

AN OUTLINE OF THE HISTORY OF
THE MANOR

2 ILUKA ROAD, MOSMAN
SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA



The Manor's entrance verandah

Originally Compiled by
Dianne K. Kynaston

Copyright © 2022 The Manor Foundation Ltd.

THE MANOR

THE MANOR is a four-storey building on a spacious block of land situated on the northern foreshore of Sydney Harbour. The property also includes three cottages as well as garages and storerooms in an area that was formerly occupied by stables. The eastern and southern sides of the property adjoin the Chowder Head section of the Sydney Harbour National Park.

The Manor was built between 1908 and 1912 by a Mr. William Bakewell who owned a brick and tile manufacturing business in Macdonaldtown, Sydney. His family home was near to the factory (at St. Aubins), but he built the Manor as a country house. He had also built in the 1890s, a country home – Airlie House, near Scone in the Upper Hunter Valley).

The bricks and were Mr. Bakewell at architectural building is the tiling throughout bathrooms. Also the many stained-the pressed metal ceiling having a different pattern. patterns very



Airlie House, Scone, NSW. Reproduced by permission.

most of the tiles manufactured by his factory, and an feature of the liberal use of the hallways and of special note are glass windows and ceilings, each distinctive, The style of the much reflects the

art deco influence of the time. The central foyer and the verandah feature grand columns. The window frames are made of oak wood, and staircases are made of Italian marble. Tradesmen over the years have commented on the fact that the structure is well built, with quality materials.

The Bakewell family did not like living at The Manor as it was deemed too far away from life in Sydney (there was no harbour bridge, and the only access to Mosman was by ferry/punt or by a long road trip via Parramatta), so Mr. Bakewell lived here alone with his servants. He died around 1917, and the house was left empty for several years.

In 1922 a group of TS members, including a number of families, decided to create a theosophical community, with Bishop Leadbeater as the central figure. They looked for a suitable house, and found one called “Garrock”, but could not make suitable arrangements with its owner. In the meantime, Mr. John Mackay, while walking around the headland, came across the Manor building – which was known at that time as “Bakewell’s Folly”. Arrangements were made to rent it and a group of people, including

several families of Dutch origin, moved in. In the meantime, the Bakewell family were trying to sell the building, and in 1925 the Manor residents managed to raise the capital to buy it. They renamed it “The Manor”.

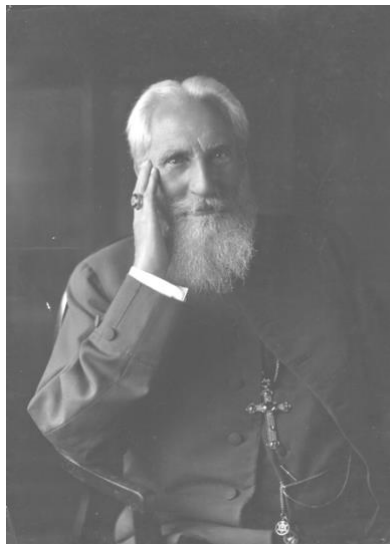
According to historian, Dr Bill Metcalfe, the Manor community is the oldest intentional community of its kind in Australia, 2022 being its centenary year.

THE HISTORY AND WORK OF THE MANOR

In an article written by Mr. J.J. van der Leeuw, entitled *The History and Work of “The Manor”* and published in a 1925 issue of *Theosophy in Australia*, he gave an outline of how the Manor Community came about. The following is an extract from the article:

When I look up my diary for 1922 I find an entry dated Saturday, July 1st, saying: “Van Gelder was here, he can sell his house and came to ask what I intended doing about the school, saying that if I did not remain in Neutral Bay he would not remain there either. It is a hard case.” Little did I think when I wrote those lines some two and a half years ago, that they contained the germ of the idea which later developed into our Manor community. Yet it was so.

At that time many of our Theosophical workers in Sydney were living in different parts of Mosman and that time I ran a young people [Bishop C.W. the purpose a house Neutral Bay. As trouble was lack of Mr. van Gelder’s mentioned entry in considering giving cheaper one had to remain near children attended the my boarders. It case,” especially as scarce.



Bishop Charles W. Leadbeater,
photo by Judith Fletcher

surrounding suburbs. At small school for the gathered round the Bishop Leadbeater] and used for called “Lyne Flats,” in ever, in education my funds, and at the time of visit and the above-my diary, I was up the house and renting a elsewhere. However, I the families whose school and to provide for certainly was a “hard at that time houses were

The next entry in my diary is of Sunday, July 16th, 1922. It runs: “More than two weeks since my last entry! But then they were busy weeks, especially taken up by the **Clifton compound idea**. Of course, the idea of a ‘compound’ is already old; van Gelder has been busy for some time on his community scheme which is to

make life more reasonable, cheaper, and more useful. Everyone here is at his wits end financially, so the idea of a 'compound' appeals to all. Van Gelder sold his house a fortnight ago and has been looking out for a suitable place. Amongst others a house in Clifton Gardens was offered to him, called "Garrock"; containing sixteen rooms, having a splendid view and well built. I was at lunch at the van Gelder's when he discussed it and deplored the fact that it was too large for him. I then suggested sharing it with him and Mr. Labberton, who is to arrive from Java in a few weeks. He at once accepted, and we decided to rent the house."

This was the real birth of the idea of sharing a house, which later became our Manor-community. The course of our plan, however, did not run smoothly, and it was all the better for us in the end that it did not. The owner of "Garrock" refused to let it at the last moment, and as we could not arrange to buy it all seemed rather hopeless. I then suggested to Mr. van Gelder renting another house belonging to the same owner and situated near "Garrock," which house several of us had inspected previously on more than one occasion. The house [is] now called "The Manor," [but was] then "Bakewell's Folly."

It was built some ten years ago by a Mr. Bakewell, who began building it as an eight-room cottage and ended up by making it a fifty-two room mansion. Mr. Bakewell had the specific intention, that his house was to stand for generations, and he spared no effort to make it strong. All that was put in was of the very best, and workmen who come to make occasional alterations now, stand amazed and often dismayed at the solidity of the material they have to deal with. The house alone cost over £36,000 to build ten years ago, and Mr. Bakewell furnished most of the material from his own brick-and-tile factory. This then was the house which I suggested sharing when our first plan fell through.

The idea was to get in a few more families and make it a joint household. Mr. van Gelder, however, was a little afraid of the difficulties of such a household and did not at first feel inclined to carry out this very much greater scheme. It was then that Providence intervened in the shape of Bishop Leadbeater. He heard of our plans and with characteristic promptness went over to the place with a number of people and looked all over it. He seemed very much taken with its possibilities as a community home and declared his willingness to come and live there himself, provided all other things could be arranged.

The end was that the different families met in council and that Bishop Leadbeater invited Mr. van Gelder to assume the most difficult task of managing the community. He accepted, the rooms in the house were divided amongst the families, the lease signed for three years with two years' optional extension, and on August 3rd, while a howling southerly was shaking the house, the first group of

new inhabitants came in, consisting of Walter Hassall, Hely Labberton, Lucius van Gelder and myself. During the next week Bishop Leadbeater, with the Kollerstrom family, the van Gelder, Mazel and Vreede families and “those without family” arrived.

They were chaotic days those first two weeks of the Manor. Mr. van Gelder certainly had a great task to perform, and with the help of the whole household, he accomplished it successfully; the community never experienced any serious trouble. This certainly proves the splendid spirit in which all undertook the work and the willingness of all who hitherto had run their own households to fit in with whatever was necessary. But then with one like Bishop Leadbeater in its midst as a constant source of serenity and inspiration, what work would not succeed? Thus, the community continued, and we all realized how much it did to bring the workers together, and how very much more work we could accomplish being thus together. We already began to discuss the possibility of buying the house, but the money was lacking.

It was then, about a year after the beginning of our community, that I had to visit Europe, and while there was able to arrange with some generous friends to help us financially if at any time we had to buy “The Manor”, as we had re-christened “Bakewell’s Folly.”

When I returned to Sydney on July 13th, 1924, it was to find Mr. van Gelder on the eve of leaving for Java, where he had to look after certain business interests. The management of the house was turned over to me, and, much to the regret of all their friends, Mr. and Mrs. Van Gelder sailed for Java on July 16th. Previously Mr. and Mrs. Labberton had left our community for Japan, Bishop Mazel for Holland, and several new members had been added to it during the year I had been away. Our family now numbered some thirty members, and a very real family it had become.

As there was some danger of the house being sold to strangers, I straight away began negotiations with the owner about purchasing it. The price asked on the basis of the tremendous cost of building the house, and the greatly increased value of the land since it was built, was more than we were willing or able to give, and it was only after half a year’s negotiating that on January 9th, at 3.41 pm (astrologers beware!) I had the pleasure of signing the contract of purchase.

The price for which we bought was £14,000, half of which we were able to pay down straightaway, thanks to the generosity of Mr. John Mackay and our two European friends, who both made good their promise of a year ago. A trust was then formed, and on Monday, February 9th, at 7.48pm (more horoscopes!) the trust deed was signed by Bishop Leadbeater and myself, with Mr. John Mackay as

witness. This was the physical birth of our community, at that moment the property was formally and legally dedicated to the purpose of the Trust, which are: The formation of a spiritual centre where people may be trained in religious matters, and the formation of a community based on Theosophical ideals.

Now that “The Manor” has been bought, our wider work is beginning. Already several houses have been bought or built by members who wanted to live [nearby.]

Such then was the genesis of “The Manor,” to all outer appearances accidental, yet undoubtedly guided by Those who use our small daily affairs to accomplish Their great Purpose. Much had already been accomplished, many have attained to spiritual Reality in this Centre of our Work. The future is to be greater still, privileged indeed are those of us who are granted a share in the pioneering work!

J. J. VAN DER LEEUW
The Manor, Mosman

RESIDENCY AT THE MANOR

Residency at The Manor is governed by certain principles, rules, and arrangements appropriate for a spiritual centre, including a vegetarian diet, abstention from alcohol, tobacco, and drugs, and a willingness to harmonise with others. These apply to all visitors and residents. The latter must have been member of The Esoteric School of Theosophy for at least two years. Applicants who are accepted by the Head of the Manor must be serious in leading the spiritual life and prepared to live harmoniously in the community. Along with the opportunity for spiritual service residents have the privilege of living in a haven of peace in brotherly and sisterly association with others in order to achieve the ideals of the Manor Centre. Besides altruistic service, study and self-preparation, members living at the centre are required to involve themselves actively in the work of the Theosophical Society.

MANOR COMMUNITY

The residents of the Manor Community have always represented a cross-section of ages and backgrounds. The original residents were primarily a group of families, but it soon extended to encompass many single members, both young and of mature age. During the 1920s and early 1930s there was a great emphasis on the young people who were students of C.W. Leadbeater, and during the 1950s there was another resurgence of younger people dominating the residency.

The residents have come from a variety of ethnic and religious backgrounds: from Europe, Asia, and the Americas, and from Christian, Buddhist, Hindu, and Jewish faiths. Thus, the community has been a wonderful example of people of all ages and cultural dispositions living together with a common cause of bettering themselves spiritually and helping to serve the world in many fields of endeavour.

Members of the community have also always been keen workers for the Theosophical Society, many working at the Australian Section's Headquarters or at Blavatsky Lodge in Sydney. This includes a number of people who held the position of General Secretary of The Theosophical Society in Australia – George Arundale, Harold Morton, Clara Codd, James Davidge, Helen Zahara, Ruth Beringer, Jack Patterson, Dianne Kynaston, and Joy Mills and Beverley Champion who have since held the office of the Section's National President. Various residents have been the Lodge President of Blavatsky, Mosman and Newcastle Lodges, or Coordinator of the Northern Beaches Group in Sydney. Many residents have been on lodge and Australian Section committees and involved in TS activities such the Blavatsky Lodge library or its Adyar Bookshop. The majority of the residents have also been theosophical lecturers, giving talks and workshops in lodges, groups, and conventions around Australia and overseas.

Over the years many meetings, retreats, one-day seminars, workshops and study groups on theosophical subjects have been held at the Manor. It has also been the venue for many ceremonial activities, such as services of the Liberal Catholic Church in its private community chapel, meetings of the Order of the Round Table (for youth and children), and, at times, for Masonic meetings.

The community has also counted among its ranks many notable Australians, well-known in their various fields of endeavour, for example:

Artists	Florence Fuller, Jane Price, Ethel Carrick Fox, Rona Scott-Abbott
Actors	Enid Lorimer, Peter Finch
Radio personalities	Harold Morton, Frank Haines
Feminists	Bessie Rischbeith, Muriel Chase
Photographer	Axel Poignant

Some early Managers of The Manor included:

1922 - 1924	Karel Van Gelder
1924 - 1926	J.J. Van der Leeuw
1926 - 1931	George Arundale
1931 -	Household Management Committee
1935 - 1936	C. Jinarajadasa
	Ian Davidson, followed by
	J. L. Davidge

From 1951 until 2020 the Resident Heads of The Manor were:

1951 - 1972	Dr. P.W. Van der Broek
1972 - 1977	James S. Perkins
1977 - 1979	Sten Von Krusenstierna
1979 - 1982	Jack Patterson
1982 - 1996	Norman Hankin
1996 - 2005	Dr. William Phillipps
2006 - 2009	Charles Marresh
2009 - 2020	Dianne Kynaston

In 2020, the role of the Resident Head was replaced with a small Management Committee.

CHAPEL

At the eastern end of the lower ground floor a chapel for the services of the Liberal Catholic Church was consecrated by Bishop Leadbeater, and has remained a private chapel, primarily for the benefit of the Manor residents.

The Liberal Catholic Church has historic connections with the Old Catholic Church with Episcopal See in Utrecht, The Netherlands. England. In 1916 the English branch of this church became independent under the leadership of Bishop James Wedgwood who was also a prominent member of the Theosophical Society. Wedgwood went on to consecrate Charles Leadbeater [C.W.L.] as a bishop in the church. (In his younger years C.W.L. had been ordained as a priest in the Anglican Church). Together these two men reformulated the Church's Liturgy in a way that enhanced its sacramental potency and aligned its teachings with a Theosophical Worldview.

ORDER OF THE ROUND TABLE

Other ceremonial activities at The Manor have included the Round Table, which provides ceremonial and social activity for children and youth.

The Round Table was started by a T.S. member, Herbert Whyte, in England in 1908, with its ceremonies and activities being based on the symbology of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table.

LIBRARY

Over the years residents had their own store of books in their rooms.

In the 1980s the large room on the top floor of the building was converted into a library, with its walls lined with shelving, and members contributing books to the collection.

However, due to heat and light in the library area, the main books were transferred downstairs and a new library was eventually set up in one of the ground floor rooms. The library has recently been reorganized and includes two new and extensive collections: The Blavatsky Collection and The Besant and Leadbeater Collection. The Manor Library is not a lending library.

RESIDENTS AND VISITORS

Over the years many people have been either long term or short-term residents, whilst others have stayed there for short periods, most of these people coming from interstate or overseas.

One young resident, Dora van Gelder (daughter of Manor founder, Karel van Gelder), married American TS member Fritz Kunz (who was secretary to C.W. Leadbeater for some time). Dora went on to be not only a committed TS worker in America and National President of the American Section of the Theosophical Society, but also worked in the field of health, developing along with Dr. Dolores Krieger the Therapeutic Touch method of Healing, which is used extensively by nurses in American hospitals as well as in some other countries.

International Presidents of The Theosophical Society, from Annie Besant onwards, have stayed at The Manor when visiting Sydney. Also, many well-known international theosophical members and lecturers have visited, including Geoffrey and Sandra Hodson; Ianthe Hoskins and V. Wallace Slater from England; Prof. John Algeo and wife Adele, Felix and Eunice Layton, Ed and Mary Abdill, and Joy Mills from the U.S.A.; Gool Minwalla, from Pakistan; Seetha Neelakantan from India; and Vic Hao Chin Jnr. from the Philippines, and the current International President of the T.S. Tim Boyd and his wife, Lily, to name but a few.

EVENTS OF INTEREST

VISIT BY THE KALAKSHETRA DANCERS

In 1966 Rukmini Devi Arundale, who revitalized classical Indian dance in India, brought to Australia a troupe of dancers from the Kalakshetra Dance and Art Academy in Chennai, India. Their tour included performances at the Perth and Adelaide Festivals as well as in Sydney, Brisbane, and Hobart. Whilst in Sydney, the women of the troupe stayed at The Manor.

ARTICLE ON RADHA BURNIER

Former Head of The Manor, Mrs. Radha Burnier, was featured in an article in the Australian *Women's Weekly* in May 1967, under the heading of 'Former film star now a leader of world-wide faith.'

Mrs Burnier was an Indian classical dancer trained at the Kalakshetra School, and found world-wide fame as one of the principle actors and dancers in the acclaimed film *The River*, by Jean Renoir. At the time of the article she was the General Secretary of the Indian Section of The Theosophical Society, and was touring the Australian Section as a guest lecturer. In 1980 she became the International President of the Society.

BOLITHO HOUSE

A longstanding Manor resident, Bill Bolitho, spent much of his time commuting between The Manor and his property at Canyonleigh (in the Southern Highlands, south-west of Sydney) where he was building a house. In 1998 he donated the property to The Theosophical Society in Australia, with the house three-quarters finished. The Australian Section completed the building, added furnishings, and named it 'Bolitho House'. The property is used as a residential retreat for theosophical work and most of the land is now a registered conservation area.

WORLD CONGRESS

In 2001 Sydney was the venue for the Theosophical World Congress, an event held approximately every seven years in different countries. Before and after the Congress many members from around the world either stayed at, or visited, The Manor. The Venerable Samdhong Rinpoche, who would become the Prime Minister of the Tibetan Government in Exile, and who also is a T.S. member, stayed at the Centre for two days prior to the Congress.

MOSMAN THEOSOPHICAL COMMUNITY

Many members of the Theosophical Society and their families have lived in houses near to The Manor, or in nearby suburbs, were involved in earlier days in a number of theosophical projects around Mosman such as the Garden School, the Star Amphitheatre and Radio Station 2GB.

During his period as Resident Head of The Manor, Dr. Van der Broek had a medical surgery in Alfred Street in Mosman. He was a gynecologist. Joan Brandt was a midwife, having worked in hospitals in England and Sydney. For a number of years Joan attended home births, not infrequently venturing out in the countryside around Sydney.

A number of residents worked for Home Care in the Mosman/Neutral Bay area, and also as volunteers for Meals on Wheels. Rona Scott taught arts and crafts at 'The Cottage' in Mosman. Mrs. Felicity Meneveau gave piano lessons in The Manor garage area, and Isolde Sueltemeyer taught music and piano to a number of students around Mosman.

THE GARDEN SCHOOL

In 1924 two of the Manor residents, Miss Arnold, and Miss McDonald, opened a 'Day and Boarding School' in Stanton Road, Mosman. Both ladies had worked at the theosophical school called Morven, which had operated at Gore Hill in Sydney. The Garden School operated in a very large house called 'Glen Carron' (formerly named Tivoli), with large grounds and a view overlooking the Harbour, towards Sydney Heads. The School's aims were to encourage individuality, creative ability and love of nature in the pupils, to cultivate in them an unselfish, co-operative attitude towards others, and a sense of universal brotherhood. Its curriculum included eurythmics, Greek dancing, Greenleaf Theatre, interpretive work in poems and ballads, the evolution of Classical and Gothic architecture, sculpture and painting. Many articles written by pupils appeared in theosophical magazines.

It started as a girls' school, but later took on boys as well, being a pioneer in co-education. Amongst its pupils was a ten-year-old, Peter Finch, who was living at The Manor from 1925-1926. Due to an estrangement in his family, he was taken in by the Manor Family and actress Enid Lorimer, in particular, oversaw his education, using Shakespearian plays to assist him in his English studies. Between the Manor Community, the Garden School and the Star Amphitheatre in Balmoral, Peter was introduced to the world of theatre.

Another actress of note who was a pupil at the school during the 1930s was Joan Hammond, who went on to become a world famous opera singer. It is recorded in Enid Lorimer's biography that she was delighted and moved to hear that Joan would end her concerts by singing "The Pipes of Pan" which she had taught her at the Garden School.

Apart from Enid Lorimer, other teachers included photographer Judith Fletcher, and artists Florence Fuller, Jane Price, and Ethel Carrick Fox.

The Garden School eventually moved from Stanton Road to a property at Seaforth, which was not far away, where it continued to be run by Miss Arnold and Miss McDonald until the early 1950s, when it closed.

This school was strongly featured in the Australian movie "Emma's War", co-written and directed by Clytie Jessop, who had been a pupil in the school during the 1940s. The film is a very gentle and poetic story about the effect of World War II on a family living in Sydney, with ~~the~~ two daughters attending the Garden School. Although a fictional account, it is obviously based on the Director's memories of life in the school.

STAR AMPHITHEATRE

‘The Order of the Star in the East’ was a worldwide organization which was founded in Benares (Varanasi) in India during 1911 to support the future work of the philosopher, J. Krishnamurti. A number of members of the Manor Community were involved with the work of this Order, which encouraged the development of the Arts, Culture and Social Concerns. As part of this work members of the Manor Community became involved in a major project to construct a building at Balmoral Beach in Mosman, the Balmoral Amphitheatre.

Contrary to continuing media folklore which connects the amphitheatre with the Theosophical Society itself, this venture had no formal connection with the T.S. However, leading theosophists of the time were involved in its formation and maintenance. Manor resident Dr. Mary Rocke, who was one of the first women to become a medical doctor and was C.W.L.’s physician, spearheaded this project.

The building was erected between 1923 and 1925. The purpose of the Amphitheatre has been commonly understood as providing a venue for the lectures of J. Krishnamurti. He did not reside in Sydney though and only spoke there once, in 1926. The vision became considerably broader and the Amphitheatre complex was to house, among other things, tea rooms, a library, reading room, a meditation room and dressing rooms. The arts, culture and social concerns were all promoted. The top floor was a classical Greek amphitheatre, the first of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere. Audiences could watch lectures or plays whilst looking through the columns towards Sydney Heads.

The Manor Community provided theatrical presentations under the direction of English actress, Enid Lorimer, who had migrated to Australia in 1923 and was appointed artistic director of the Star Amphitheatre. Over the years Enid worked in many areas of theatre, film, and television, and was awarded an Order of the British Empire for her services to the theatrical world in this country. The first play performed at the amphitheatre was “The Other Wise Man”, with Harold Morton as the lead actor.

The life of this structure was remarkably short-lived, which was to the detriment of Sydney’s foreshore architecture, for its timeless beauty and simple elegance were sublime. The Order of the Star in the East was dissolved by J. Krishnamurti in August, 1929, and the building was sold in 1931 to an entertainment promoter who used the amphitheatre as a mini golf course, and then to the Roman Catholic Church. The Mosman Council subsequently bought the property, which was eventually demolished in the early 1950s. A red brick apartment building was erected in its place and was used at one stage to house the families of returned World War II soldiers.

RADIO 2GB

In 1923 Karel van Gelder purchased some high-powered radio broadcasting equipment which was suitable for home operations. The young people of the Manor community used it to broadcast classical music and talks on theosophy.

When George Aundale came to live at the Manor in 1926 (on becoming General Secretary of the Australian Section of the TS), he invested in new equipment which boosted the power from 800 watts to 3000 watts and he licensed it as a radio station. After an application to use the name 2AB (after the International President, Annie Besant) was rejected, they changed it to 2GB (after the Italian philosopher and martyr Giordano Bruno who, some believed, was a former incarnation of Annie Besant).

The station was to be utilised for spreading the teachings of Theosophy and the first official broadcast took place on Armistice Day, 1926. Its general manager, A.E. Bennett, stated '... the intention is to conduct the station on ideal principles and solely with the object of uplifting our Australian people'.

The Sydney Morning Herald reported '... The broadcasting station of the Theosophical Society was opened last night in the Adyar Hall by the Minister for Education (Mr. Mutch), who stated that he regarded the work of broadcasting stations as being in the nature of secondary education.'

The original antennae were set up in the lower grounds of The Manor, but later moved to another part of the property. 2GB became the most popular radio station in Sydney and New South Wales, after its power was further boosted. The studio was moved to larger premises in Adyar House, Bligh Street, Sydney, during the late 1920s, while the antennae remained on The Manor grounds. The majority of its staff were members of The Manor community, for example, Harold Morton, Clara Codd and Axel Poignant.

Harold Morton was one of the key announcers, and helped to establish the Theosophical Society's Radio Lodge, attached to 2GB.

Clara Codd, a suffragette from England, lived at The Manor in the mid 1920s. She returned again in 1932 to lecture for the TS and conduct short theosophical addresses every afternoon on 2GB. She wrote that she was 'pleasantly surprised to find Eric Colman, brother of the famous film star, Ronald Coleman, as her announcer'. She stated: 'I asked him once what it felt like to be Ronald Colman's brother. He smiled and told me that his family listened in to our Sunday lectures all the time.'

Doris Gowlland started her working life at the radio station doing clerical work, but eventually worked her way up to become a key executive of the station. She eventually

travelled overseas, to America and England, to explore radio broadcasting there, and this was well publicized in the newspapers.

The Society continued to broadcast programmes on a Sunday night right up until 1980 when the lease was not renewed due to a slight drop in its ratings. Gladys MacCartie, and Manor resident, Victor Smith, conducted these programmes till it ended.

By the mid-1930s problems had developed with the radio station management, due partly to the commercial direction of its programming and loss of share ownership by TS members. Control of the station by the TS ceased in 1936. The antennae were eventually removed from the property with the Society losing most of its broadcasting rights, but retaining a lease on broadcasting programmes once a week until 1980. Gladys MacCartie, who was a member of Blavatsky Lodge in Sydney, supervised programming for twelve years during that time and reported that when the contract period came to an end, the programme still had twelve thousand listeners. Victor Smith, a member of the Manor community, also conducted programmes. These were a great service to the community and helped attract a number of active and committed TS members over the years.

The Art World

E. PHILLIPS FOX PAINTING



E. Phillips Fox
(Wikimedia Commons,
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Template:PD-US>)

A large painting called “Springtime” by Emanuel Phillips Fox was gifted to The Manor by his artist wife, Ethel Carrick Fox. During the 1980s, The Victorian Art Gallery borrowed it for a major exhibition of artwork by E. Phillips Fox. It was therefore eventually sold through the art market to the Bendigo Art Gallery in Victoria.

RONA SCOTT-ABBOTT

Various artists have visited or resided at The Manor over the years. For example, from 1981-1983 acclaimed Australian artist and Manor resident, Rona Scott (later Rona Scott-Abbott), together with fellow resident, Dudley Gower, embarked on a major theosophical



Rona Scott-Abbott in her studio

project called “Cosmic Birth”. Dudley wrote a lengthy poem inspired by the symbolism and visionary concepts of the Stanzas of Dzyan which form the basis of *The Secret Doctrine*, a major theosophical book written by TS Principal Co-founder, Helena P. Blavatsky. Rona painted 78 large oil paintings, and together with Dudley’s poem, they were shown through the medium of slides at the 1983 Convention The Theosophical Society in Australia held in Gilbulla, Sydney.

The majority of the paintings were given by Rona’s husband, Ralph Abbott, to the Australian Section in 2013. The balance of the paintings are held mainly in Lodge premises or have been acquired by various TS members.

ITEMS OF INTEREST AROUND MANOR

EGYPTIAN CARPET AND SETTEE

During the 1920s two large blue carpets with a distinctive Egyptian design were acquired. Then resident Enid Lorimer, who, apart from her acting abilities, was also adept at needlework, embroidered the cushions on a carved wooden settee to match the carpets.



Dining Room at The Manor

PIANO

The Beale piano in the main room on the ground floor is a Boudoir Semi Grand piano, made in Sydney. It is not known when the piano was acquired.

DINING ROOM TABLES AND CHAIRS FROM INDONESIA

The dining room contains two large wooden tables and one smaller one with heavy wooden chairs that sit along both

sides. This furniture came from Indonesia with one of the Dutch families early in the life of the community.

GRANDFATHER CLOCK – KAREL VAN GELDER

A large grandfather clock sits in the main hallway. It was originally owned by Karel van Gelder, who gifted it to The Manor.

SOME PAST NOTABLE RESIDENTS OF THE MANOR COMMUNITY

Bishop C.W. Leadbeater:

Theosophist, Bishop of the Liberal Catholic Church, author and founding member of The Manor community

Karel van Gelder”

Founding member of The Manor community

Johannes van der Leuw:

Founding member of The Manor community

Dora Kunz (nee van Gelder):

Resident at the Manor in the 1920s, renowned clairvoyant and author

Fritz Kunz:

Associate of Bishop Leadbeater, scientist and author

Enid Lorimer:

Former resident at The Manor and distinguished actress

Peter Finch:

Former resident at The Manor and well-known actor

Bishop John Tettemer:

Former resident at The Manor and Bishop of the Liberal Catholic Church

Dr. George Arundale:

Former President of the Theosophical Society and one time Resident Head at The Manor

Rukmini Arundale:

Former resident at The Manor, Theosophist and distinguished Indian artist and politician

Earling Roberts:

Former resident at The Manor and portrait painter

Dr. Mary Roche:

Resident at The Manor in the 1920s and physician to Bishop Leadbeater

Theodora St. John:

Former resident at The Manor and Australian artist

Harold Morton:

Resident at The Manor in the 1920s, secretary to Bishop Leadbeater and manager of Radio 2GB

Doris Gowlland:

Resident at The Manor in the 1920s and officer of the Order of the Star in the East

Florence James:

Former resident at The Manor and Australia artist

Clara Codd:

Theosophist, for resident at The Manor and General Secretary of both the South-African and Australian Sections of the Theosophical Society

Bessie Rischbeith:

Australian feminist and social reformer, former resident at The Manor

Florence Fuller:

Australian artist and former resident at The Manor

Jane Price:

Australian artist and former resident at The Manor

Ethel Carrick Fox:

Australia artist and former resident of The Manor

Rona Scott-Abbott:

Australian artist and former resident of The Manor

Anatol Kagan:

Architect, social activist and former resident at The Manor

Dr. Geoffrey Miller:

Medical doctor, Naturopath, Theosophist and former resident at The Manor

Bishop Sten von Krusenstierna: Theosophist, Bishop of the Liberal Catholic Church and Former resident at The Manor

Bishop Ian Hooker: Theosophist, academician, Bishop of the Liberal Catholic Church and former resident at The Manor

Dudley Gower: Theosophist, National Lecturer for the TS in Australia and former resident at The Manor

Sources for part of the above information:

J.J. van der Leeuw, Outlook (The History and Work of 'The Manor'), *Theosophy in Australia*, 1925.

Oliveira, Linda, 'The Manor: Centenary of an Urban Spiritual Community', *Theosophy in Australia*, March 2022.

Oliveira, Linda, 'Radio Station 2GB – a Rare Opportunity', *Theosophy in Australia*, September, 2001.

Other sources were not named in the original notes by Dianne Kynaston.