



Members of the Toronto Branch blowing soap bubbles as part of the 2019 St. John's Tide Celebration

The Anthroposophical Society in Canada Branch Development Tool Kit

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Introduction

The Purposes of this Tool Kit

The main purpose of this tool kit is to provide guidance and encouragement to people who want to establish a new Branch or Group of the Anthroposophical Society in Canada in their community. It explains the requirements for establishing a new Branch or Group and provides examples and suggestions for activities Branches and Groups can undertake. There are a few requirements for founding and administering a Branch or Group of the Society. There are a wide range of options for what activities Branches or Groups can take on. Branch or Group life can be a creative, enjoyable process and offers great opportunity for local, social initiative.

There are two primary requirements:

- 1) Having the Branch or Group **recognized by the national leadership of the Society**, which means the Branch or Group can be recognized on the Society's website and enable other Branches and Group to make contact for collaborations and shared initiatives. Newly recognized Branches or Groups can receive \$500 from the Toronto Branch to help them fund their initial activities.
- 2) Having the Branch or Group **establish a financial stewardship** agreement with the Society's Treasurer so he can account for all of the Society's financial activities, including Branch or Group activities, and ensure these all adhere to Canada Revenue Agency regulations. There are two options for this stewardship agreement depending on whether the Branch or Group wants to manage their own funds in their own bank account or have the Society's Treasurer and book keeper do this for them.

Both of these requirements are explained in detail in Section 3 of this tool kit.

Regarding the options for Branch or Group activities, there are over 20 Branches or Groups across Canada and they exhibit a remarkable range in respect to their:

- types of activities and frequency of activity,
- governance and decision-making process,
- local statutes or rules for members,
- financial management,
- fundraising, and
- use of local communication tools.

This tool kit contains a rich presentation of these differences in order to spur the imagination of local teams planning to establish a new local Branch or Group. When it comes to Branch or Group life, the Anthroposophical Society is characterized by a deep respect for the freedom and initiative of its local members.

A note on the terminology: the terms "Branch" or "Group" are essentially equivalents. The term "Branch" tends to be used by local teams who are interested in representing anthroposophy in their community through public events and other forms of outreach. The term "Group" tends to be used by local teams who are more focused on activities that primarily engage their own team members, such as

a study group. However, local teams can use either. For the purposes of this document, we will use the term "Branch" to make it easier to read.

Also, while Branches tend to form in relationship to a local community or geographical area, they can also be pulled together around an activity or project. This is stated clearly in the Statutes of the General Anthroposophical Society in Dornach that Rudolf Steiner introduced when he re-founded the Society at the all-important Christmas Conference of 1923/24. Statute 11 states, "The members of the Society may join together in smaller or larger groups, on any geographical or relevant basis of activity."

The Importance of Branch Life



On many occasions, Rudolf Steiner pointed to Branch life as a new form of sister/brotherhood. When individuals of different races, destinies, genders, professions, and points of view come together periodically to study esoteric truths or do artistic activities or plan anthroposophical events, something can light up through the bonds of soul-to-soul contact. We can "awaken" to each other.

This work is especially valuable if we can work with others who think differently. We can train ourselves to give full recognition to them as authors of their own destinies. We can leave them free to structure their thoughts in a way appropriate to them as the bearers of their pre-earthly existence. In Branch life, we can learn to bow in reverence to the mystery of the other. Agitation kills anthroposophy, says Steiner.¹ Our words must reflect not the propagandist's attempt to persuade, but the pure and single-minded attempt to express the Spirit. We can show interest in each other's point of view; we can carry questions over the days and nights between meetings as well as look for the common ground from which the group work can proceed.

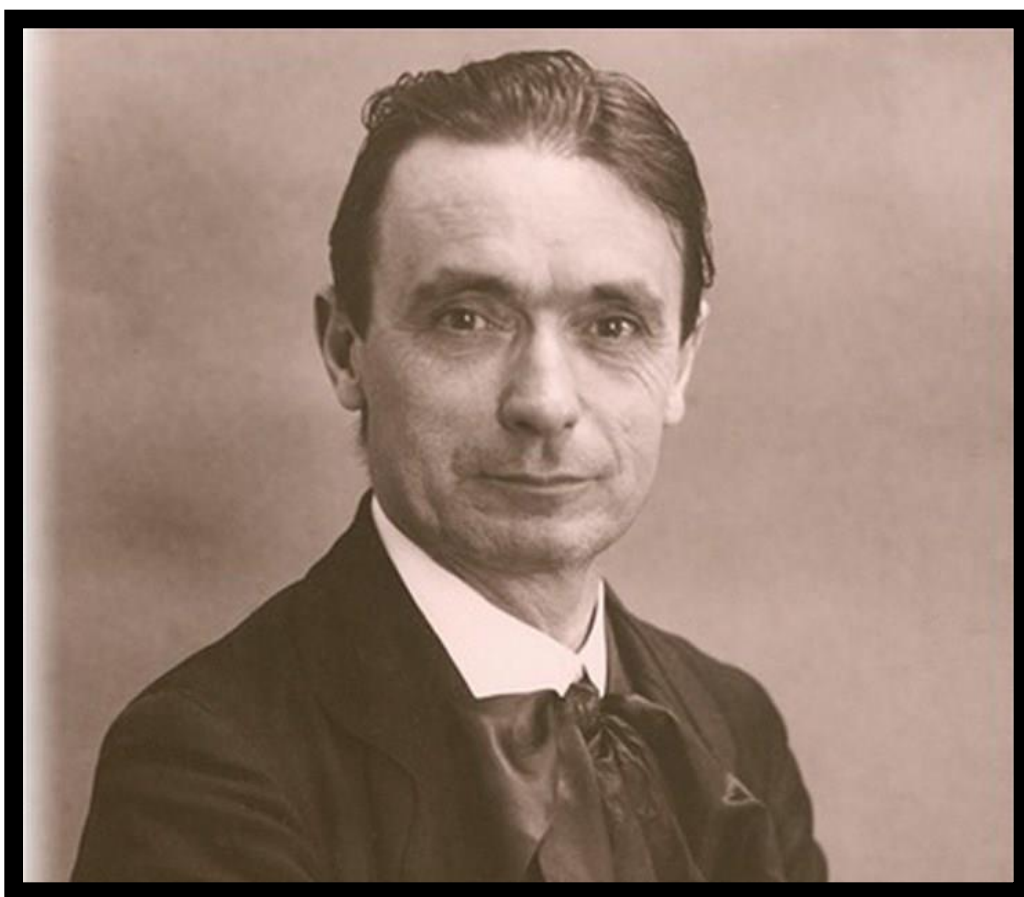
While working together this way, the thoughts and feelings of the assembled individuals are raised into the supersensible. Our work together can become an offering to the divine creative powers, to whom we owe our existence. The spiritual hierarchies become interested in us when we try to work together out of anthroposophy. When we develop empathy for others, when we recognize and work with spiritual impulses that want to unite with our ideals and when we develop freedom of thought and allow others to do the same, we prepare for the future epoch.²

Steiner believed that everyone who goes to an anthroposophical meeting should have the feeling that they will find more than if they merely study anthroposophy on their own. In studying anthroposophy on one's own, the truths of existence are revealed. In participating in Branches of the Anthroposophical Society, it is life that is cultivated³.

¹ Rudolf Steiner, *The Life, Nature and Cultivation of Anthroposophy* (letters to members), January 27, 1924

² See more on this subject: Rudolf Steiner, *How Anthroposophical Groups Prepare for the Sixth Epoch*, June 15, 1915

³ Rudolf Steiner, *The Life, Nature and Cultivation of Anthroposophy*, February 3, 1924



Rudolf Steiner in his 50s – Apparently Dr. Steiner had a great smile. You can almost see it in this photo.

From the lecture entitled “Preparing for the Sixth Epoch” by Rudolf Steiner given on June 15, 1915 in Düsseldorf (in Collected Works 159):

We have come here today for the opening of the group founded by our friend, Professor C. This group wishes to dedicate itself to the spiritual life of the present and future in the way that is customary in our Movement. On such an occasion it is always good to remember why we associate in groups and to ask ourselves why we found working groups and cultivate in them the spiritual treasure to which we dedicate our forces.

If this question is to be answered truly, we must realize that we make a distinction, even if only in thought, between the work we do in a group like this and our other work in the world. Those who are unwilling to enter deeply into more intimate truths connected with the spiritual progress of humanity, might ask if we could not cultivate spiritual science without forming ourselves into groups, but simply by finding lecturers and providing opportunities for people who may not know each other to come together and have access to the spiritual treasure of which we speak. We could, of course, proceed in this way. But as long as it is at all possible to establish, in the wider and narrower senses, associations of human beings who are known to one another and who come together in friendship and brotherliness within these working groups, we will continue to found them in full consciousness of the attitude of soul that is part and parcel of spiritual science. It is not without meaning that among us there are human beings who want to cultivate the more intimate side of spiritual

knowledge and who sincerely intend to work together in brotherliness and harmony. Not only are relationships and intercourse affected by the fact that we can speak quite differently among ourselves, knowing that we are speaking to souls consciously associated with us — not only is this so, but something else is also to be remembered. The establishment of individual groups is connected with the whole conception that we hold of our Movement if we understand its inmost nature. We must all be conscious that our Movement is significant not only for the existence known to the senses and for the existence that is grasped by the outward turned mind of man, but that through this Movement our souls are seeking a real and genuine link with the spiritual worlds. Again and again, in full consciousness, we should say to ourselves that by the cultivation of spiritual science we transfer our souls as it were into spheres that are peopled not only by beings of earth but also by the beings of the higher hierarchies, the beings of the invisible worlds. We must realize that our work is of significance for these invisible worlds, that we are actually within these worlds. In the spiritual world, the work performed by those who know one another within such groups is quite different from work carried on outside such a group and dispersed about the world. The work carried out in brotherly harmony within our groups has quite a different significance for the spiritual world than other work we may undertake.

This lecture is an excellent one for a new group to consider as it explains how our small and scattered anthroposophical groups are nonetheless of great importance. At the end of the lecture, Dr. Steiner calls on spiritual leaders to help the new group:

I call down upon the labors of this group, the power and the grace and the love of those masters of wisdom who guide and direct the work we perform in brotherhood within such groups. I call down the grace and the power and the love of the masters of wisdom who are directly connected with the forces of the higher hierarchies. May there be with this group the spirit of good that is in you, great masters of wisdom, and may there also prevail and work in this group the true spirit of the Movement!

Section 1 - The Anthroposophical Society: A Brief Introduction

1.1 Anthroposophia and the Early Beginnings of the Anthroposophical Society



The initial founding of Anthroposophical Society took place on December 28, 1912 in Cologne, Germany. There were about 3,000 members at that time. This event had its roots in the evolution, and in a sense the degradation, of the Theosophical Society. Rudolf Steiner joined the Theosophical Society because its origins were connected to the same spiritual stream out of which he was working, a stream usually referred to as Rosicrucianism. In 1902, Rudolf Steiner agreed to become the General Secretary of the German Branch of the society. For almost ten years, Dr. Steiner presented the content of anthroposophy through lecture cycles, books, and articles within the context of the Theosophical Society.

Over the years, the international leadership of the Theosophical Society increasingly turned to following Eastern esoteric practices and traditions. In 1912, Rudolf Steiner was asked to leave the Theosophical Society due to his unwavering commitment to Christian and Western esoteric approaches, namely Rosicrucianism, and his unwillingness to support certain public statements made by the international leadership. He moved forward with his work with the support of the majority of members of the German Section who agreed to work with him to found the Anthroposophical Society. He took on the role of teacher and advisor to this new Society but did not take on an administrative leadership role. This distinction between his role as teacher and the day-to-day administrative was important in enabling him focus on expanding his capacity for spiritual research.

In the years 1912/13 Rudolf Steiner began to make direct references to Anthroposophia, an invisible spiritual being who speaks and walks amongst us and who can be consulted for advice. We within the anthroposophical movement can listen to her empowering call and show greater courage, energy, patience, and tolerance and above all greater truthfulness. We can also choose to devote ourselves to forming a community of human beings who are united in the spirit of Anthroposophia.

Following the burning of the first Goetheanum on New Year's Eve 1922, difficulties that arose within the Society led Dr. Steiner to bring members from all national societies together to re-found the Anthroposophical Society at the Christmas Conference in 1923/24. He asked (and was granted) permission to take on the presidency and administrative leadership of the Society. This was a significant risk, as it was possible that by taking on this administrative role, he might damage his capacity for continued clairvoyant research. He notes that

It can be said that what was undertaken at Christmas was in a certain sense a hazard. For a certain eventuality existed: because the leadership of the Anthroposophical Society was now combined with the presentation of the spiritual teachings, those Powers in the spiritual world who lead the Anthroposophical Movement might have withdrawn their guiding hands. It may now be said that this did not happen, but that the contrary is true: these spiritual Powers are responding with an ever greater measure of grace, with even greater bounty, to what is streaming through the Anthroposophical Movement. In a certain sense a pledge has been made to the spiritual world. This pledge will be unswervingly fulfilled, and it will be seen that in the future things will happen in accordance with it. The reverse proved to be the case as has been shown by his remarkable productivity for the remaining years of his life. (Lecture 7 from Volume 4 of "Esoteric Observations of Karmic Relationships", given on July 18, 1924, CW 238)



The founding of the Anthroposophical Society at the Christmas Conference is a complex and special event, rightly recognized as a mystery event. At the very end of the event, Dr. Steiner himself referred to the Christmas Conference as "a turning point in time". In a subsequent lecture he noted:

A real attempt was made through the Christmas Meeting to bring a new spirit into the Society, but it is essential that the nature of this new spirit shall be understood. It is not a spirit of abstractions but of living reality, a spirit which wants to speak not to the head but to the hearts of men. Thus as far as Anthroposophy is concerned, the Christmas Meeting was either everything or nothing...The spiritual Foundation Stone of the Anthroposophical Society was laid in the hearts of every participant. We brought the Meeting to a formal conclusion, but actually it should never be closed, it should continue perpetually in the life of the Anthroposophical Society. (Lecture of February 6, 1924 given in Stuttgart (CW 240).

The Christmas Conference brought many new elements into the anthroposophical movement including a new form of a social organization (often referred to as a Michaelic form), the School of Spiritual Science with its various research sections, the gift of the Foundation Stone Meditation, a new kind of leadership team chosen by Dr. Steiner for esoteric reasons, and a new relationship between the karma of Dr. Steiner and the individual Society members.

A key innovation was the organizational nature of the new society itself – this Michaelic form – which relies on the freedom, initiative, and responsibility of the individual members to an unprecedented degree. It differs radically from traditional organizational forms in that it has centres of initiative and

leadership made up of individuals who agreed to take on these roles, but it does not create and depend on hierarchical power relationships to sustain this structure. Rudolf Steiner respected the freedom and capacity of all individuals in a way that is radical, liberating and challenging.

The new General Anthroposophical Society in Dornach, along with the new School of Spiritual Science, along with the various national Societies, were intended to be open and transparent to the public; to stand before the world like any other society but as a context for individual and group initiative. Steiner stood against dogma of any kind. In a letter to members on July 6, 1924, he reiterated: *It ought never to be said amongst Anthroposophists, “we believe this”, “we reject that”. There should not be a distinction in Anthroposophical circles between what is ‘orthodox’ and what is ‘heretical’.*⁴

Statue 4 states that anyone can become a member, without regard to nationality, social standing, religion, scientific or artistic conviction, and who considers as justified that the headquarters of the Society would be based at the Goetheanum in Dornach, Switzerland. In Statute 5, an inner circle was indicated for those members who felt called upon to take on more responsibility by working with the Nineteen Lessons of the School of Spiritual Science and taking on the role of representatives of Anthroposophia in their communities.

In freedom, members can work in their own way with the content of Anthroposophy. They can take on increasing responsibility and become more accountable to the being of Anthroposophia. Each member can find their own relationship to the Foundation Stone Meditation. If we lay this meditation into our hearts and work with it, we can become able to, at any moment, connect with and consult with this living being Anthroposophia.

Steiner’s intention was that members working together in the Anthroposophical Society could provide a spiritual sheath for earthly work. It was a chance for karmic streams within the movement to learn to work harmoniously together to serve Anthroposophia so that its impulse can work increasingly stronger towards concrete deeds that flow into the world.

The activities of the Anthroposophical Society broadened over time during Rudolf Steiner’s life. This is often presented as three 7-fold cycles with the first cycle (roughly 1902 to 1909), which occurred with the womb of the Theosophical Society, focusing on Dr. Steiner articulating the anthroposophical world conception to a growing number of people who became interested in his research. The 2nd seven-year cycle (roughly 1910 to 1917) focusing on elaborating these teachings through artistic practices and develop of the new art form of eurythmy. The third cycle (roughly 1918 To 1925) expanded anthroposophy into a range of practical initiative including Waldorf education, biodynamic agriculture, and anthroposophical medicine.

Suggestions for Further Reading:

- See Rudolf Steiner’s The Christmas Conference for the Foundation of the General Anthroposophical Society 1923/24 for his in-depth description of the structure and organization of the new Society.
- The Christmas Foundation: Beginning of a New Cosmic Age by Rudolf Grosse
- The Foundation Stone by Willem Zeylmans van Emmichoven

⁴ Steiner, The Life, Nature and Cultivation of Anthroposophy (Rudolf Steiner Press, 1976), p. 52

- Also, Sergei O. Prokofieff (1954 - 2014) has written extensively about the tasks of the Anthroposophical Society. See his books:
 - Rudolf Steiner's Research into Karma and the Mission of the Anthroposophical Society (2004)
 - The Esoteric Significance of Spiritual Work in Anthroposophical Groups and the Future of the Anthroposophical Society (2008)
 - Why Become a Member of the Anthroposophical Society? (2013)
 - Why Become a Member of the School of Spiritual Science? (2013)
 - Crisis in the Anthroposophical Society and Pathways to the Future with Peter Selg (2013)
 - The Esoteric Nature of the Anthroposophical Society (2015)

1.2 The General Anthroposophical Society in Dornach and the School of Spiritual Science



Executive Leadership Team and School of Spiritual Science Section Leaders

The center of the global anthroposophical movement is in Dornach, Switzerland in the Goetheanum, home of the General Anthroposophical Society in Dornach and the School of Spiritual Science, with its various research sections. The Executive Leadership Team (as of Fall 2020) is currently composed of four individuals: Justus Wittich, Joan Sleight, Constanza Kaliks and Matthias Girke. Each Section of the School of Spiritual Science has a section lead. In addition, each national society has a General Secretary that serves as a connection to Dornach. The General Secretaries from countries around the world meet from time to time and discuss emerging issues and decisions with the Goetheanum leadership. Increasingly, these leadership teams are working collaboratively to advance the anthroposophical movement as it expands around the world. At present, there are about 50,000 members worldwide. For more information see: www.goetheanum.org/en/anthroposophical-society/executive-council-and-goetheanum-leadership.

The School of Spiritual Science includes the Class Lessons – special lessons for members committed to the anthroposophical meditative path – that are provide by Class Holders in communities around the

world. In addition to the Class, there are a number of sections that carry on in-depth research work in specific areas:

- General Anthroposophical Section
- Section for Mathematics and Astronomy
- Medical Section
- Natural Science Section
- Agricultural Section
- Pedagogical Section
- Section for the Spiritual Striving of Youth
- Section for Social Sciences
- Section for the Performing Arts
- Visual Arts Section
- The Literary Arts and Humanities Section

For more on the School of Spiritual Science see www.rudolfsteiner.org/school



The Goetheanum by Wladyslaw

1.3 The Anthroposophical Society in Canada



The current National Council of the Anthroposophical Society in Canada is composed of: (from left to right:

- Bert Chase, General Secretary
- Micah Edelstein, President
- Susan Koppersmith, Secretary,
- Catarina Burisch, member
- John Glanzer, Treasurer
- Claudette Leblanc, Administrator

The following was recently published in the Society's monthly communication vehicle, "eNews" regarding the Council's work:

Your Council finds its central task in supporting Anthroposophical initiatives born out of a Canadian

impulse. Our ability to support initiatives comes in many forms, from moral and public support, communication and fostering awareness, providing advice and a connection to the Goetheanum, and monetary support in the form of grants and short-term bridge funding.

Financial resources to fund initiatives typically come from member donations where the Society connects donors to general or specific projects. The coordination of these monetary flows is not always exact, creating deficits one year and surpluses another year. To manage these ebbs and flows, the Society is blessed with a reserve fund that originally came from the sale of Hill House, the national Society headquarters in Toronto.

The fund has been kept in secure, liquid investments to both protect capital and make it available when needed. Its value fluctuates according to those withdrawals and deposits to the fund each year. As of year-end 2019, the fund value was approximately \$254,000. There has been an ongoing discussion of different perspectives around the role and use of the fund. Lately, questions have come up at recent AGMs. Members ask, how can we put this money to good use and keep it flowing?

This is a characterization of the process to access funding, and a list of recent initiative support activity:

- *Members can apply for grants or bridge financing for anthroposophical initiatives*
- *Bridge financing acts as a "float", where cash is provided to get an event started. This is normally fully repaid right after the event income can cover it.*
- *Whether funding is given temporarily or as a grant (no repayment) needs to be agreed upon upfront in writing (to avoid a problem or misunderstanding).*

The Council understands that not all initiatives can generate enough income to pay fully for themselves. Important initiatives such as the Encountering Our Humanity conference of 2016 drew people from across the world; this initiative incurred a deficit of \$29,000 which was initially covered out of reserve funds and substantially restored over subsequent years.

Council looks at each request individually. Rather than a rote, mechanical process, each request is weighed against the entire Canadian landscape in the context of finding the highest good. We are

particularly interested in financially helping initiatives that have a “multiplier effect” — e.g. they involve and support entire groups of active and energized ASC members wanting to promote initiatives out of the work of Rudolf Steiner. For example, receiving a request to help an individual student with tuition, but instead funding faculty travel costs and bringing tuition fees down for all students. To access funds, members can send an email to our President, Micah Edelstein at 1micah@gmail.com

In addition to the approach set out in the above excerpt, the Council:

- oversees The Anthroposophical Society in Canada’s relationship with The General Anthroposophical Society in Dornach
- oversees the Society’s financial life including Branch activities and annual reports to the Canadian Revenue Agency
- sends out the monthly “eNews” bulletin that reports on local events, provides members an opportunity to express their views, promotes events and activities, and provides links to important communications including “Anthroposophy Worldwide” the monthly periodical from the Goetheanum
- prepares and sends out “Perspectives”, the Society’s annual periodical that includes essays and other content from leading members
- working with a Branch to host the Society’s Annual General Meeting and associated conference

The Council is also in the process of developing Mandate Groups. Chaired by a Council member and composed of active Society members, these committees work on specific project areas. At present two such Mandate Groups are active:

Gift Money Mandate Group – Chaired by John Glanzer, Treasurer

Membership and Branch Develop Mandate Group – Chaired by Susan Koppersmith, Council member

If you are interested in joining one of these Mandate Groups or have ideas for another Mandate Group, please contact our President, Micah Edelstein at 1micah@gmail.com.

1.4 Existing Branches and Groups in Canada

There are currently over 20 Branches of the Anthroposophical Society. Some of the Branches have selected a name for their Branch in addition to its location. For more on each Branch and contacts: <https://www.anthroposophy.ca/en/Branches-and-groups/>

British Columbia

- Duncan
- Kelowna - The Kelowna Parzival Group
- Nelson
- Robert’s Creek - Sunshine Coast Branch
- Vancouver
- Victoria

Prairie Provinces

- Calgary
- Edmonton

Ontario

- Barrie – Huronia Branch
- Durham - Saugeen Cedar Branch
- London
- Ottawa - Confluence of Three Rivers Branch
- Thornhill – Polaris Branch
- Toronto Branch

Quebec

- Eastern Townships
- Montréal (English)
- Montréal (Français) - Branche Sophia
- Sherbrooke (Français) - Vers les Sources, Estrie, QC
- Val David (Français)

Atlantic Provinces

- Nova Scotia



Members of the Huronia Branch (Barrie)

Section 2 – Branch Activities: The Possibilities of Freedom

2.1 Overview



Anthroposophical Branches come into being through the activity of Society members. Society members and friends are welcomed into these groups to take part in different aspects of the life of the Society, for study, festival celebrations, lectures, conversation, research, or other activities. Through their members, Branches can give active support and companionship for discoveries and activities on the anthroposophical path and may form a community of care in a social sense. Vital foundation work for bringing anthroposophy into the world and life to anthroposophy comes from Branches.

2.2 Branch Basics

1) Types of Activities

Branches are free to decide which activities they wish to take on, provided of course they are very broadly speaking anthroposophical. A Branch that dedicated all of its time to promoting Zen Buddhism or floor hockey would likely be considered out of bounds but a Branch that held an event to compare various approaches to meditation including Zen Buddhism or held a floor hockey tournament as a fundraiser would be fine.

Most Branches do spend some time considering what sort of Branch they want to be. In some cases, this is a significant and protracted conversation that can result in the creation of a mission statement or statement of purpose. In other cases, there is a ready consensus around what the team will take on first.

In broadest strokes, Branch activities could be broken into three types:

- a) Activities for Branch members, or for members and friends depending on Branch rules
- b) Activities for the general public
- c) Special projects

a) Activities for Branch members, or for members and friends depending on Branch rules

In the first category, the following could be included:


- regular Branch meetings – scheduled meetings where Branch members gather for a local activity
- regular Study Group or Reading Group meetings – these usually focus on a particular book or set of lectures by Rudolf Steiner or other anthroposophical author
- lectures, workshops, or conferences for members – these can cover a wide range of anthroposophical topics and be organized in a variety of ways

- artistic workshops or events for members – as above, these can be woven into other events or happen as stand alone events
- festival celebrations – many Branches celebrate four major Christian festivals discussed by Rudolf Steiner (Michaelmas, Christmas, Easter and St. John's Tide). Other festivals can also be celebrated. In some Branches, these are open to the public or celebrated in collaboration with an anthroposophical initiative such as a Waldorf school, Camphill Village, or biodynamic farm.

In general, these activities aim to deepen the anthroposophical experience of the participants. They assume some familiarity with anthroposophy and are usually open to Society members only or Society members and friends of the Society. In some Branches, some events – for example, a lecture on a particularly esoteric topic, might be open only to Society members, and perhaps those actively considering becoming a member. In other Branches, these events are open to members and friends, meaning people who are familiar with anthroposophy but are not Society members.

Naturally, the membership dues are important to the will life of the Society, and for the shared responsibility of supporting the Goetheanum, so it is reasonable to ask friends who attend events to consider joining and paying the membership fee. The current membership of \$320/year can be a deterrent. It is important to note that no one is denied membership for financial reasons. If they cannot afford the full membership fee, they should speak with the Society administrator about an appropriate and reasonable amount given their circumstances.

b) Activities for the General Public



**Rudolf Steiner's Copernican Revolution
The Evolution of Consciousness**

Professor Frederick Amrine
Arthur F. Thurnau Professor in German Studies, University of Michigan

Friday, October 17
7:00 PM to 9:00 PM

Friends House, 60 Lowther Avenue
(St. George Subway)

Tickets at the door (cash or cheque only)
\$20.00 general admission \$10.00 students and seniors

Sponsored by the Toronto Branch of the Anthroposophical Society in Canada
(a registered charity). For more information, please email Toronto.ASC@gmail.com

These activities are often similar to the above list but are advertised more widely. Events that are open to the public tend to have an “introductory” quality to them. In other cases, such as a weekend workshop led by a prominent anthroposophist, deeply esoteric content can be presented to people entirely new to anthroposophy.

Staging events for the general public is often more work than events for members and friends but it is also a service, as it helps people “for whom the time has come” to find their spiritual stream. Skills that Branches wanting to do public events need to have or develop include:

- Event design including how to weave thinking and artistic elements together (e.g. including eurythmy or other artistic activities)
- Liaison with speakers and artists including handling conversations about payment or honorariums
- Promotions including developing promotional materials and distributing them including potentially paid advertising
- Space rental, room design to facilitate admissions (float, ticket sales)
- Audio/visual elements of public events where

necessary

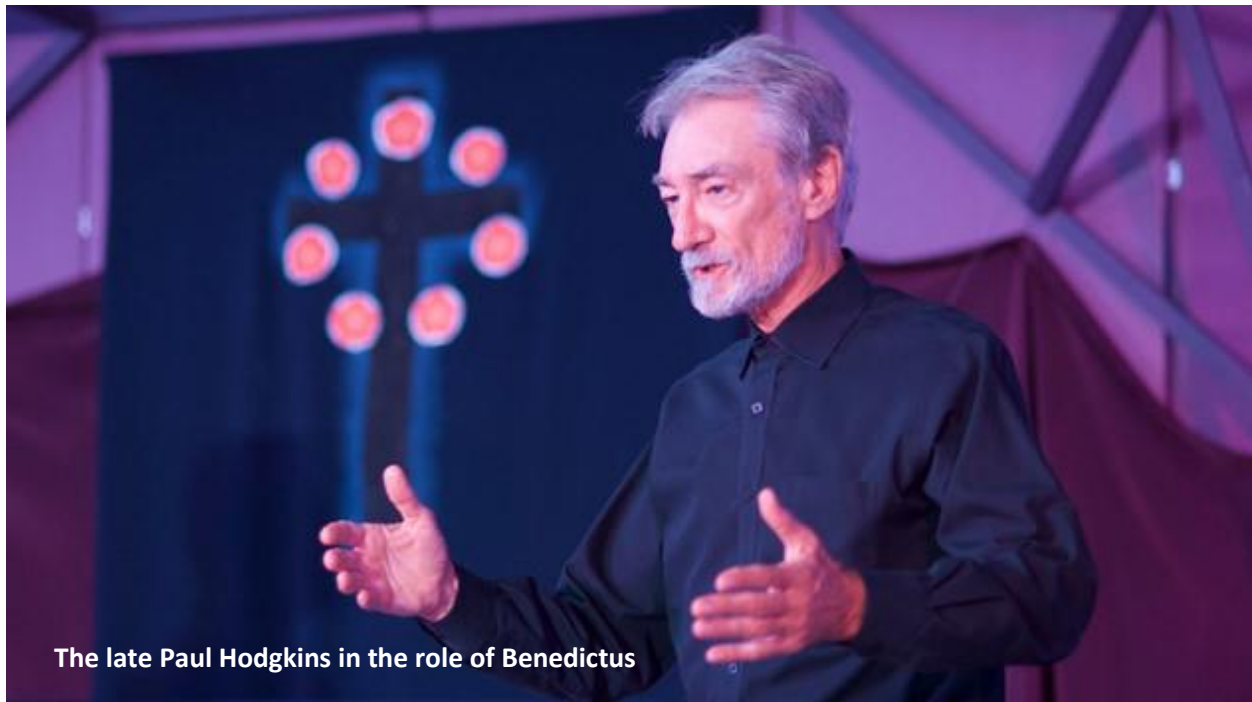
- Managing question and answer sessions with audiences

- Introducing and thanking presenters

c) Special Projects

Sometime Branches or initiative groups engage in a special project that takes a considerable amount of the local team's organizational capacity over months or even over years. Some examples including working with the national Council to organize the Annual General Meeting and Conference or putting on a significant event such as a performance of Rudolf Steiner's Mystery Dramas.

Let's consider this later example with reference to the wonderful set of dramas and conferences put on by Timothy and Magi Nadelle and their brave troupe of Tquest actors, set designers and stagehands. Though not a formal group of the Society, these events were supported by funding from the Society and support by several Branches. Over three years, this dedicated group put on, at first parts, and then in year three, the entire drama "Portal of Initiation." The associated conferences focused on the book The Philosophy of Freedom by Rudolf Steiner and associated experiential exercises that Tim Nadelle developed based on this foundational anthroposophical group.



2) Governance and Decision-Making

Branches across Canada, and in other countries, have various governance and decision-making practices. The selection of how to operate is left up to each Branch.

Smaller Branches tend to operate either:

- a) under the energetic leadership of one or two people who have will for organizing things, or

- b) through an informal or, in some cases, quite consciously selected group consensus decision-making practices.

On one pole, some Branches experienced the working out of their approach to governance and decision-making as a key, self-defining activity. On the other end of the spectrum are Branches for whom the selection of a governance model has been so organic as to barely warrant attention.

Larger Branches tend to have some kind of organizing committee and process for members and friends to bring initiatives forward for consideration and potentially local funding. The larger the Branch the more formalized these tend to become. There are no Branches in Canada as large as those in some of the European communities.

3) Local Membership Rules

Each Branch can create its own local statutes. This can cover aspects of Branch life such as:

- the purpose of the Branch,
- rules around participation in events,
- rules around use of Branch funds, and
- how the decision-making structure works.

One issue that can be a point of discussion relates to whether non-members of the Society can participate in some of or in all of the Branch activities. Some Branches are quite open to have Society members and friends attend all events, often with the understanding that each individual will choose when and if to join the Society. Others argue that a commitment to the Society is critical for participation in Society events. People who believe the latter often reference the fact that Dr. Steiner generally followed this practice in that certain events were open to the public but the majority of events were for Society members and one had to bring one's Society membership card in order to be admitted.

Others argue that in order for the Society to thrive, it needs those participating to pay membership dues, and, while the membership is \$320 per year, which may be prohibitive for some, lower amounts are possible based on the applicant's financial situation.

Another focus of discussion is often related to the use of Branch funds. Some Branches strive to ensure that each activity they undertake raises as much revenue as it costs, thus protecting the Branch fund for future use. Other Branches are more open to funding events that have to revenue dimension, if they feel it is important enough.

4) Financial Management

In terms of financial management, it is important to understand that in Canada, the Society has legal standing as a non-profit organization and a registered charity. The various Branches have no legal standing. They are not legally independent entities but part of the Society. Hence, the Society owns and is responsible for all the financial activities of all recognized Branches. That is why the Society has developed the two alternate Stewardship Agreements explained in the next section.

These agreements clarify common responsibilities across all Branches. However, that does not mean all Branches have a consistent approach to financial management. It is useful to know that some Branches own property and have significant investments while others operate with little or no financial resources.

Naturally, Branches that have accumulated funds have more in way of financial management tasks to complete.

5) Fundraising

This is a relatively new area for the Society and the Branches. The Society's Gift Money Mandate Group is now working on developing the Society's fundraising capacity and is having some moderate success.

Branches can also fundraise but there are several clauses in the Stewardship Agreements that have a bearing on how they can proceed with this. In particular, at present the Society is deemed a "non-soliciting" not-for-profit organization under the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act. This status limits the Society's fundraising options but also lowers the organization's regulatory and reporting burdens.

This status can be changed if, in the minds of the Council, the benefits of accepting a donation from outside of the "non-soliciting" status were to significantly outweigh the on-going, annual costs that would accrue to the Society of giving up that status. For a more detailed understanding of these issues, see, for example: www.gwvlaw.com/blog/2017/05/defining-soliciting-and-non-soliciting-corporations-under-the-cnca.shtml

6) Local Communication Tools

Here as well we see diversity across Canada. Some Branches have developed:

- A local website
- A local newsletter
- Social media sites – YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, etc.

Many Branches have no local communication tools but advertise through the Society's communication vehicles (including both eNews and Perspectives and the Society's website at www.anthroposophy.ca).

The need for local communication tools usually grows out of the group's activities and its context. Urban Branches with an interest in outreach are more likely to need to develop these tools to reach people in their communities.

For an example of local communication tools developed by the Toronto Branch, see:

- Website: www.anthroposophyBranchto.com (in development)
- Facebook Page: www.facebook.com/groups/torontoasc
- YouTube Channel: www.youtube.com/channel/UCwYXhOJpDJStmt4jeHjrDSQ

2.4 From Branches and Groups across Canada

Story #1 – Excerpts from the History of the Kelowna Parzival Group

These excerpts are drawn from a "History of the Kelowna Parzival Group" written by Brigitte Knaack. The sub-titles have been added.

Starting as Study Group

Our anthroposophical study group was started on March 21, 1978 by Christian and Karin Reuter. Over the more than 40 years of its existence, the Kelowna Parzival Group has studied a wide variety of anthroposophical books and lectures. With the exception of July and August, the group meets every Monday night from 7:15 PM to 9:00 PM. For many years, members were gathering in the homes of members. In 2002, we started to meet in the faculty room of the Kelowna Waldorf School (now Lakeside School).

Helping to Start a Waldorf School

In September of 1982, following an initiative by study group members, the Kelowna Waldorf School opened its first Preschool and Kindergarten to children living in the greater Kelowna area. Since then, a number of study group members have always been active in the life of the school as parents, teachers, trustees and committee members.

Expanding to Organize Lectures, Conferences, and Festival Celebrations

Workshops and lectures by guest speakers, social events, conversations on current events and the celebration of Christian festivals have always been part of the group's program. In 1986, group members were given the opportunity to attend a three-day seminar with Philip Thatcher, focusing on the medieval story of Parzival by Wolfram von Eschenbach. The figure of Parzival and his deeply moving quest for the Grail left a lasting impression, not only on existing members of the group but also on three new members who joined the study group as a result of attending this seminar.

Becoming a Branch of the Anthroposophical Society in Canada and Choosing a Name

In the Spring of 1990, members felt that the time had come for the group to become an official Branch or Members' Group of the Anthroposophical Society in Canada. A careful name search was conducted and — on account of the members' inner connection with the universally human quest of Parzival — the name "Kelowna Parzival Group" was chosen... On April 25, 1990, in a festive meeting attended by the Chair of the Anthroposophical Society in Canada, George Wilson, and the General Secretary of the Anthroposophical Society in Denmark, Oskar Hansen, the Kelowna Parzival Group celebrated its inauguration as an official Members' Group of the Anthroposophical Society in Canada.

Working as Leaderless Group

Over the years, members have specifically expressed the wish to be a 'leaderless' group. This is why, from the beginning, the Kelowna Parzival Group has never elected a 'leader,' but the group has always had a facilitator, whose task it is to organize and facilitate the meetings and communicate with the members so that the group is able to function effectively and harmoniously...

Developing a Way of Working Together

The members of the Kelowna Parzival Group are agreed on a set of principles, and anyone joining or visiting the study group is expected to respect them. For our own and others' benefit, we cultivate an awareness of these principles and strive to gradually grow into this reverent way of meeting the spiritual world and each other. On joining the group, each new member receives a page entitled "About Anthroposophical Study Meetings," which outlines the principles we all agree to observe. (For a copy of this document, please contact Bridgette Knack at beknaack@telus.net or (250) 764-4710).

A Typical Branch Meeting

At this time, we have a core group of 10-12 members...We always start the evening by reading the verse of the week from Rudolf Steiner's *The Calendar of the Soul* in English and German. The reading is followed by a few minutes of silence, after which we share our thoughts on the mood of the verse as it reflects the inner life of the soul in relation to the outer life of nature. Since we use our own version of the Calendar, which contains seven different English translations, we often reflect on the different renderings and the translators' attempts to mirror different aspects of the German original. This conversation sets the mood for the evening and is followed by our study of the chosen book or lecture. Questions and conversations are the lifeblood of our study. They inspire us to reflect on the subject with renewed and joint effort. Members alternate in choosing and reading a meditation to close the meeting.

Member Donations

We do not charge a membership fee; instead, following the initiative of one of our members, we have introduced a contribution box. From time to time, the members decide on using the accumulated amount to finance a special project, usually in support of our Lakeside School.

Class Lessons in the Region

Since 2003, members of the General Anthroposophical Section of the School of Spiritual Science, living in Kelowna, Westbank, Lumby and Nelson, meet in Kelowna (usually on five weekends per year) to attend Class lessons and participate in Class conversations.

Story #2 – Getting to Know Rudolf Steiner at the Toronto Branch

The Toronto Branch has a regular Branch meeting every 6 weeks or so. These meetings are 2 hours long and attended by anywhere from 6 to 20 people. Meetings begin and end with a verse, sometime include a roundtable check-in but in general focus on a group activity prepared by one of the members of the Branch Organizing Committee. Several years ago, we had a memorable evening listening to stories about Rudolf Steiner told by people who knew him.

Each story was placed inside a white envelope and adorned by a photograph of Dr. Steiner at about the age from which the story was told. Each member present picked an envelope not knowing which story they would read. One by one each envelope was opened, the enclosed story read aloud and then the photo shown around. It sounds simple, and it was, but as the stories mounted from the different voices, a rich picture of Dr. Steiner's remarkable personality emerged. As we completed reading 15 stories, there was quite a special mood amongst the group, exciting for some and more reverential for others. We had a lively discuss of how the stories showed different aspects of his personality and how this accumulated sense of his personality affected us.

Here are two of the stories we included:

By George Adams (in *A Man Before Others*, page 16, 17)

George Adams who interpreted Rudolf Steiner's lectures to audiences in Great Britain on several occasions. Dr. Steiner would speak for about five minutes in German and the Mr. Adams would repeat the section in English. This is extraordinarily difficult to do. In order to manage these on-site, long translations, Mr. Adams, who was a young man at the time, used symbolic notes, a prodigious memory, a great talent for translation, and courage. People who were fluent in both languages marveled at his accuracy both in content and emotional tone. Dr. Steiner, whose English was very limited, was delighted with Mr. Adams capacity and remarked, "You have done me a great service!"



Looking back on it now, it seems to me that I was doing it with childlike, youthful life-forces, of which an abundance had been given me. There was a great trust in it – an unconscious act of faith. In other respects, I was rather shy and diffident in Dr. Steiner’s presence; I was less near to him than others among his pupils, who had more experience and confidence or were farther along the path of knowledge. Sometimes he had unexpected ways of putting me at my ease, as on a peaceful summer afternoon at Oxford in 1922. Walking through the college garden, I met him and a few others coming from the opposite direction or waiting for someone else to join them. I paused and greeted them. Presently Dr. Steiner bent to a nearby flowerbed, picked up a large snapdragon and began fitting it on the tip of my nose, looking at me with his friendly smile. But when interpreting his lectures, I was never shy. I went all out...

From Anna Samweber (in *Memories of Rudolf Steiner and Marie Steiner-von Sivers*, Page 24, 25)
Ms. Samweber worked closely with Rudolf Steiner and Marie Steiner on administrative matters.



When Rudolf Steiner gave one of his big public lectures at a time when he spoke up for the Threefold Social Order, he always used a special exit which led to the artists’ room, from where I accompanied him through a long passage to the main exit. After one of these lectures there were many people standing around who wanted to put their questions and problems to him, and who occupied him for a long time. I was waiting by the side entrance and I had already got his coat, scarf and hat and was holding them in my arm so that I could pass them to him when he was finally free. After I had stood by the door for some time, he came, took his things from me, went back to the artists’ room and put everything back on the hooks. Then he took one piece after the other and put them on. With great surprise I burst out, “But Herr Doctor, can you imagine how I feel?” He replied, “And can you imagine how I feel?” We went silently through the dark corridor where I usually led him, as his eyesight was very bad in the dark, when suddenly he said, “Are you so angry with me that you let me walk into the wall?” Further on, he asked whether I did not know why he had acted like that. When I answered in the negative he replied, “Think about it.”

When we met the next day and the day after that his first question was: “Have you thought about it?” I became quite upset and when I woke again at night, it came to me. When the people stood around Dr. Steiner and besieged him, I had stood self-satisfied with the thought that I had his coat, his hat, his scarf. On the following day Dr. Steiner asked me for the fourth time whether I had thought about it. I said, “Yes Herr Doctor, I know now why.” He answered, “You see, Sam, that must not be.” He disliked intensely all personal cult and he gave it no chance to develop around him.

Naturally, the research work to locate all these stories from multiple books and prepare them with corresponding pictures took a little time, but the effect on our Branch membership was well worth it.

Story #3 -

Story #4 -

Story #5 -

Story #6 -

Section 3 – Establishing a Branch of The Canadian Society

3.1 How to Establish a Branch of the Canadian Society

Establishment of a Branch to further the life of anthroposophy in a community does not follow a prescribed sequence but rather reflects the activities of the individuals who initiate it. Branches may begin as:

- study groups
- a festival-celebrating groups
- a meditation group
- a group of conference organizers
- a research group
- an online discussion group
- or something encompassing some or all the above.

At a certain point, the Society members comprising the group (normally around 5 - 7 Society members) may decide that they wish to formalize as a Branch of the General Anthroposophical Society. In an out-of-print guidance document presented by the Goetheanum some years back, it was recommended that a group of individuals thinking about forming a Branch consider three things:

- 1) A group is established in consultation with the relevant country society, reporting its formation, either verbally, but preferably in writing. (The Canadian Society traditionally requires a formal notice in writing.)
- 2) Membership of the group implies membership of the GAS.
- 3) The group acknowledges the statutes of the country society.

The Members' Office at the Goetheanum kindly asks to be informed on the forming of a new group by the National Society.

So, when ready to do so, a representative for the group writes a letter of introduction and addresses it to the Council of the ASC giving names of all group members and including name chosen for the Branch, its location, and contact information. This information is added to the Canadian list of regional contacts. Once the Branch is acknowledged:

- the Council will notify the Goetheanum of your formation unless they have any questions
- a Council representative will be in touch to the new Branch to provide a write up and contact information for the Canadian Society to post on our website and commit to keeping it updated
- the Treasurer will be in touch to establish the Stewardship Agreement explained below.

3.2 Some Practical Advice on Getting Started

Here is an example of a letter of application to the ASC from the newly formed Vancouver Branch which started activities in early 2018

To: The Council of the Anthroposophical Society in Canada
130A-1 Hesperus Rd.,
Thornhill, ON
L4J0G9
May 14, 2018

Dear Council,

This is a request to form a new Branch of the ASC in Vancouver. We have already been meeting now for several months. For the time being, our name will be the "Vancouver Branch." Here is our purpose statement:

The Vancouver Branch of the Anthroposophical Society in Canada will foster communication within our community and with the Goetheanum for the purpose of supporting anthroposophical initiatives.

We meet at 9:30 am once a month on a selected Saturday morning at the Rudolf Steiner Centre in North Vancouver. We work with speech or eurythmy, have a 20 minute a study, hear reports of initiatives and we plan festivals. We want to offer support to anthroposophical endeavours in the greater Vancouver area as well as provide a welcoming space for newcomers and for people to share news of their initiatives.

Contact person: Susan Koppersmith at _____

Sincerely,

Michael Roboz
Ruth Tschannen
Patricia Smith

Greg Scott
Monica Gold
Bettina Hillaby
Angela Dutson
Esther Chase
Giselher Weber
Abegael Fisher-Lang
Susan Locey
Susan Koppersmith

- > need to add a section here
- > focus on relationship development that usually precedes Branch formation
- > doing some advance thinking about activities, governance, etc.

3.3 Branch Financial Management and the Role of the Steward

The Anthroposophical Society in Canada is a registered Canadian Charity (BN 135250298RR0001). Being a charity has several benefits for the Society as summarized on the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) website:

- Registration allows a charity to issue official donation receipts for gifts it receives. These receipts can be used to reduce the income tax payable of an individual donor or the taxable income of a corporate donor.
- Once registered, a charity is exempt from paying income tax under Part I of the Income Tax Act.
- Registered charities are eligible to receive gifts from other registered charities, such as foundations.
- Registration provides increased credibility in the community, since registered charities must follow certain rules and guidelines in order to maintain their registration.
- Many goods and services provided by registered charities are exempt from goods and services tax/harmonized sales tax (GST/HST). Also, in many situations, registered charities can claim a partial rebate for the GST/HST they pay.⁵

In order to maintain its charitable status, the Society must adhere to CRA financial accountability and reporting responsibilities. These affect both national as well as local group activities. In this regard, it is important to understand that Branches or local groups are not legally independent entities. Any funds raised by or used by a Branch or local group are property of the Society and subject to their rules including all CRA requirements. If this is not done properly, actions at the local level could jeopardize the Society's charitable standing.

To ensure appropriate financial management at the local level, the national Council has established the local group Steward role and corresponding agreements. Each Branch or group must identify a Steward to ensure the local group understands its financial accounting and reporting responsibilities. The Steward must sign an agreement to this effect with the Treasurer of the Society. This agreement comes in two forms: one for local groups that have their own bank account and one for groups that do not have their own bank account. Active local groups often find it easier to have their own local bank

⁵ See <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/charities-giving/charities/applying-registration/registration-right-you/advantages-registration.html>

account primarily because it is easier to write cheques for expenses themselves rather than requesting this of the national Treasurer.

Below you will find the text of the two Steward Agreements. You will note that despite the government requirements set out here, every effort has been made to provide local groups with autonomy as far as possible.

When establishing a new local group, it is useful to have the new Steward meet with the national Treasurer in order to fully understand the obligations set out in these Steward Agreements.

Text of Steward Agreement for Groups with Financial Accounts

The Anthroposophical Society in Canada Group Steward Agreement – Groups with financial accounts

General Principles

The Anthroposophical Society in Canada (Society) financial life unfolds in two operating areas:

1. **National:** consisting of financial matters related to the entire membership, including General Secretary, Goetheanum, School & Sections, administration and communication support, nationally sponsored projects, and AGM/Conferences. These activities are funded through membership contributions and additional donations towards the various initiatives.
2. **Local Groups:** funds are raised beyond National membership contributions and national donations through local donation campaigns, events, and activities. Funds received by the Society in this manner will be deposited and posted to the Group's fund account and managed by the local Steward.

In this way, local activities across Canada can unfold under local direction, and the entire Society can remain aware and supportive. All funds and assets related to either National matters or the local Groups shall remain the property of the Society.

Obligations of local Financial Stewards

- 1) Conduct all Group financial transactions while working in association with the Treasurer and Council to comply with the bylaws and Purpose of the Society. This includes ensuring that only Society activities are funded, and that money does not leave the Society, except to qualified donees (i.e. other Canadian registered Charities).
- 2) Protect the non-soliciting status of the Society. Accept only donations from Society Members or their relatives. Offers of donations from any other source must be re-directed to the Treasurer for assessment and further disposition.
- 3) Protect the Society from legally binding restrictions on donations. If a donor wishes to direct their donation to a specific use, then obtain their written or emailed agreement with the non-restricted disclaimer obtained from the Treasurer. Forward an electronic copy of the acknowledged disclaimer to the Treasurer and Administrator for audit records.

- 4) Work with Project Stewards to oversee the financial aspects of projects undertaken by the Branch/Group.
- 5) Do not enter into contracts or liabilities on behalf of the Group that might result in exceeding the financial solvency of the Group.
- 6) Review the Income and Expense sheet and Balance Sheet of the Group, as provided by the Society's Bookkeeper, on a quarterly basis to ensure accuracy.
- 7) Maintain the Group's bank account. The Society will account for the Group's assets on the Society's Balance Sheet and all Group transactions on the Society's Income and Expense Sheet. This information will be reported by the Society to the Canada Revenue Agency and to the membership of the Society on a yearly basis.
- 8) Manage Group bank accounts, which includes the following:
 - a) Collect and deposit all donations and revenues received from activities and events held by the Group.
 - b) Pay all contracted invoices and bills for the Group from the Group's bank account.
 - c) Identify and separate bona fide donations from other revenue (e.g. Workshop fees). Provide the Administrator and Bookkeeper with an accounting of donations requiring tax receipts, including Name, address, date, and amount.
 - d) Reconcile all transactions to the Group's bank account and provide a summary report of the transactions and their descriptions, along with bank statements, to the Treasurer, Administrator and Bookkeeper of the Society on a quarterly basis.
 - e) Obtain vouchers, receipts and/or relevant documentation supporting all revenues and expenditures of the Group. Provide an electronic copy of all such relevant documents to the administrator and bookkeeper with the quarterly report.
- 9) Manage financial and loan accounts, which includes the following:
 - a) Before setting up any financial accounts or loans, inform the Treasurer of the Society.
 - b) Reconcile all transactions of financial and loan accounts and provide a summary report of the transactions along with statements to the Treasurer, Administrator and Bookkeeper of the Society on a quarterly basis.
 - c) Ensure that vouchers and/or relevant documentation support all transactions. Provide an electronic copy of all such relevant documents to the Treasurer, Administrator and Bookkeeper with the quarterly report.
- 10) Be prepared to answer questions that relate to a review engagement and possible audit.

Either the Society or the Steward is free to terminate this agreement at any time with written notification, at which time the Steward shall assist the Society in establishing new signatories to any local bank accounts.

I, _____, as financial Steward to the Anthroposophical Society in Canada, agree to the foregoing on behalf of the _____ Branch/Group ("Group") and the Society.

Effective Date: _____

Group Steward: _____
Name Signature

Backup Group Steward: _____
Name

Acknowledged and Accepted: _____
Treasurer Signature

Text of Steward Agreement for Groups without Financial Accounts

The Anthroposophical Society in Canada Group Steward Agreement – Groups without financial accounts

As a general principle, the Group will raise its own funds through donation campaigns, events and activities. The Society will accept, deposit and post to the Group's fund account all donated contribution and bequest money directed to the Group by the donor. All funds and assets related to the Group shall remain the property of the Society.

I, _____, as financial Steward to the Anthroposophical Society in Canada ("Society"), agree to the following, on behalf of the _____ Branch/Group ("Group") and the Society:

1. Conduct all Group financial transactions while working in association with the Treasurer and Council to comply with the bylaws and Purpose of the Society. This includes ensuring that only Society activities are funded; and, that money does not leave the Society, except to cover legitimate expenses or qualified donees (i.e. other registered Charities).
2. Work with Project Stewards to oversee the financial aspects of projects undertaken by the Branch.
3. Not to enter into contracts or liabilities on behalf of the Group that might result in exceeding the financial solvency of the Group.
4. Review the Income and Expense sheet and Balance Sheet of the Group, as provided by the Society's Bookkeeper, on a quarterly basis to ensure accuracy.
5. Provide the following to the Bookkeeper and Administrator of the Society:
 - 1) All donations and revenues received for the Group with a detailed summary of all money collected for depositing into the Society's bank account under the Group's Fund account.
 - 2) A written request to pay any and all contracted invoices and bills for the Group.
 - 3) Vouchers, receipts and/or relevant documentation to support all revenues and expenditures of the Group, if possible in electronic format.

6. Be prepared to answer questions that relate to a review engagement and possible audit.

Either party is free to terminate this agreement at any time with written notification.

Effective Date: _____

Group Steward's Signature: _____

Backup Steward to the Group: _____

Treasurer of the Society Signature: _____

3.4 Support from the Council and Other Branches

- > the \$500 in start up funds from the Toronto Branch
- > the Council's funding support for specific initiatives
- > idea of collaboration – e.g. cross Canada speakers tours

Conclusion: The Pioneers of the Spirit

Appendix 1 – Statutes of the General Anthroposophical Society in Dornach

Appendix 2 – Mandate / Objects and Purposes of the Anthroposophical Society in Canada

Appendix 3 – Should a Branch Have a Name? by Virginia Sease (News for Members, Summer 2004)



There are many aspects connected with the question of whether a Branch or group of the Anthroposophical Society should have a name. The following comments represent perspectives, but no implied recommendations, because the members at each place where the Anthroposophical Society lives need to decide this question among themselves.

A first consideration may center on the recognition that each place has its own spirituality, its own *genius loci*; that is, its own archangel. Invisible threads weave from each human being's individual angel to this archangel being of a specific place. We can notice this especially if we are in a foreign land or even another city and we meet someone from our hometown. We experience momentarily an immediate connection even if we have never seen the person before.

When we speak of archangels, we generally restrict ourselves to the seven planetary archangels such as Sun-Michael, Saturn-Oriphiel, or to the archangels who serve as folk spirits. Rudolf Steiner mentions, for example, Surakiel, who "especially eradicates comprehensive vices from a city or from an entire area and changes them into virtues."¹ The presence of the Anthroposophical Society also affects the *genius loci* of a specific place.

The history of Branches and groups as a constituent of the Anthroposophical Society reaches, first of all, back to the connection with the Theosophical Society. Local groups generally bore the description "lodges," whereas national groups were called Branches or sections. Beginning in 1902, and until 1913 then the members founded the Anthroposophical Society, Rudolf Steiner was the General Secretary of the German Section of the Theosophical Society encompassing the German-speaking countries. A typical announcement for 1906 in the News for Members of the German Section Theosophical Society, edited for many years by Mathilde Scholl, reads, "Giordano Bruno-Branch, Cologne: After a recess of approximately one month, the work of the lodge began again at the end of September. . . ."² Rudolf Steiner's lectures for members were also announced as "lodge-lectures." This sounds strange for us today.

An important history is connected with the designation "lodge." It goes back to the Middle Ages when the building guilds constructed wooden huts as a place for conversation and exchange concerning construction questions in regard to building the great cathedrals. Strasbourg was generally recognized as the "main building hut," since the construction there had already begun in 504 A.D. In 1007, the cathedral suffered almost complete destruction by lightning, but between 1015 and 1439 it was rebuilt. By 1275 the architect, Erwin von Steinbach, had given the decisive instructions for his famous building hut or lodge. Because of the conversations which occurred, one could think that gradually "lodge" emerged from "logos," although from an etymological standpoint much is left to the imagination here!

The Freemasons cherish a detailed description of the history of the lodge; for example, they trace the first lodge back to the beginning of Christianity in Jerusalem under the Grandmaster John the Evangelist. Hence they refer to St. John-Lodges and John-Masonry. Then, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky also adopted the designation “lodge” after she and Colonel Henry Steel Olcott founded the Theosophical Society in New York City in 1875.

By the time the Anthroposophical Society became separate from the Theosophical Society, Rudolf Steiner had transformed the Eastern nomenclature into European designations. For example, we may observe this change in regard to the word “chakram” which he dropped very early, preferring to speak instead of “organs of spiritual perception” or lotus flowers. It is the difference between a “wheel” with its continual repetitive action, and a flower which contains the development and transformation inherent in its natural growth.

In 1904, Mathilde Scholl decided to name the Branch in Cologne the “Giordano Bruno Lodge.” This was the second Branch to be founded under the aegis of Rudolf Steiner as the General Secretary of the German Section. This year (2004), the Branch in Cologne celebrated its 100th anniversary and renamed itself the “Rudolf Steiner Branch in Cologne.” (The first Branch of the German Section was inaugurated in Weimar in 1903.) Rudolf Steiner also published Theosophy in 1904; it bears the inscription: “Dedicated to the spirit of Giordano Bruno.” As of the 1908 edition, this dedication was eliminated. Rudolf Steiner responded to Mathilde Scholl’s inquiry about the name Giordano Bruno (1548-1600) after the Branch dedication: “Of course I am in agreement with the name for your lodge. There is nothing as far as I know which might speak against this name” (Rudolf Steiner to Mathilde Scholl, April 5, 1904).³

In 1911, a problem arose when Annie Besant, so it seems, identified herself as Giordano Bruno. The relationship of Rudolf Steiner and Annie Besant is very complex. Initially Rudolf Steiner had a high regard for her. He accompanied her on a lecture tour through Germany in 1904 and translated her lectures simultaneously from English into German. As of 1907, significant differences manifested between them which led to a separation in the esoteric work and in 1912–1913 to the founding of the Anthroposophical Society.

On June 15, 1911, Annie Besant gave a lecture at the Sorbonne University in Paris with the theme “Giordano Bruno: Theosophy’s Apostle in the Sixteenth Century.” In this lecture, Annie Besant emphatically criticizes Christians in regard to the persecution of Giordano Bruno. We may notice that she does not direct her wrath to the institution of the Church, which would be more historically correct: “He (Giordano Bruno) was buried living in the tomb. Such mercy gave the Christian to the man who dared to think. . . . The Christians have starved and tortured his life out of him. The heretic is old in the prime of his manhood.”⁴ Then follows a vivid eye-witness-like description of his torture. In 1913, she wrote in the journal Theosophist that many were—like she herself—not Christians. Nevertheless, the Branch in Cologne retained the name of Giordano Bruno until approximately 1914, after which the designation was merely Anthroposophical Society in Cologne. Now, after much consideration of various possibilities, the members chose their 100th anniversary to christen their Branch anew as the Rudolf Steiner Branch of the Anthroposophical Society in Cologne.

General Aspects Pertinent to a Name

Every person in the civilized world has a name. Rudolf Steiner draws attention to the fact that in about the third year of life the child undergoes a process of individualization, and begins to perceive himself or

herself as an individual with a separate identity, thus no longer saying “Jane or Robert wants a cookie,” but “I want a cookie.”

In ancient times, names revealed qualities connected with the things or beings they designated. In ancient Hebrew times, we see especially clearly how the special quality in relationship to the Divine was manifested in the name; for example, Moses—“he who was saved from the water” or Michael—“he who is like God.” From another aspect, names in their very structure expressed a pious wish or even a magical exhortation; for example, Melissa—derived from Greek— meant “become diligent like a bee.”

For the Germanic tribes, a name possessed magic and power. Hence a new-born weakly child was normally killed, but always before the child had been named. This expressed their experience that spirit and body became a unity when the name was bestowed, and a personality emerged from the living being. This same tradition found continuity in Christian times when the name—such as a saint’s name— offered protection by the saint for the namesake. Thus we see that from earliest eras the “name patron” indicated protection, invocation, and task or charge.

On September 19, 1906, Rudolf Steiner held a significant lecture for the inauguration of the Paracelsus Branch in Basel; it was entitled “The Mission of the Theosophical Movement.” Although Rudolf Steiner did not refer to Paracelsus by name, this great individual was implied through the theme itself, which concerned three ways of initiation. Paracelsus lived—and to some extent still lives—in the aura of Basel as part of the *genius loci*. The Branch still bears the name “Paracelsus Branch of the Anthroposophical Society in Switzerland.”

A completely different gesture manifests with the 1910 founding of the Saint Mark’s Group in New York City. Rudolf Steiner sent a communication that this name would be fitting because St. Mark’s concise and analytical manner of writing was especially appropriate for the quality of the American Spirit, and New York would be a very good place to found the St. Mark’s Group.

In September 1911, a totally new dimension enters through the members in Neuchâtel, Switzerland: they decided to choose Christian Rosenkreutz as their Branch patron, Rudolf Steiner had mentioned Christian Rosenkreutz in the early Esoteric Lessons, and then Rosicrucianism appears as a mighty overture in the 1907 Munich Congress of the Theosophical Society for which Rudolf Steiner, Marie Steiner, and members connected with them carried the initiative. In retrospect, Marie Steiner characterized this Congress as the “separation of souls.” On June 1, 1907—immediately after the Congress—Rudolf Steiner undertook a new step in the esoteric history of humanity. He placed before the members of the Esoteric School the necessity for each member to decide whether the pathway he or she had chosen was connected to the Eastern stream of esotericism under Annie Besant with its affiliation to Master Koot Hoomi and Master Moriah, or to the Western stream of Christian Rosenkreutz and Master Jesus for which Rudolf Steiner was the leader. Then Rudolf Steiner spoke in Cologne on December 25, 1907, about Goethe’s great poetic work *The Mysteries*, with the thirteenth individuality who asks the question “who brought the roses to the cross?”. These events mark an important milestone in Rudolf Steiner’s revelation concerning Christian Rosenkreutz. The first two mystery dramas by Rudolf Steiner followed in 1910 and 1911, bearing the designation “A Rosicrucian Mystery through Rudolf Steiner.”

With this brief background we can approach the significance Rudolf Steiner attached to the wish of the Neuchâtel members to connect their work with Christian Rosenkreutz. His first words are: “It fills me with deep satisfaction to be here for the first time in this newly founded Branch which bears the exalted

name 'Christian Rosenkreutz', whereby it then becomes possible for me to speak for the first time [italics V.S.] more exactly about Christian Rosenkreutz."⁴ Thus the decision and the deed of the members opened up a new possibility for Rudolf Steiner! At the conclusion of the second (and last) lecture he said: "I myself want to remember again and again our great and promising work, and to implore the great leader of Europe for his help. So may this Branch be one of the building stones for the temple we wish to erect. In the spirit of Christian Rosenkreutz we have opened this Branch and in the spirit of Christian Rosenkreutz we want to endeavor to conduct the work further."⁵ We experience here that the "spirit" conveys the reality of beingness and is not merely a nice phrase, just as the dedication of the book Theosophy to the spirit of Giordano Bruno indicates deeper levels of awareness.

Many Branches took on a "patron's" name at the time of their inauguration, especially in the years before the outbreak of the First World War. Rudolf Steiner attached spiritual significance to every Branch inauguration, which he termed "Einweihung," a word that also means consecration. This radiates through his words for the commencement of the Vidar- Branch in Bochum, December 21, 1913: to that divine Being regarded in the north as the divine Being who will restore rejuvenating forces, spiritual forces of childhood to an aging mankind; regarded as the divine Being to whom Nordic souls turn when they wish to speak about what flows from the Christ-Jesus Being, bringing our humanity a new message of rejuvenation—to this name our friends here intend to dedicate their work and their Branch. They wish to name it the "Vidar Branch." May this name be full of promise, in the same way that what has been accomplished here and will be accomplished here by loving souls, by spirit loving souls, is full of promise for those of us who wish to understand the work being done here? Let us thus deeply and truly cherish what our friends here in Bochum are attempting, and let us offer to their Branch and their work the consecration that today is also intended as a Christ-consecration; let us do this by unfolding here our most beautiful, our most loving thoughts for blessing, for power, and for true, genuine spiritual love for this work. If we can feel this, then with our Bochum friends we rightly celebrate today's festival of naming for the Vidar Branch.⁶

On various occasions, Rudolf Steiner composed a verse for the Branch; for example, he wrote a verse for the Threefold Group in Spring Valley that is known today as the "America Verse". It was brought personally to Ralph Courtney by Reinhard Mueller, a Swiss member who divided his time between Switzerland and New York because of business, and was a founding member of the Threefold Group. He received the verse directly from Rudolf Steiner in 1924 in response to Ralph Courtney's request. The first English translation was by Frederick Heckel.

America Verse

*May our feeling penetrate
Into the center of our heart,
And seek, in love, to unite itself
With the human beings seeking the same goal;
With the spirit beings, who, bearing grace,
Strengthening us from realms of light
And illuminating our love,
Are gazing down upon
Our earnest, heartfelt striving.*

We may summarize these descriptive names as a challenge for the work (Bochum, New York City, Spring Valley); as a possibility for the revelation of a significant individuality (Christian Rosenkreutz in

Neuchâtel); as a connection to the spiritual quality of a place, the genius loci (Paracelsus, Basel). To these can be added honoring an individuality and/or spiritual direction (Parsifal), as well as an intimate connection to the history of our Anthroposophical Society (Rudolf Steiner Branch in Cologne).

Possible Reservations Concerning Branch Names

Some reservations can also be considered when the Branch has borne a name for some time, but then something arises that connects the name with a dubious situation; this may have been the case with the Annie Besant-Giordano Bruno complication. Furthermore, a political situation may arise where the name is usurped by a configuration contrary to the impulse of the Branch.

When later generations enter the group, they may have little or no association with the patron behind the name. For example, the patron name of the Hans Christian Andersen Branch in Wintherthur, Switzerland, certainly may have enjoyed greater significance for the founders than for following generations. Sometimes the question arises whether the Branch should continue to carry the name for the sake of continuity, or should it find a name that is meaningful for the present members. Again, each Branch will need to decide this question for itself.

What Speaks Today for Giving a Branch a Name?

When well-chosen by the members of a specific place, the name may point to the future even if the origin of the name is anchored in history. A few examples illustrate the diversity existent today: Rama Juan de la Cruz (Mexico), Elias Branch (Jerusalem), Hillel Branch (Tivon, Israel), Rama Santiago Apostel (Cali, Columbia), Marie Steiner Branch (Latvia), Faust Branch (Fair Oaks, California). Also, many Branches world-wide connect the identity of their Branch with the Archangel Michael.

The General Situation of Branches and Groups since the Christmas Conference 1923–24

Whether members belong to a Branch or group with a specific name or not, we are all members of the General Anthroposophical Society first of all. Then we may choose to connect with a Branch or group when our personal destiny leads us to a particular geographic location. Destinies today may be characterized by their mobility, which often results in the founding of new anthroposophical endeavors by members of the General Anthroposophical Society. When these members eventually take the initiative to found a Branch, it is as if the area has attained a new identity. Branches may be experienced also as individualities, not in the sense of a hermit existence but rather as a part of a whole that is the entity Rudolf Steiner named the General Anthroposophical Society. This designation describes the comprehensive, cosmopolitan quality and goal of our Society in the Age of Michael.

1. Rudolf Steiner, Lecture of April 20, 1908 in Berlin, in *Das Hereinwirken geistiger Wesenheiten in den Menschen* (GA 102), Dornach, 1964 (trans. V. Sease).
2. Trans. V. Sease.
3. Annie Besant, "Giordano Bruno, Theosophy's Apostle in the Sixteenth Century," Lecture on June 15, 1911, Sorbonne, Paris. The Theosophist Office, Adyar, Madras, India 1913.
4. Rudolf Steiner, Lecture of September 27, 1911 in Neuchâtel, in *Das esoterische Christentum und die geistige Führung der Menschheit* (GA 130), (trans. V. Sease); English: *Esoteric Christianity* (Rudolf Steiner Press, 2000)
5. Ibid., Lecture of September 28, 1911 (trans. V. Sease).
6. Rudolf Steiner, Lecture of December 21, 1913 in Bochum, in *Die Welt des Geistes und ihr Hereintragen in das physische Dasein. Das Einwirken der Toten in die Welt der Lebenden* (GA 150), Dornach, 1980 (trans. M. Miller)