

Reports from Local Groups

New Zealand Group

Leo Hobbis +64 9 478 7809

Margaret Bowater writes: Recently the Auckland Friends of the Scientific and Medical Network had two evenings of astonishing input from one of our members. Margaret Needham, a teacher and psychotherapist, cautiously presented a written record of a mythic inner journey experienced over the last seven years, entitled 'Call to the Inland'.

Following an initial series of dramatic visions, she had found herself involved in a continuing process of Active Imagination only partly voluntary in which she entered an inner landscape which was both continuing and changing, conversed with an inner Counsel of the Deep, and was accompanied by a particular guide through a long series of symbolic experiences e.g. stages of Preparation, Initiation, Trial, and the Return Home. In the course of these experiences she was tested to the limits of her courage and compassion. The facilitator of our discussion, Margaret Bowater, highly experienced in the field of dreamwork, introduced the work by comparing it with a diagram of Joseph Campbell's classical Hero Journey, and also Bunyan's 'Pilgrim's Progress'. Others compared it with Tolkien's 'Lord of the Rings,' and Le Guin's 'Wizard of Earthsea'. Yet none of Margaret's experience was the result of voluntary imagination; it was a mythic journey of the spirit through an imaginal world, which she understands to be somehow parallel to this one, yet also closely related to her own life-experience. The journey itself having apparently finished, she is now reflecting on its significance.

As may be imagined, deep questions arose among us about the nature of this experience: somehow combining meditation, Jungian dreamwork, shamanic training and spiritual development, all expressed in a vivid and heightened literary style. Margaret was encouraged by the insights offered by group members, and is now continuing to reflect on the experience with a view to possible publication.

New England Group, USA

Diana Bates +1 508 799 8753

Andrew Bates writes from Massachusetts: An excellent meeting was held on June 6th at the home of Andrew and Diana Bates. Seven people, including the Chairman of the Network, Dr Peter Fenwick, attended. The emphasis for discussion was on the issue of 'walking our talk'. This presents challenges and these were discussed. At the end of the meeting there was recognition of the need to remind ourselves to tread a fine line where science and the spirit meet.

A tentative date for a further meeting on September 5th, at the Bates' home, was mooted. Peter Fenwick has agreed to give a video presentation of his work. Diana Bates has volunteered to be the local co-ordinator and will inform central office of when to proceed with the sending out of invitations for the September meeting.

Swiss Group

Janine Murray +41 61 931 4041

Christina Bader writes: We held our meeting in Zürich on 22nd March on the theme 'Experiences that are life changing'. Ten of us spent an exciting and interesting day sharing our experiences that have contributed to our life changing direction. Inspired by the theme from the last meeting, Bridges between Science and Spirituality, Janine Murray felt that discussion should be extended to give a deeper insight into our own bridges. Already in the introduction of ourselves, some of us shared experiences or questions along with our traditional education and professional life, that caused unrest in the original framework of the profession we had chosen. 'There must be more to it!' was an often heard remark. Some had played and communicated with dolphins, another had extrasensorial contact to people in coma.

Janine quoted some articles about mystical experiences from Journal of Consciousness Studies. Both had the common description of sharp perception, timelessness, calmness and a sense of eternal love. 'Can we facilitate those experiences?' was a question that came up. In two smaller groups we answered some questions to aid more dialogue from inside. For example: 'In what situation in your life do you feel the most joy?', 'Remember a situation recently when you had a strong intuitive feeling about something', 'Recall a situation where you took a particular path in your life, due to a series of meaningful coincidences (synchronicity)' and 'Have you ever had what could be described as an experience of cosmic consciousness or mystical union?'.

The atmosphere was caring, emotional and filled with interest to listen openly and to share our very personal experiences.

Dutch Group

Herbert van Erkelens + 31 23 533 1088

Herbert van Erkelens writes: During the first half of 1998 we met each other three times. First we investigated symbolism of the stone in ancient Egypt and Jewish belief. In both cases the stone turned out to be a 'door to heaven'. Our attention shifted to gold, incense and myrrh being gifts of the Wise Men to the child Jesus. To our surprise the three substances play a significant role in homeopathic medicine. Finally we started to read parts of the Parzival by Wolfram von Eschenbach. In this epic the grail vessel is replaced by a stone which has fallen from heaven. This miraculous stone is closely related to the philosophers' stone in alchemy.

In September we will present ourselves as local group of the SMN at a conference intended to found a new organisation called 'De Geest van Wetenschap' ('The Spirit of Science'). The new organisation is an initiative of Ilja Maso, one of the new members of the SMN. It has as its main aim to bring science and spirituality together. The Dutch group of the SMN will participate in 'The Spirit of Science'. To that end we will continue to study the symbolism of alchemy and the grail legend.

Bristol Group

Richard Hellen 01453 548724 or Sally Lawson 0117 924 9684

Forthcoming: We continue to meet on the second Wednesday of each month in a series of personal discussions.

Cambridge Group

Hazel Guest 01223 369148 or John Roberts 01954 782032

JOHN ROBERTS writes: After a couple of years of abstaining from meeting in the December season, the Local Group held a General Discussion at which members were invited to express views on what directions of development they would like to see (or not see) either locally or in the Network as a whole. The meeting was encouragingly well attended and lively, particularly in relation to the question of how to find the right balance between openness and rigour. The word 'flaky' featured much in the discussions, the main concern expressed being that the Network should not be drawn too uncritically into the excessively speculative. We all look forward to keeping this important topic alive.

On 12th January 1998, Michael Langford (a former holder of professorial posts in Philosophy and in Medical Ethics in Canada who has now become a Member of the Network) came to discuss problems of patient autonomy and informed consent. While the status of these principles is as old as the Hippocratic Oath, occasions are experienced where their application is not straightforward. There may, for example, be conflicts with confidentiality (as in tracing parentage for genetic counselling) or ethical problems in implementing 'Living Will'. The question relates to the wider philosophical problem of whether there can be more than one truly ethical course of action in a situation when several principles need to be balanced, and the concepts of the 'reasonable doctor' and the 'reasonable patient' emerge as alternatives for achieving objectivity in the legal sense of being testable with the help of an expert witness.

On 16th March, Richard Michell (one of our Local Members) spoke of the life and work of the Danish writer Martinus (1890-1981). At the age of thirty Martinus had had an experience of 'cosmic consciousness' which he spent the rest of his life communicating and recording in a seven-volume book in which his writings were illustrated with mystical works of art (of which we were shown samples). From Martinus' viewpoint the historical developments of consciousness embodied in the great religions or in science are just a part of an evolving cosmic scheme in which (in some way that may perhaps be so subtle in intended meaning that one should perhaps be slow to form a view about) that everything is evolving as it should and that the 'good' and the 'bad' need to be accepted. The ideas were received sympathetically and respectfully, but there was discussion on certain issues particularly on the moral questionableness of passive acceptance of evil in the world.

On 20th April, Montague Keen (a new member of the Network, but a long standing psychical researcher and Member of the S.P.R.) came to discuss 'Survival: Latest Evidence Analysed'. The speaker prepared the ground by reviewing several other areas of study of the paranormal, where he believed that there was such strong mounting evidence that the present defensive rejection of mainstream science would not be able to hold out much longer. The detailed research that he was to describe was a follow up of the mediumistic material dating from the 1920's and 1930's known as the 'cross-correspondences' (well known to some of those attending). The big question under investigation has been whether the kind of evidence being collected could be explained by a 'super-psi' hypothesis (of global clairvoyance) or whether in fact it points to survival. The group was grateful for the privilege of being given a preview of a piece of research that we shall look forward to being published in due course.

On 8th June, we were visited by Dr Vivian Lunny, a medically qualified member of the Network who makes extensive use of aromatherapy. This branch of medicine, Dr Lunny

explained, was 'as long or as short or as wide and as deep as you want it to be' and could be an important tool with serious medical problems (certain auto-immune conditions being mentioned) so powerful, in fact, that it required thorough study and training to apply properly. It was important to use essential oils from the correct botanical species and also necessary to treat patients individually by taking into account, for example, the very strong psychological associations often carried by smells. The meeting was highly interactive and also became memorably multi-sensory when strongly aromatic essential oils were produced leaving those attending, I believe, with a greatly expanded view of the potential of this work.

Chichester Group

Leon Wyman 01243 530833

Our meeting on June 6th, was attended by 21 people. The relaxed atmosphere enabled us to get to know each other better and the short talks from several members contributed to a rewarding afternoon. We hope to arrange an all-day meeting next June at the same venue.

Chilterns Group

Doug Flower 01494 783993 or Elaine Hadfield 01442 864613

The Group held a joint meeting with the Yorkshire Group in Berkhamsted on June 6th. The programme for the day allowed for much discussion of the ideas raised in the talks. The following summaries were provided by Mike Brown.

Max Payne, Chairman of the Trustees of the SMN and leader of the Yorkshire Branch opened the proceedings with a talk on science and human values. Civilisation, he said, is in a major moral crisis because science has undermined many of the systems of social culture and of religious belief. He pointed to the fact that knowledge gives power, and with knowledge comes responsibility. Science unleashes powers which can be used both for good and evil. Whilst science is democratic and anti-authoritarian, it is also elitist and hierarchical. There is a conflict between the spirit of science and many of the cultural trends of the late 20th Century, and in some respects between science and formal religions. Success of science vividly demonstrates the values of objectivity and Max felt that traditions other than science could benefit by reaffirming objectivity. Self-awareness on the other hand points to domains beyond science. As there are human values which are beyond the scope of science, rationality cannot be the only basis of morality. Nevertheless it is a good starting point. Pursuit of truth leads to questions about the nature of consciousness, questions debated by Plato and philosophers ever since.

Alan Knight gave a brief history of the UFO phenomenon from the distant past up to the present day with sightings of triangular craft and accounts of abductions. This led on to the claims of official secrecy by those researching UFO's, and of suggestions that there was a military classification 'above top secret' applied to UFO's in military or circles. There appeared to be a conspiracy of silence in official circles, possibly because military defence systems are unable to engage UFO's successfully. There were frequent reports of sightings, often by reputable professional people. In particular there had recently been a wave of sightings over Mexico by independent observers. He suggested that the scientific community and others had not paid sufficient attention to the implications. He expressed the hope that more attention would be paid to interpreting the evidence available, to assembling of a solid knowledge base of reliable data, and developing theoretical hypotheses explaining the UFO

phenomenon. Upon request, Alan undertook to send references to books on the topic that he would recommend.

Dr. Carol Briery said that although most of us are not aware of this, we live in a web of vibrating energies, many of which are man made. Some of them are beneficial to health but many are harmful, particularly when we are exposed to them over long periods of time. We cannot sense these energies but we can see and experience their effects on the human body. The effects may be cumulative, and small but repeated exposures can confer lasting physical damage. Knowledge itself is power. Carol discussed in outline knowledge about, and investigations into, harmful electromagnetic energy fields which surround us. Methods of protection were suggested, ranging from blockage of individual energy lines to complete insulation of the places that we inhabit.

Jim Lyons took as his title 'The Geometry of Consciousness'. Starting with the existing senses, he showed that one possible way to investigate consciousness is using the ancient technique of dowsing, a natural sense employed by our ancestors to understand their environment. He showed how ancient designs based on spiral patterns interpreted in the light of modern day science represented chemical reactions seen in excitable media. These are the so called Belousov-Zhabotinsky (BZ) reactions. This suggests that the flow of subtle energies can be modelled using hydrodynamic principles coupled with ideas from non-linear dynamics (chaos theory). Appropriate mathematical models, even at this early conceptual phase, were beginning to elucidate phenomena associated with the mind's interaction with the environment.

The use of Reaction-Diffusion processes used for describing the evolution of morphological variations in living matter were also seen as a way forward in modelling conscious processes. This has been highlighted both by the ancients interpretation of experiences at sacred sites, and by the very latest ideas based on Quantum Teleportation. The latter has now established experimentally the connectedness of entangled particles as part of a coherent holographic field. Jim concluded by hypothesising that Consciousness should be the key element in describing nature. It was linked to mass/energy relationships, according to concepts proposed by the Japanese physicist Inomata in the 1980's. It was also the key feature of subtle energies, the vortex patterns he had illustrated.

Guildford Group

Diana Clift 01483 417922

Diana Clift writes : Our May meeting was an informal party with food and wine and reports from the 'offshoot groups'. Two members of the Bohmian Dialogue group, which has now been meeting every other week for more than two years, spoke movingly about what the experience had meant to them and the insights they had gained. We also had reports from the 'Boys' Club', from Bob Haining about his Rife equipment for healing, from Mike Chambers about the Healing and New Science working party and from Di Clift about experiences of table tilting and automatic writing in a seance group. Another small group has been meeting informally, mainly at a pub, to assess published 'channelled' material from various sources.

On 20th July we had a remarkable evening. We were privileged to have an American double act of Professor Mark Woodhouse (author of Paradigm Wars, from Georgia State University) and Dr Brian O'Leary (former Princeton physicist on the Apollo programme) together talking

about their personal experiences and how they came to what they regard as an emerging world view which overthrows most of the assumptions of conventional science. Mark used a case study of a woman with multiple personality and remarkable psychic abilities, and Brian talked about research into 'free' (or Zero point) energy. We had a record 55 people attending, including many guests and visitors from beyond our area. We just managed to fit in the room and it was a memorable evening for all. We are very grateful to Mark and Brian.

North London Group

Rupert Kinglake Tower 0171-435 9730

Rupert Kinglake Tower writes: The North London Group met on the 25th March, fortified by a cornucopia of delicious food and drink at the home of Lynn McGregor, to listen to a fascinating talk by Rupert Sheldrake about the phenomenon of being looked at from behind, or staring at someone and finding that they turn around spontaneously. This phenomenon is a common experience of many people across the world, but it has been almost completely neglected by scientific researchers. According to the dominant materialist scientific world view, the mind resides in the brain, and the head is perceived as the locus of consciousness. Classical visual perception argues that visual processing, and the images that we see, go on inside the head. Rupert argues that this takes no account of the subjective experience of seeing, and he hypothesises that the Mind is non-local, extending all around us, and that the image that we see is exactly where it seems to be (i.e. 'the Truth is out there'). We are surrounded by extensions of Mind, so that everything that we look at can be touched by Mind.

Hence, Rupert asserts, we distrust our perceptions as being genuine owing to the prevailing 'mind is in the brain' scientific world view.

There is considerable belief in cultural folklore from ancient times regarding the power of gaze, such as Darshan' in India, and the need for protective talismans to ward off the 'Evil Eye' in Mediterranean cultures. Even now in our modern era, surveillance experts and security teams are aware of the need never to look directly at a target in order to ensure successful covert operations. Rupert has adapted and modified the methodological approach of early 20th century investigators in order to test the phenomenon under experimental conditions. By way of demonstration, he directed some live experimentation with group members. All were split into pairs, and each pair was allocated a random set of twenty trials ten in a 'looked at' condition, ten in a 'not looked at' condition. The individual being 'looked at' turned his or her back to the viewer, donned a blindfold, and then, on being given a signal by the viewer (a tap or click), guessed whether he or she had been stared at or not. The viewer noted down the result after each trial.

Although the experimentation was conducted under highly artificial conditions, several individuals guessed correctly well above chance levels.

After the experiment Rupert divulged to us that he had supervised many trials across several countries, and had achieved a similar pattern of results in all of them a highly significant 60% average in 'looking' trials which is well above chance, whereas in the 'non-looking' trials the results were non-significant. More recently, he has been conducting experiments with children in classrooms looking through a window to a target outside, and with adults through a darkened window at the B.B.C. A colleague in the U.S., Marilyn Schlitz, has even conducted such experiments via close-circuit television. All of the above have achieved

similar levels of success. The field of enquiry into the 'Staring Effect' is still in its infancy, although there is a growing literature. Rupert associates these findings with his widely published work into 'morphic' fields which link the viewer and the 'looked at' owing to the non-locality of Mind. The phenomenon of the 'Staring Effect' opens up new explanations for the nature and location of the Mind, and may have profound implications for our understanding of it.

A different format to our group meetings was introduced on May 13, when some 40 people attended a debate on Consciousness at the home of Nona Ferdon Davis. Two guest speakers were given 15 minutes each to contest the topic area from two opposing positions. Dr. Max Velmans argued on behalf of the prevailing Reductionist Worldview that 'Consciousness is fully accounted for by current known brain processes only'. Dr. Peter Fenwick replied in favour of the New Science paradigm that 'Current metaphysical assumptions of modern science prevent a full understanding of consciousness'. Statements and questions were then addressed to the guest speakers from the audience. The latter was then divided into smaller groups of 5-6 individuals, and given some 20 minutes to discuss issues arising from the floor, as well as the chance to voice their own personal views about the Consciousness debate. Finally, all participants reconvened, and each smaller group, having nominated a spokesperson, summarised the output from their group discussions. A general debate then followed, chaired by Rupert Tower.

The inspired impetus of ideas from both Max and Peter encouraged a wide range of arguments on the issue of the 'meaning' of Consciousness, which demonstrated its paradoxes and 'slipperiness' in evading precise definition. Nevertheless, the evening was an unqualified success, and it is our intention to hold similar debates once a year. In future, however, a specific aspect of Consciousness will be chosen for discussion, as a general exploration of Consciousness in itself is too awesome and boundless a topic to accommodate any and all attempts at synthesis or resolution!

The North London Group enjoyed a pleasurable evening with Brian Snellgrove, who came to talk to us about 'The Human Aura'. Some 25 people attended the meeting at the home of John Hunt in South Hill Park, NW3. The setting was intimate, and a short meditation was done in order to centre the group.

Brian spoke about the basic features of the aura. 'Aura' means 'breath' and is the resultant summary of the large number of different types of fields that surround the human body. The fields encompass light, electromagnetic radiation, and heat, in a subtle intermix of energy.

The aura contains information of two sorts. Firstly, the essence or soul of the person which may include Karmic patterns, the 'calling card' to others of similar disposition. Secondly, the individual psychology of the person the cocktail of thoughts, reactions and disharmonies as a result of the daily struggle of life. These radiations rather like a bar code form the basis of attraction between people, and function for the owner as both an informer and protector.

Brian originally introduced a diagnostic method for reading the human aura based on Kirlian photography in 1973. However, more recently (1990) he discovered that he could use the natural sensitivity of his hands to diagnose the aura, and hence no longer needed to rely on machines. The seven 'Chakras' are an intrinsic part of the aura and are the primary focus of assessment when giving a reading to an individual. Chakras exist as configurations of energy, which are claimed to whirl in a rotational mode according to the overall harmony or

otherwise of the person concerned. Each person has a unique pattern, and this can be detected using the hands as diagnostic tools.

Brian measures the radiation around the individual's hands with his own (each finger means something), with additional aid from a pendulum (dowsing), a volt meter to measure left and right brain differences, and his own cross-cultural experience. Finally, Brian conducted a demonstration of aura detection with a member of the group, which gave us a fascinating insight into his work, and which clearly resonated strongly for the courageous individual who agreed to be a guinea pig!

Brian's latest book, *The Magic in your Hands* (1998) is now available in bookshops, and is published by the C. W. Daniel Co., Saffron Walden.

West London Group

Clive Hicks 0181 997 7974, Anushka Jordan 0181 578 4431 or Yvonneke Roe 0171 733 5857

Clive Hicks writes: The West London Group holds six regular meetings a year, on the second Wednesday in February, March, May, June, October and November, and possibly occasional other meetings, some perhaps in conjunction with other groups. We meet from 7.30 for coffee, fruit juice and biscuits, with a subject being introduced at 8.30, followed by informal discussion. New members and visitors are welcome. There is a charge of £2.50 for refreshments and administration. The group is in some need of new venues for meetings, so please contact us if you could accommodate an occasional meeting. The group had interesting meetings in May and June. First Michal Levin, speaking under the title 'So You Know it All Knowledge into Action' spoke of her discovery of psychic ability, how it was refined under personal difficulties, how she helped others, and how we can help ourselves. It was very much an inter-active meeting.

Then in June Dr Natalie Tobert, under the title 'Communicating with Spirit Healing and the Soul' told the group of her understanding of some of the framework of shamanism. The subject was familiar to some in the group, but new to others, but it was notable how the group could accept the shamanistic world-view within a modern, Western, understanding. Much of the discussion was revelation of correspondences, rather than argument of any sort.

Contact Anushka Jordan, Yvonneke Roe or Clive Hicks with any queries or ideas you may have, or, nearer the time, for details of future meetings.

South West London

Pamela El-Hosaini 0181 977 3531 or Maria Lis-Balchin 0181 942 8242

Pamela El-Hosaini writes: Our new group began in early May with a presentation on complementary medicine, when Bob Haining spoke about Dr. Rife's resonant frequency therapy. In the 1930's Dr. Rife made breakthroughs in the electronic treatment of all kinds of disease. The lost technology of his cancer-killing beam-ray has now been rediscovered and remarkable success is being reported by lay people who have built a modern version of his equipment. As an electrical and electronics engineer, Bob is one such person. He gave a very well received and informative talk and video presentation which covered the historical aspects of the work, and he demonstrated the equipment he had built. Members were treated to a group participation session of varied frequencies in front of the beam-ray

machine and many people reported a sense of heightened well being and vitality. It was noted that the machine appears to boost the immune system, thus increasing the feelings of wellness in otherwise healthy people.

On July 16th Dr. Mark Woodhouse gave a presentation on some of the topics covered in his book, *Paradigm Wars*. He spoke about New Age verses New Paradigm thinking with respect to such issues as reincarnation, the environment, feminism, education, technology, the millennium and spirituality. His talk was very well received and there was great interest in Mark's views about government conspiracy regarding the concealment of UFO activity and the probable large scale visitations by aliens within the next year.

It has been decided that future meetings will be every two months, whenever possible on the last Monday of the month at 8:00 p.m., with refreshments available from 7:30. They will be in Sept, Nov, Jan, Mar, May and July, and the venue will be 14 Belgravia House, 238 Kingston Road, Teddington. Please contact Pam El-Hosaini on 0181-977-3531 or 0181-943-9724 or pamela@slinky.netkonect.co.uk for further details and confirmation of events. This is a new group, and is still in the experimental stage. If there are members in the area who have suggestions, expertise or would like to help in any way, please get in touch with Pam.

Scottish Group

Paul Carline 0131 447 7207

David Lorimer writes: The Edinburgh Group held a couple of meetings at the home of Jane Ridder-Patrick where we discussed the themes of the May Dialogue and Annual Meeting. Here are a few notes from our meeting: Is suffering a gateway to growth and meaning? Is recovery sometimes due to finding meaning in the situation? Kim Jobst gave an example of a patient with chronic pain where the key event or defining moment, forty years before, was a disempowering remark by his grandfather that had radically undermined his self-worth. This breaks one's relationship with oneself. Taken to extremes, such an event can trigger an unconscious desire to die. Can illness be regarded as a voyage of (self)-discovery? Can disease or pain be regarded as a healthy response to an imbalance? This is a predominantly Eastern view where notions of balance and harmony are central concepts. It also underlies the naturopathic understanding of illness. What is the difference between a living and a dead cell/organ/body? Hence what is the relationship of consciousness to physical bodies? Does it simply emerge from the complexity of organisation or does it supervene so that it might continue to exist independently of physical substrates? A key question around the time of death is whether one is at peace with oneself and others. A traditional element of the *Æ*good death¹ is to have made and achieved such peace before one departs. It is the quality of physicianship, i.e. the quality of the person's being or humanity, that is a central component in a healing interaction between practitioner and patient (NB the word derives from waiting *qv* Voltaire's remark in the 18th century that the job of the physician is to amuse the patient while nature effects the cure!)

South West Group

John Cosh 01803-863939

Alan Jewsbury writes: There were 26 people present for the meeting of the Devon and Cornwall group, starting around Noon on Saturday 18th April 1998 at Bogan House, Totnes.

The first speaker was Professor Guy Claxton who gave us an interesting insight into his recent book *Hair Brain, Tortoise Mind*. He believes that our culture pressurises us to exert control over our minds at all levels. He advocates that the rational, analytical approach is not the only or best one. Prior to the 17th Century there was much greater understanding of the wisdom of the 'unknown unconscious' which we ought to cultivate. He gave many examples of thinkers who encouraged one to 'think sparingly' and to beware of the hare that jumps in with instant decisions. Rather one should use the tortoise approach by allowing stillness and time to produce decisions of greater wisdom. He illustrated his talk with slides showing how the mind can be deceived and how we see what we expect or desire to see rather than the reality.

After a tea break Dr David Connell, told us about 'Rumi and the Dervish Dance' which he illustrated with music and diagrams. This was a fascinating account of how more than 30 years ago he was invited to learn the ceremony of the Dervish Dance in the tradition that had been inspired by Rumi, a Sufi teacher from the 1200's. The purpose was to change the state of consciousness. The account he gave was a first hand story from the diaries he had kept at that time. The experience involved early morning tuition daily for a month in a group before he started his work as a GP. Each dancer performed on a 30² board with a nail in the centre. The aim was to lose one's ego and if possible to find an inner stillness in the intricate movement of the dance and to attain a changed state of consciousness. The story was particularly interesting as it recounted the day to day happenings and the build up of the experience right up to the time of the final public presentation of the Dance. This experience had led him into further investigations into mysticism, although this was another story. Both talks sparked a vigorous discussion and the meeting was clearly very successful.

Forthcoming: The next meeting will be on Saturday 10th October 1998. The speakers will be Dr John Cosh on 'Genetic Engineering: Friend or Foe?' and Debbie Shapiro on 'Your Body speaks your Mind'. Alan Jewsbury and John Cosh have organized these meetings for the last 5 years with invaluable help from Joan Jewsbury. Alan and Joan told the meeting that they wished to withdraw from responsibility for this. Anne Bancroft had already joined John and Alan to arrange the speakers for this meeting. Ann and John will continue to arrange future meetings and will be joined by Jean Hardy who will take over the chair.

Taunton Group

Kevin Tingay 01823 461423

Forthcoming: The next three meetings of the Taunton group will be held at 7.30 at The Rectory, Bradford on Tone, Taunton, TA4 1HG on Tuesdays: October 6, November 3, December 15. Further details from Kevin Tingay 01823 461423.

Isle of Wight Group

Sonia Bewick 01983 868919

Sonia Bewick writes: Our May meeting, held at the Quay Arts Centre, Newport, I.O.W, was a truly delightful experience with a visit from Diana Clift who, on this occasion, spoke about crop circles. Diana's talk, which included a collection of slides, presented us with a concise but unbiased resume of crop circle activity and investigation to date. Although Diana willingly offered her own personal ideas and opinions, she was at pains to ensure that the

information was sufficiently clearly given that we could each draw our own individual conclusions without undue influence.

Having been given in such a relaxed and well prepared way the talk easily lead into an open discussion with a fruitful exchange of ideas and experiences, and with the subject under discussion being extended to include consideration of various sacred sites Stonehenge, Avebury etc and their juxtapositions with crop circles. The meeting was also attended by John Haddington who, like Diana Clift, has been involved in research for the Center for Crop Circle Studies, and at Diana's invitation he was able to give his interpretation of the meaning and evolvement of crop circles, thus adding a further interesting dimension to the discussion.

The meeting transferred informally to a local hostelry where the discussion continued into oblivion!

The guest speaker at our July meeting, held at the Riverside Centre, Newport, was Professor Chris Clarke whose talk was entitled 'Creation in Life and Cosmos'. Starting with a discourse exploring the creation myths of early Aborigines, through Christian concepts of Genesis and the Garden of Eden, and eventually leading into neo-scientific ideas, Chris then closed the first part of the meeting with a brainstorming session based on our individual experiences of, and reactions and responses to, creation at various levels. The second part of the evening was devoted chiefly to an open discussion of various aspects of creation and evolution. Some salient points included: a) the observation that whilst personal evolution is invariably the progressive creation of a more enlightened person, evolution as a whole can be retrogressive as well as progressive; and b) the suggestion that creative instincts in one's present life which are not supported by actual creative capabilities might be a throwback to a previous life. This led to a suggestion by Chris that maybe the future has already been created, based on the present. Our group is now planning for co-operation in the very near future with Arthur Ellison following his item in the April 1998 edition of Network concerning personal consciousness development.

Wessex Group

Julian Candy 01703 844149

Julian Candy writes: In May Kevin Kingsland led us into a fascinating consideration of *Complementary Perspectives on Reality*¹, in which he unfolded to us his concept of the Whole Person. In June a new member of our Group, Dr Crawford Knox, gave us a stimulating and scholarly introduction to the topic of Wholeness, which provoked a lively interchange of thoughts and feelings. Our exploration of disagreement and different viewpoints seemed to enhance a sense of coming together and indeed of wholeness a very good dialogue! Our next meeting in July (of nine since last October) will tackle the topic of 'Sexuality and Wholeness' which Anne Baring will introduce. All our meetings this year have taken place in her beautiful house, and its warm yet creative ambience has greatly contributed to the success of our meetings.

Forthcoming: After the Summer break it is likely that we will resume meetings on the second Friday of the month, but more details will appear on the local groups insert and on the local groups co-ordinators¹ mailing list.

Yorkshire Group

Max Payne 0114 230 4194, Mike Brown 01423 879038

See joint report with Chilterns.