTheMountain.pdf>*



*The editor has found shelter from the storm under the mountain Wollumbin (Mount Warning).*

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## FREIBURG EXPERIENCE

*Ramzi Addison writes from New Zealand...*

I enjoyed the Freiburg congress more than usual because for the first time I had no Subud job and I was accompanied by my eldest son and three of his kids who were living in Holland. We camped in the Black Forest with other Subud people and it was generally a really pleasant time.

One afternoon I was sitting alone in the dining hall after we had lunched while everyone had gone off to do things and I was left sitting feeling happy and content, my mind in neutral, not thinking about anything.

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Then something started to happen. It was like a documentary about climate change. I was shown that the world would continue to get hotter and hotter – and hotter and yet hotter.



*I saw that a huge conflagration would arise...*



Our current feeble attempts to do something about this were doomed to failure because what was causing it was the way humans are towards themselves and each other.

I saw that a huge conflagration would arise. Wars and misery and general mayhem of the worst sort and when it all finally ended only around 25% of us were left. But the remaining people would be transformed by God so that we could start again.

I asked, “what are the chances that Mankind will be able to change themselves to prevent this happening?” The answer was “highly unlikely”.

Then I asked, “what are the chances that I could change in the necessary way?”.

The answer to this was “Zero.”

Then the movie stopped, and I went and got a coffee.

Now I have no idea if this was “real” or not. But it certainly felt real and it still does. Curiously, this experience makes me feel happy. I am glad to be here on this planet at this time. I get the feeling that we are lucky to be alive now – that this is a special time for all of us.

I had no real sense of when such a thing might go full gangbusters but it’s pretty obvious that it has already started. I also had no sense of where might be the safest place – will there be an “ark”? I’m glad I live in New Zealand but as we all know this little country can get quite obstreperous sometimes!!

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## BUSHFIRES AND DROUGHT IN AUSTRALIA

*From Bruce Ray, Australia’s Committee Councillor...Bruce lives in northern New South Wales on Byrills Creek Road, near the town of Uki, a rural area still heavily forested in parts...now very, very dry...*

Thank you, brothers and sisters for your prayers and wishes. It is greatly reassuring to know that there are many who care and we are not alone.

### General and brief overview

Australia, along with many other parts of our planet is facing unprecedented climatic change. Due to unpredictable climate patterns, the east coast and inland of Australia is experiencing the worst drought in history. Our rainforest now burns and a new category of fire, “catastrophic” has been added to our national warning system.



*Firefighters tackle the Gaspers Mountain fire outside Sydney. Parts of eastern Australia have had record low rainfall in 2019, contributing to an unusually ferocious early bushfire season.*

Hundreds of thousand of hectares of Australian bush now lie charred and black. Hundreds houses have been lost and there have been surprisingly few fatalities, thanks to media saturation and early warning systems. >

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Just north of Sydney a mega fire (3 large fires that aggregated) has been burning for several weeks, covering Sydney in dangerous levels of smoke. At present there is an extreme fire at Yanchep near Perth in WA.

The terrain in many cases is steep, rocky and inaccessible, so planes and helicopters now play a major role in attempting to control these fires.

727 aircraft are now used in extreme situations, flying very low and releasing thousands of litres of retardant, a dramatic sight.

For many generations Australians have been proud of our volunteer rural bush fire brigades. Instead of preparing for a 4-month fire season, they now have to deal with a 10-month season. These men and women are now in a near perpetual state of exhaustion. Brigades drive and sometimes fly to other locations to support fellow volunteers only to return for another call-out

Householders now have to create their own fire plans which have to consider the possibility of no help arriving. A council of former fire chiefs is now petitioning the National government for immediate and strong action on climate.

### Subud Australia perspective

Many Subud brothers and sisters have been kept busy clearing vegetation and installing equipment around their houses. As far as I know none have been directly affected so far. In the North Shore of Sydney many homes were threatened while a Sunshine Coast couple were evacuated a month ago and spent an adventurous night in their car, sleeping at the beach. Their home was unharmed and they returned next day.

On a personal note, my prayers have concerned close friends who lost houses and friends in Wytallabah NSW, and the massive amount of flora and fauna destroyed. I also offer fervent prayers for our political leaders to respond decisively and compassionately in these changing times.

It is difficult to provide a bright side to this situation as the threat is ongoing. However, communities are closer and victims are supported via crowd funding. Volunteers are joining wildlife care organisations and fire brigades. The generous and empathetic side of human nature is evident in many situations. One beneficial side-effect has been the presence of beautiful, rare Richmond bird-wing butterflies in our garden and many species of native birds, all attracted to our little oasis by water and nectar. We are indeed all in this together.

*This article first appeared in Subud World News [www.subudworldnews.com](http://www.subudworldnews.com)*

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## TO PASS THE EXAMINATION FOR HEAVEN

*Excerpts from words of advice from M'bakyu Rochanawati, circa 1963/64. She was Bapak's stepdaughter, the daughter of his second wife, Ibu Siti Sumari.*

All that matters is worship of God. M'Bakju Rochanawati is not afraid to die or to give up everything: but I will not give up worship of God. It is important for you to be happy in THIS world, otherwise you will not be happy after you die. Even if you are ill and you suffer, you must be happy IN- SIDE. It means God is taking some dirt off you when you are ill.

When you are near Bapak here, you may often feel like complaining or feel irritated or unpleasant. That is the dirt coming out. The unpleasant feelings you have now come from the influences around and they come into you and also there is dirt inside. All this comes out when you are near Bapak. When you suffer, when you worship God, it is only like pricks hurting from the OUTSIDE. But if you do NOT worship God, the suffering takes the whole of you. Therefore, with the worship of God, you can always be happy, even if you have to suffer, because inside



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you are strong and happy.

When someone does not like you – leave it; or, if someone likes you and admires you – leave it – it does not matter. All that matters is worship of God and asking forgiveness of God:

“ You must sit on the passions and not let the passions sit on you...” ”

Please, God, forgive – forgive – forgive. The helpers sometimes say in the latihan to the members: ‘Don’t think when you do the latihan.’ But, when they say that, they think of themselves. The way to heaven is through hell.

(M’Bakju Rochanawati describes how we have to pass through fire, water and air). M’Bakju has experienced this. (She describes that she had to become one with the fire, and one with the water, therefore, she did not feel the fire as fire nor the water as water).

Now you are still in the golden years: until you are sixty-three. Make the most of your golden years. As a helper you may come to know the secrets of people, either from inside, receiving or, from outside when they tell you about themselves. But a helper must never repeat this to someone else; it must be locked up. (Gestures pointing at closed mouth). **YOU ARE UNDER OBLIGATION TO GOD IN THIS REGARD.**

And also the helpers must not test about another person unless that person asks about it. M’Bakju is alone in my worship of God. M’Bakju would give up everything and everybody if necessary but not my worship of God. They can take everything away from me but nobody can take my worship of God; and, in that, I am alone. M’Bakju must not be too close to people, not even to my own children. Sometimes I see that my children want me very much but I must not be too close to them either, just as I must not be too close to everybody else. It is the same with them as it is with other people. I must not be too close with you either, so when we separate it will not be too hard to separate. Worship of God has the first place.

**YOU MUST SIT ON THE PASSIONS AND NOT LET THE PASSIONS SIT ON YOU.** But with most people, the passions sit on them. You must worship God under all conditions, whether happy or sad. You must worship God under all conditions, sincerely, 100%. M’Bakju (talking to the women after latihan about the importance not to be afraid but to worship God): God will protect you if you submit 100 %. It is especially important with women who may have babies, as it affects the baby if you are afraid. (Among various examples, M’Bakju gives the example: Someone who is NOT afraid of T.B. will not catch it when living among T.B. people, but someone who is afraid of it will catch it.)

So it is with fear. What you are afraid of can enter into you. Therefore, you must not be afraid, but submit to God, and God will protect you. You must watch yourself each day and not speak badly about others or judge them or be jealous or irritated or gossip or take notice of things which are not your concern.

If you do this, are watchful every day then you will begin to build a good character. If you do his and do not allow passions to be the boss, but correct yourselves as mentioned, this is like an **INNER FASTING**. You must be the boss above your passions, and not let your passions be the boss. You must love yourself.

If you love yourself, you will not readily dirty yourself and you will not do these things as mentioned before, like talking about other people. Your first love is to God, then to yourself, then to your husband and your family. You must be thankful to God for suffering because it means that the dirt inside us from ourselves and from our ancestors is being removed. It is better to be ill and suffer in this world than in the next.

Every part in yourselves has to become clean. We always make ourselves dirty by sinning unconsciously or by sinning and not being able to stop (for instance, by speaking about other people, by disliking other people, by jealousy, envy, etc., etc.). You **MUST** be aware of your sins. Suffering makes you aware of your sins.

M’Bakju is not afraid to die but I want to die at the right time freed from all my sins. Before you die you must come to being **ALONE** with God. M’Bakju does not mind what people say about me; all that matters is to worship God. Patience is the key to heaven. Without patience you cannot make progress.

If you feel worried or hurt by people, or pleased if they admire you, or angry with someone, or sad, this eats into your heart and makes wounds. But for heaven you must have a whole pure heart. So when anyone hurts >

you, leave it - leave it, forgive him or her – leave it and forget it. Let it not get into you; it must remain on the outside. Inside you must be happy and untouched by it, worshipping God. M'Bakju is always happy and praying INSIDE: Oh, God, forgive, forgive. And when people come with their worries, it does not make M'Bakju weak because I am always praying inside to God, and being therefore, happy. You must come to that. ●

## Durham, a Budding Centerprise

*By Hanafi Fraval, edited by Levana Fraval, from an interview and copious notes, photos, etc. provided by Sumati Pickett, Durham group chair.*

*After interviewing Sumati Pickett, I got the feeling that a good seed planted many years ago had grown to where it is now: on the way to sustainability, with an active group and a budding centerprise. It is an inspirational story... H.F.*

The Subud Durham group started in the late 1990s when Kohar Parra, Sumati's husband, moved to the area. Slowly, over the years, others came. They did latihan in a barn and in each other's houses, and then in a small office, where simultaneous latihan were not possible. So various members of the group began scouting around for a more suitable venue.

In 2013, they found a place to rent that looked perfect. Centrally located, it offered two big spaces for latihan and great parking. The helpers then tested about it, and the testing was "horrible." Several members of the group simply could not understand why the testing was negative for such a wonderful place! But the helpers felt that the group needed to wait, that the right opportunity would appear – which, at the time, seemed completely crazy.

Just two months later, they "accidentally" found a three-acre property at 3801 Dove Creek Road, Durham, NC. On the site was an existing building that had been used as a church. The property is about a 15-minute drive from a major interstate, about 20 minutes from downtown Durham.

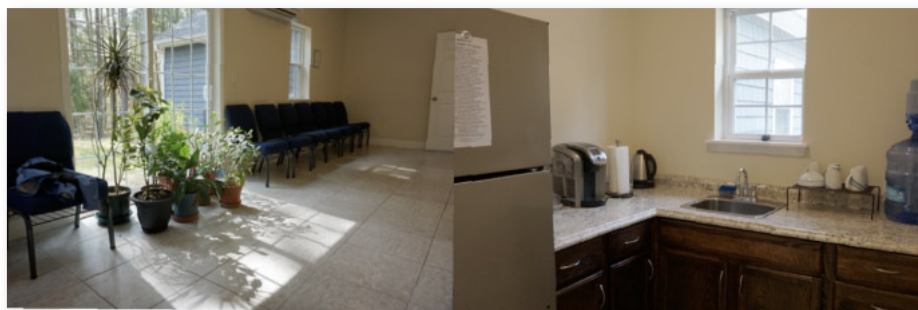
Subud Durham currently has 30 members – 19 women and 11 men – many of whom are young. Members of the group contributed \$25,000, with an additional \$25,000 coming from one member, who bought the property next door. Subud USA provided a loan of \$10,000, and MSF \$30,000. There were additional donations of \$25,000, plus a \$25,000 loan from a Subud member. Of this, a \$20,000 down payment secured the property.



*The Blue Dove House built in 2014/15.*



*Blue Dove House under construction.*



*The lounge area (left), and the kitchen area of the Blue Dove House.*



*The Subud Durham group 2014 (some members not pictured).*

## Marketing

Branded Dove Creek Meeting Spaces, the property has extensive facilities including the Blue Dove Building with two halls, each 720 square feet, that may be combined into one hall of 1,440 square feet; and the White Dove Building with a 1,520 square feet hall that is ideal for retreat meetings, health and wellness services, exercise and sports, education classes & workshops, religious services and community meetings.

A Pentecostal pastor, who is starting his congregation, recently signed a five-month lease for the original building. In Feb/Mar 2019, the group began renting out their newer, Blue Dove House (see photo) for events and short-term rentals, and it has been rented for a massage workshop and for a wedding, both daylong events. The group continues to look for short- and long-term renters.

The most compelling reasons for a renter to choose Durham's property over others are its versatile spaces (halls can be joined or made into two rooms) and its proximity to town. Yet additionally, in an area of woods and quiet, it has the feeling of being a retreat center.

The Durham group, promoted under its brand name, advertises in neighbourhood list servers, Google Maps, and in a professional, nonprofit list server with a sign visible from the road.

The group is investing in upkeep and in renewing parts of the building that currently need work. They recently replaced playground equipment on the property and installed an iron filtration system to improve water quality and protect plumbing, such as for toilets and sinks.

The group has a short-term plan and will revisit rental rates and agreements as they increase. They are also working on a long-term plan aiming to generate sufficient income from rentals to contribute more to the regional Subud organization. Currently, finance from rentals is not broken out separately in the books.

Contracts are developed using an online service to create a legal document appropriate to the event/lessee. [More such documents are available on the SubudSpaces Slack website for hall committee members and managers. See the end of this article. – H.F.]

Subud Durham wants to be a place where members across the region and country would like to come and visit. They aspire to take on a more ambitious development of the property so as to be of service to Subud members around the country, and to the Durham community.

## Finance

Current rental income is around \$825 a month [the November figure]. Monthly expenditure is \$850. Donations income is \$900.

For now, bookkeeping and administrative work, including filings, are done in house and are managed by the group treasurer.

The property is owned by Subud Durham, and of course the lenders to the project. The centerprise manage- >

ment is shared primarily among Sumati Pickett (chair), Rashad and Latimah Pollard, and Luthfi Bustillo. All are unpaid volunteers. This is the team that negotiates rental agreements with tenants and handles hall maintenance and operations.

### The centerprise & the group

Members of Subud Durham are supportive of the centerprise activity. In fact, it is fortunate that, for the most part, the group has been very harmonious and were able to talk about and then act upon how to buy, what to build, how to build, how to rent, etc. These are challenging issues, and the fact that all the members in the group make monthly contributions that enabled the project to happen speaks volumes. These days most of the conversation revolves around: Is the place being well kept? Is it clean? Is it suitable for letting?

The group makes a monthly donation to Subud East Coast. They see enterprise as the way to expand that donation. Last year some of the members left the group, which of course left a spiritual and financial hole, causing the group to realize that they needed independent income to remain sustainable.

When asked what the biggest challenge for the centerprise has been to date, Sumati responded that the amount of cleaning required following an event had been underestimated! Initially events were scheduled back to back, leaving little or no time to turn the space around in a welcoming and rentable form for the next client. Often the space was left dirtier than had been expected.

A more immediate challenge is advertising to potential renters. The group is currently developing a marketing plan and is printing business cards that members can hand out to their networks. The group committee is grateful for the opportunity to share their story, even though they are just starting out. It's likely that they would love to hear from anyone who feels they can contribute in any way.

Dove Creek Meeting Spaces, 3801 Dove Creek Road, Durham, NC 27705 • Inquiries: 919-323-0535 • [subuddurham@gmail.com](mailto:subuddurham@gmail.com)

*Committee members and hall managers are invited to join the SubudSpaces.Slack.com website, where they will find useful information and resources on managing a Subud center, including a template checklist for planned building-maintenance budgeting, a business plan, a marketing strategy, a housing handbook, sample agreements, etc.*

*To join, contact Raynard von Hahn [SubudSpaces@gmail.com](mailto:SubudSpaces@gmail.com), who can send you an invitation.*



*Blue Dove Reception Hall.*



*Blue Dove Meeting Hall.*



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AVAILABLE ONLINE FOR THE FIRST TIME  
A GIFT FROM GOD &  
BAPAK: THE MAN AND HIS MISSION



“

*A landmark production  
presenting a vivid and coherent  
account of Bapak's life and  
the story of Subud...*

”

For the first time Subud Voice is making available online four video programs which document the history and development of Subud from Bapak's birth in 1901 to his 100th anniversary in 2001. The programs are...

**BAPAK THE MAN AND HIS MISSION**

Part 1: 1901-1959: The Origins of Subud. 1 hr 16 mins

Part 2: 1957-1971: Preparing the Vessel. 1 hr 20 mins

Part 3: 1971-2001: Putting the Latihan into Practice. 1 hr 26 mins

Then all three were compiled into one handy 65 minute version  
**A GIFT FROM GOD 1901-2001.**

For more information and how to get the programs  
CLICK ON THIS LINK

<https://www.subudvoice.net/shop/>

This will take you to a page where the four videos are listed, each one identified by a thumbnail of Bapak.

If you want more information about each of the videos click on the thumbnails of Bapak, which will take you to a page describing the contents of the video and its duration.

Each of the videos costs **US\$25** to purchase the rights to watch online, as many times as you like.

Or you can purchase the rights to stream all four for **US\$60**.

The site will ask you to set up a LOG-IN with username, email address and password in order to purchase the rights to view. Please make a note of this information in case you need to access the site on future occasions.

The site will give you the option to pay for the videos from a PayPal account or from a credit card. Once you have made the payment you will receive in your email account LINKS to whatever videos you have purchased to view.

Remember that we are selling the rights to these videos in order to support the ongoing production of Subud Voice.

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# HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

*An American Subud member sent us this story about the Obama Foundation. Perhaps it serves as an antidote to all the doom and gloom.*

*The Obama Foundation Leaders: Asia-Pacific Program is a one-year leadership development and community engagement program that seeks to inspire, empower, and connect emerging leaders from across the Asia-Pacific region...*

Dear Harris

You may find this interesting, as part of it deals with Barack talking about how his time as a youth in Indonesia influenced him. Also, Michelle Obama and Julia Roberts have a conversation...I recall that Julia stayed at the resort in Kalimantan.

I hope you find time to listen to these talks, as they are quite encouraging about the future of the world and down to earth about what achieving change really takes. I even think Ibu Rahayu would find parts of this effort interesting.

Love and thanks... take some time to be inspired...



The Pan Pacific conference of the Obama Foundation - developing future world leaders across Asia - talks by Barack and his Indonesian sister Maya. Michelle Obama and Julia Roberts

[www.obama.org/asiapacific19/?j=83767&sfmc\\_sub=9687&l=77\\_HTML&u=8930598&mid=100016450&jb=7&utm\\_source=crm&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=2019apfftunein#livestream](http://www.obama.org/asiapacific19/?j=83767&sfmc_sub=9687&l=77_HTML&u=8930598&mid=100016450&jb=7&utm_source=crm&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=2019apfftunein#livestream)

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## 1000 DAYS OF THE PASSING OF MANUELA MACKENZIE

Edward Mackenzie would like to invite any Subud members out there who knew Manuela to join him on the 20th February 2020 to mark the 1000th day since her passing. At 16.00 in Spain he will, with others, be having a cup of tea and a slice of cake, so wherever you are please join me.

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## RUKMAWATI BRANTING

My name is Nikhil Dally. Rukmawati (Aine/Helga) Branting was one of my first music teachers at Jakarta International School in the 1970s, a great inspiration to me (I now work as a professional musician) and a friend. In her later life I used to visit her at her farm in Norfolk, and at Wisma Mulia in Gloucestershire. A couple of years before she passed away, she let me read draft passages from her autobiography, and promised me a copy when it was finished. Since her death, I have tried to purchase a copy of her book – but have been unable to raise a response from any of her surviving family.

Does anyone know where I could purchase a copy (used or new) of Rukmawati's autobiography? I would of course be happy to pay for it. It would mean so much to me to have a memento of Rukmawati, who was without doubt one of the foremost influences in my life.

Nikhil Dally / [nikhil@dally.org.uk](mailto:nikhil@dally.org.uk) / +44 1932 241196

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# The Subud symbol

*Rasjid Smith reflects on a "interesting curiosity" to do with the Subud Symbol...*

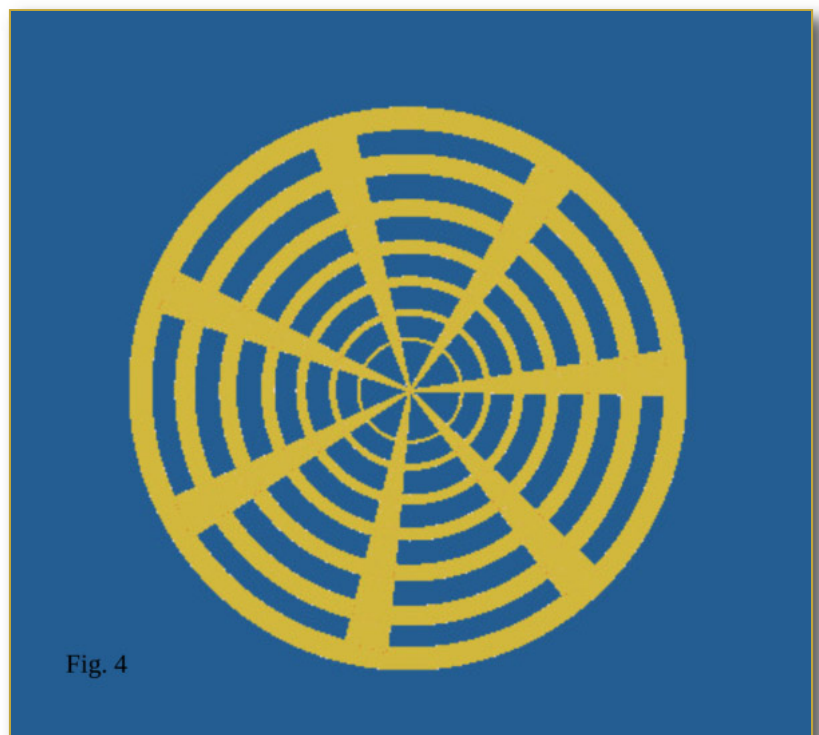
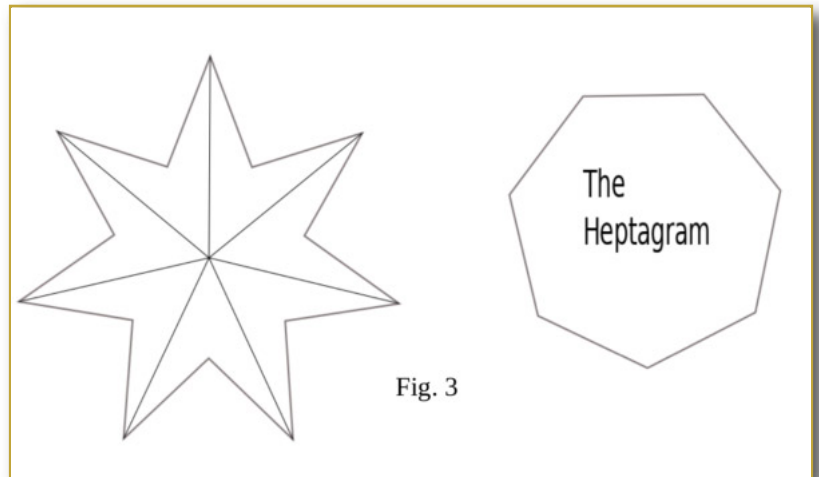
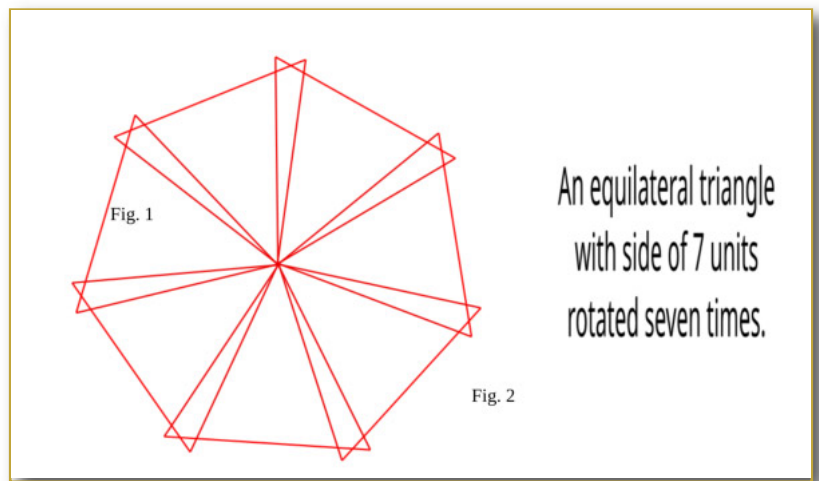
Many people have often wondered where this symbol came from, it's purpose and perhaps it's use as well. I am not going to try and explain any of this, because it would take a lifetime of research, but there is an interesting curiosity which springs from its construction.

This is a form of the heptahedron, which is a seven sided object in which every face is of the same area. The symbol can be constructed using seven equilateral triangles rotated around the same centre. The centre is also the apex of a triangle. By doing this you will see seven spokes which should be coloured gold, if you are making the symbol. The 2D symbol is made from the heptagram, which is part of sacred geometry and sometimes called the star of Babylon, or the 'Law of Seven'.

There are many ways to draw this symbol if you have instruments or a computer. However, I wanted to show that from this symbol one can also make a 'heptahedron', which is a three dimensional version of the heptagram. The 'heptahedron is a seven 'faced' figure in which every face has the same area, which also makes it a 'platonic' form. ( platonic forms in geometry have faces of the same area.) 'Plato' was the person who first thought of 'platonic ideas'. These are perfect 'ideas', or concepts which only exist in the spirit world, but have a material counterpart which is often not perfect at all. Examples would be things like man, woman, house, ship, tree etc. The idea of a triangle for example, is something everyone is aware of.

The 'idea' is perfect, but to actually draw it without some imperfection would be impossible at the moment. The material world is one of movement and therefore of change. The 'idea' is always more perfect than the reality, and I expect many of us can relate very closely with this.

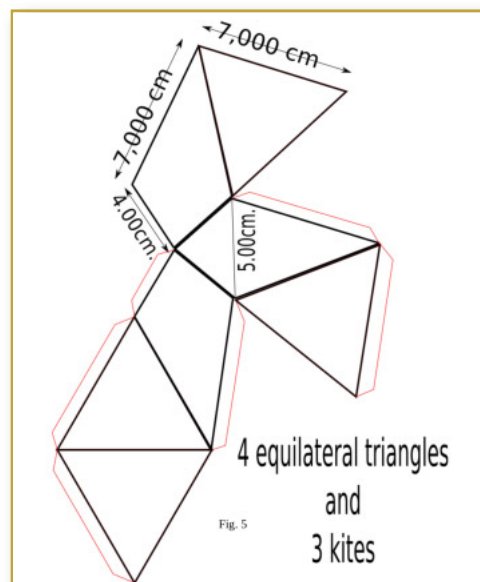
The 'heptagram' is a seven sided figure of sides equal length, and the seven pointed star is the star of Babylon.



From the heptagram can be made 4 equilateral triangles and 3 kites, making seven faces each with the same area. These can then be used to make a heptahedron, which I am told is also a 'platonic' form.

The dimensions can be changed proportionally, and the mathematical heptahedron has a much more accurate construction than the one shown. The 'seven' is the most important length as it is part of the symbol. From the above template can be made a heptahedron. The angles of the kite are  $125 \times 2$ , 35 and 75. All these dimensions are not exact by any means, but they are close enough to enable a model to be made.

This is a model of the heptahedron. This mathematical form is not an invention, but a discovery first made by a man called Frank Chester, and he has named it the Chesterhedron. The man is not actually a Subud member, but this platonic form has some very remarkable properties, which is not really surprising as it is derived from the Subud symbol. This shape has a very strong connection with the heart (the organ in the body), also the natural Earth (the planet). It even has connections with the journey of the soul into the body of a child at conception. There are undoubtedly many more characteristics of this 'platonic' form waiting to be discovered. Frank Chester has a website, if anyone wishes to pursue this further. The field of knowledge of 'sacred geometry' is a fascinating one, and certainly whole books have been written about it.



## THE TURKISH WAITER

*A story from Sebastian Paemen...*

I struck up a friendship with a young Turkish fellow who works as a waiter in one of the Turkish restaurants here in Oxford. I'd noticed the mature and courteous way he was dealing with two pretty -giggling- Pakistani girls who were flirting with him. A sweet thing to watch, it reminded me of when I was young.

We started talking and he told me his life's story.

Coming from a pious Muslim family, he'd gone off the rails as a teenager, became an atheist, started drinking, got into drugs and had been involved with the police. Eventually he got married to an Irish woman.

He wasn't happy with his life though and felt unfulfilled. Three years ago he woke up around suhur time during Ramadan after a night of drinking. He hadn't observed Ramadan since he was a boy. Unexpectedly he felt really bad about himself and a voice in his head kept saying 'Why are you drinking and sleeping, it's the Holy month of Ramadan?'

That day he returned to Islam and started to do Ramadan. He said it was a strange experience, it felt as if he didn't have a choice, something had pulled him back to his religion. He had to give up his marriage, as his wife and her -heavy drinking- family wouldn't accept him not drinking alcohol anymore and on the whole rejected his return to Islam.

At the age of 30 he is so much happier with his life now. He loves doing his prayers, reading the Qur'an and the works of Muslim saints, and is saving money for his elderly parents in Turkey to go on the hajj.

He smiled when he said "I had forgotten Allah, but he hadn't forgotten me."



## A MESSAGE FROM BAPAK – THE WORLD SITUATION IN 1980

*An article by Solihin Garrard. This article first appeared in a recent issue of the Subud Britain Journal but it seemed to us to be of such general interest that we have decided to publish it in Subud Voice...*

On July 12 1980 Varindra Vittachi, Chair of the World Subud Association, relayed a message from Bapak to the Subud UK National Council and some members of Subud Central London; a message that was to be shared with all Subud members. Varindra had visited Bapak in Cilandak a few days before and spent three hours with him.

"Bapak told Varindra that the world situation was worse than he had ever felt it. That he woke every morning at 3 o'clock feeling the tension, the threat of armed confrontation.

"The weapons being created, he said, had been designed for a purpose and embodied a force which would search for a way to fulfil that purpose. The human beings in charge of these weapons are not masters of this force, so that the arms race represents a real and growing hazard for the world. In God's eyes, Bapak said, the world was a mere speck of dust in the universe and its passing would perhaps hardly be noticed - but why were we allowing our human world to fall into this state?

"There would be endless discussion, he said, about disarmament, but this would come to nothing. There would be conferences called by the United Nations to discover if there were religious solutions, but these too would be no use [Varindra said that when he returned to New York there was indeed an invitation on his desk to just such a conference].

"The only thing, Bapak said, which could truly affect the world situation were the actions and the state of people who knew the real essence of religion: that is - people who have received the latihan. For that reason Bapak wished all Subud members to keep 'close to the latihan' all the time.

"Varindra referred to Bapak on an earlier occasion talking about 'tasting the latihan' briefly several times a day, just 'checking it's there', and suggested that this was one way of keeping close.

"Bapak never spoke of things being 'urgent' Varindra said, but this was 'necessary', and he had asked Varindra to tell all his friends around the world. My friends, said Varindra, are all those who feel about Bapak as I do."

### **That was then; this is now**

In view of a recent BBC interview (4 November 2019) with Mikhail Gorbachev, general secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (1985–91) and president of the Soviet Union (1990–91), Bapak's message "to all Subud members" is perhaps as relevant today as it was in 1980.

Gorbachev tried to reform the USSR and ease tension with the West. Through diplomacy with President Reagan in 1991 he is credited with forging a deal to slash their nuclear capabilities. But the arms race has reignited and both countries have torn up the deal. In the interview Gorbachev states his belief that as long as weapons of mass destruction exist, primarily nuclear weapons, the danger is colossal: "...All nations should de-



*Bapak told Varindra that the world situation was worse than he had ever felt it.*



*Bapak and Varindra Vittachi.*



*The only thing, which could truly affect the world situation were people who knew the real essence of religion...*



clare that nuclear weapons should be destroyed. This is to save ourselves and our planet.”

Solihin Garrard [solihingarrard@gmail.com](mailto:solihingarrard@gmail.com)

The full BBC interview link is here:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/world-europe-50265870/mikhail-gorbachev-tells-the-bbc-world-in-colossal-danger>

or here: <https://bbc.in/2JTir7g> or here: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p07t8ml3>

## Ramadan in Orgiva 2020

*Leonard Hitchcock writes...*

In May this year [2019] members of the group in Orgiva, S.Spain, who were observing the fast of Ramadan, invited other members to join them in a ‘Ramadan Retreat’.

This was a great success and, as well as members from Spain, we had members from Turkey, USA, Senegal, France, UK, Germany, Australia, Austria, Colombia and Greece in a truly international gathering. In all, over the month, there were 22 members fasting together both from the group and visitors.

This was possible thanks to the completion of the lovely new Subud Centre with the two large latihan halls and spacious social and dining areas - and terraces which hosted our meals together in the warm evenings. We were also able to offer accommodation very close to the halls and organise meals and outings together.

We will be organising a second gathering, open to all members, during the month of Ramadan in 2020 which runs from April 23 to May 23 [approximately!]. Members can come for all or a part of this time.

This is a lovely time of the year and perfect for fasting; not too hot, and a time of fragrance when the air is so sweet from the multitudes of flowers which are everywhere, including the glorious wild meadow flowers of the beautiful surrounding snow-capped mountains [which offer magnificent walking opportunities].

Feedback from participants was unanimously positive. Here are some extracts:

*‘This was a total package of a welcoming local group, beautiful surroundings, wonderful climate – a peaceful quiet setting for the Ramadan fast. Also great food and wonderful local attractions and activities available for those who want them.. Great little town nearby [Orgiva] with good restaurants within walking distance’*

*‘wonderful strong deep latihans’*

*‘This is a wonderful group that joyfully embraces visitors’*

*‘What a special way to share what you have built with the Orgiva community and what a special and rare offer to Subud people from around the world. I received the invitation and immediately replied’*

*‘the rhythm of shared meals and occasional group hikes and outings was perfect for me’*

*‘the accommodation was great, really nice. Have one’s own space and still be surrounded, was the perfect setting.’*

*‘A vibrant community has welcomed me, attended to my needs – respected my feelings – open discussions, tolerance for different views – kindness.’*



*Breaking fast together at O Sel Ling – the Buddhist Centre up in the mountains above Orgiva. (Photo by Lillian Shulman)*

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*'As someone who normally fasts on their own, I felt such gratitude to be able to be fasting together with Subud brothers and sisters from many countries - to experience the reality of one human family and to receive such a grace during the late night/early morning latihans on the 'Nights of Power' [alternate nights of the final 10 days of the Ramadan fast]'*



*There had been milestones of relief, little landmarks on the way...*



Incidentally - for newer members, for whom the concept of fasting may seem strange, I can recommend checking out the many talks that Bapak gave about this interesting subject!

There will be a follow-up reminder nearer the time but if you would like to come or have any queries, please contact: Michael Alexander at: [cgym@mac.com](mailto:cgym@mac.com) : and for Whatsapp: +34 642 128 797

Hope to see you there!

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## LEBARAN

*Dr Rachman Mitchell reflects on the meaning of "the first day after the end of Ramadan"...*

This word indicates both a day and a month. It comes after the month of Ramadan. So, it is the first day after the end of Ramadan.

The word itself is derived from the word "lebar" meaning wide, which signifies the opening or widening of the human heart to experience generosity and to be able to genuinely and spontaneously give and forgive and be forgiven.

Since many of us find these three feelings and actions quite difficult to experience and do, how does it come about?

I myself have always been a little mean and also disinclined to admit that anything that I have said or done could have been wrong or offended anyone and therefore have been too proud to seek out those I have spoken ill of and ask their forgiveness.

Well the answer lies in the practice of fasting in the previous month of Ramadan.

Most of us know that this is a simple discipline of going without food and water between sunrise and sunset, in most cases, only sixteen hours (what is fact is now recommended by doctors to stay in good health and resist the onset of diabetes). There is in fact another restraint more difficult to carry out that is to fast the wish to find fault and criticize others. Both require an effort of intention, prayer and one's own will.



*Of course, this is a taste of heaven...*



I decided to practice this when I first heard about it on my arrival in Indonesia in 1967. I did not find the fasting of food and drink so difficult but the fasting of my likes and dislikes of other people's behaviour much more difficult and indeed a cause for much chagrin. However, as the bodily fatigue increased so did a certain inner tranquility which caused "me" to feel closer to my "self" and closer to others. More important than this was the certainty that the Power from which everything comes including ourselves, exists.

Slowly also was the realization that the effort to fast was no longer coming from my personal will but from this other Will and Power which I then knew and now know exists within me and everyone who is a possible human being.

So, my heart did begin to widen (menjadi lebih lebar) I began to experience more the need to give, the need to be forgiven and to forgive especially with my family and my friends. I found myself falling in love with my wife again.

Of course, this is a taste of Heaven. The life and needs of the material world press again on the failure of the heart to keep to the straight path. This is why I have tried to practice Ramadan ever since. Like a house which needs a spring clean, so our own Being does as well especially when witnessing so much strife around.

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# AFTER THE SHRINKING

*From the future, Dahlan Simpson, a self-confessed optimist, greets the New Year...*

Hello. Have you just jumped into the future? I ask because it is now the year 2137. I still don't know why I had to come back, didn't want to, and now I am 35 again and here with just, they think, 200 million souls left in the world.

What happened to the other ten billion? Many tsunamis, earthquakes, wars, new disease outbreaks, and other acts of nature. Well it had to happen, right? It's called consequences. Everything in life has them. And in the year 2050, when all seemed eerily quiet, a year when nothing much had happened, on New Year's Eve it was as though all hell had broken loose – and maybe it had.

You will be surprised: I am an optimist. Yes, really. Because – and I hope all those people who died are okay – I think this time the world is going to get it right. How on earth might I believe this?

- 1 no wars, not even a single battle, for over 50 years,
- 2 all countries seem eager to cooperate in every way: education, health, industry, social welfare
- 3 Most of the important technology was saved post the global shrinking. What shrinking?? Well, it seems a kinder word than others I have heard, eg meltdown, catastrophe, Armageddon. Now you get it, right? We want to stay positive!

And do you know one of the things that didn't die? Falling in love, yep, folks still do it. It must be hard wired (such an unromantic word!!) into everybody.

And having babies. They project that in a hundred years, there will be about a billion people. Cor blimey, what are we, rabbits?!

## [Back to my optimism](#)

You know, we learned so many things in the past 70 years or so. Oh, we have been taught much more, but learning is not the same, is it? If you don't listen....I just was reading about the life and times of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be Upon Him). They were fighting in the Middle East back then and, until the great Shrinking, they were still at it. We all knew it was never going to end without one heck of an Event. Well, Planet Earth got its implicit wish.

Many people thought that climate change was the big issue, oh, back a hundred years ago or so. How wrong can you be? It was people change that was key. And people weren't. They wouldn't. So God just Gave up. Well, who wouldn't have? You make something, and it tries its damndest to break itself apart. No, not everyone, but too many.

'People change': Why, how can people change? Lets say you have a bad tasting curry. How are you gonna make it good? Exactly. Most would just start again.

Well, God Didn't. He sent us a gift. But it wasn't obvious. Hardly anyone recognised it. It was like noticing a slight shift in the breeze. Not everyone could tell. But it was real, more real actually than anything on Earth. It was a bringer of life, a new beginning.

Sorry, I am not going on with that thread. You will have to research by yourself. If I tell you, it will be just another free gift that you didn't value. Like life itself. Who values life? I mean the real life, not the three score and ten.

Yeah, people change. They have to. I mean, they had to. After the Shrinking, everyone knew it had to be a clean start. No going back to the old ways - look where they had gotten the human race. A race to the bottom. In spades. But the human race just kept digging. It was always going to end badly.

I the optimist. Yes indeed. I can now see that everyone, and I mean everyone, realises that we all live >



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forever. Sure, our bodies don't, but this Earth was only ever a school and a hospital, a place to get well and to learn. It was never the basis for life itself.

### And that realisation changed everything. Allow me one example

I read in some of the history books from the Old World, as we now call it, that some people fought over wealth. Now we can see how ridiculous that was. For wealth is just a passing attribute. It has no lasting purpose. Unless, that is, it is used for the common good. Think of a cathedral, a university, an airplane, a book. But if used just for personal satisfaction, it just disintegrates, like a sandcastle near approaching waves.

You know, a lot of people used to 'pooh pooh' love and all the things that love brings, like close families, just societies, stable economies. Not anymore. Love is now appreciated and understood to be a building block for life, even THE building block. It sounds grand. Well, it actually is.

Here to illustrate the point is an extract from a poem about love –

Yet you well know that love is more,  
It's universal,  
Eternal,  
The kernel -  
It's so old that nothing came before.

That's it, universal, eternal, the kernel.

And the world, or what is left of what once was, gets it.

### Love is the building block

It's totally profound once you understand that single, simple thing. And, well please forgive the dramatics, but the world fell in love with itself. It wanted, in unison, in harmony, in total agreement, it wanted the world to work together as one humanity. One single, breathing, humanity, where it is always five o'clock somewhere and it is always midnight somewhere else. But all breathing together as one.

Before anyone wonders whether this is all soft in the head, consider this. More love means no wars, no-one dies at the wrong time, and it means total harmony and co-operation. If you have ever worked in the scientific or medical field, you already know how powerful that is.

So yes, Love is. Embrace that. You don't even need to mention the building block, because love simply is.

Look at a small child's face. Look at the stars in the sky. Look at the flowers in the fields. What do you feel?

### Wonderment...and God's Love is its essence

So one of love's attributes is it engenders cooperation. This is mighty. But I won't enlarge on this. I am sure that you get it.



*Love is the building block...*



I want to return to that special gift that God brought down many years ago. No, I still won't tell you what it is. But you know the saying, if it looks like a duck, quacks like a duck, paddles like a duck, then it is a duck. So what is this gift?

It makes someone come alive, as if for the first time.

It makes someone feel comfortable in their own skin.

They aren't carrying any baggage from the past.

They know who they are.

They feel happy, even when in pain or if they just got sad news.

They can tap into eternity, and know that it is real, and real for them.

Nothing can take away their feeling of life and of being loved by God.



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How do I know this?

Well, I still don't know if you are a time traveller, because everyone here gets it. And I mean every-one. Did you think that I was an aberration? Quite the contrary. I am so average that the only thing that isn't average is the size of my family. Well heck, who has 2.4 children anyways?

So yes, that gift changed everything. Now Planet Earth has a chance. If you can time travel another hundred years, perhaps you can tell us how things worked out.

But I already know. The gift told me. The fruits of love last much longer than a hundred years. Even more than a thousand. That is how even two thousand years ago, one man told us all to love one another. And that powerful message still thrives today within humanity's heartbeat.

Take care, wherever you are, whenever you are. And feel God's Gift inside you.

© Dahlan Simpson 2019 ●

“  
Now planet  
Earth  
has a  
chance...  
”

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## The Maritim Guest House, Jakarta ... when there's no room at the inn

*Anisah Taylor, UK, writes...*

The decision to take a last-minute trip to Jakarta to coincide with the WSA council meetings was certainly met with its challenges. Where would I stay at such short notice? The Wisma Subud Guesthouse? No vacancies. The Archive House? No vacancies. The Kristal Hotel? No vacancies. But that was ok. The odds were against me, but in finding that there was no room at the inn, by some miracle, I discovered a lovely little place called the Maritim Guest House, just a stone's throw away from the Wisma Subud compound. This was a trip of many blessings for me, and this discovery was certainly one of them.

The hosts at the Maritim, Don and Ita, who live in residence, described their experience of setting up the guesthouse. When they first started up, they were very wary about sharing the same living space as their guests, surely this would not end well? However, the first guests arrived. Subud members. What was this wonderful feeling? Since then, they have never looked back. They told me that whenever Subud members have come to stay, they have felt the guesthouse to be alive and full of energy (... which perhaps can be a little exhausting too!) They respond to their guests with great care and attention. They have become familiar with the weekly journeys to Pamulang latihan on Wednesdays and Saturdays and always wait up late until you are safely home. They also helped me prepare for an early start for the journey to Bapak's graveside, Suka Mulia. Without question or complaint, Don and Ita got up at 4am and prepared a breakfast parcel for the road. The grilled cheese sandwich is certainly the guesthouse's speciality (and they serve a beautiful breakfast!) ... something I didn't imagine eating at 6am on a bumpy journey to the mountains in West Java.

The Maritim Guest House felt so familiar, so welcoming, and so Subud! What a lovely experience and one I will treasure. Certainly, in the future, it might be nice to stay in the Wisma Subud compound, but actually, when there is no room at the inn, and you find yourself passing through Jakarta, especially in the run-up to the next world congress, you should definitely knock on the Maritim Guest House's door. You will find it at <https://www.maritimgh.com> or send an email their way [maritimresv@gmail.com](mailto:maritimresv@gmail.com)



## The Great Kalimantan Adventure Matthew C Mayberry

“Bapak can tell you that there is gold, there is silver, there are diamonds, there are many precious stones, there are other things like oil and so on. Bapak went to Kalimantan and met people in authority like the Governor of Central Kalimantan, who was stunned, he couldn’t believe it. He said: ‘How does Bapak know that in this place there is that and in this place there is this and so on?’ And Bapak said ‘Oh. I didn’t learn it anywhere, I know it from myself’.” Talk at Slough, UK, 4 September 1981

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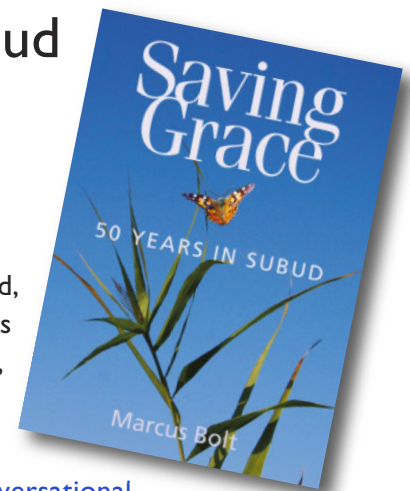
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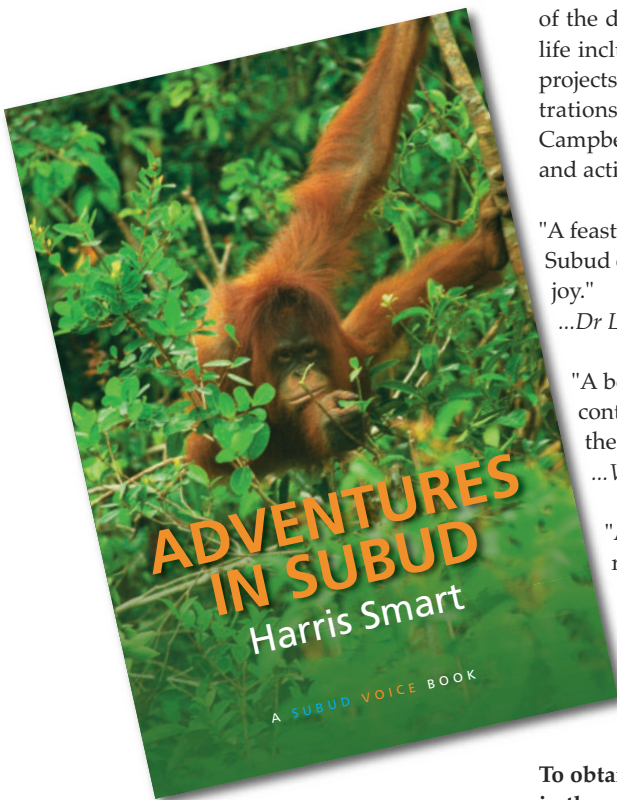
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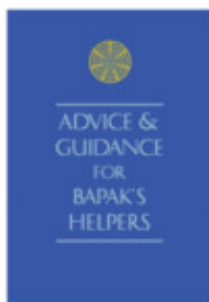
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