

SERVA AUSTRALIA

August 2014

SERVAS INDONESIA GATHERING 1+2 November 2014

31st Oct 14— Arrival in Ambarawa, stay in Puri Agung hotel & resort

1st November— excursion to : Ambarawa and Surroundings (Train Museum, Lake Rawa Pening), Bandungan Highland, Gedong Songo temple, etc

2nd Nov— Meeting to end at 3 pm, Closing ceremony at 4 pm till end, Sightseeing/ shopping (if time permits) and dinner at Chimory Resto (self paying)

Meeting Topics :

Keynote address by the Organiser

introduction of participants

discuss ways to increase members in Indonesia

discussion and exchanges with participants from other countries

Cost per person : 15 US\$ for 2D2N Latest Registration : 30th September 2014

For more information please contact : Amin Sudarto (Host/event organiser)

Email : aminsudarto@gmail.com

aminsudarto_amb@yahoo.co.id



The May issue of Servas International News is available now online here:
goo.gl/uAGBhE



Peace event in Italy

On 10 October to Perugia (Umbria region) we will have the international March for Peace from Perugia to Assisi .

As usual Servas Italy will participate at this event of course .

We would like many Servas friends as possible to be present at this important meeting to give Servas maximum visibility.

Giampaolo Fiordalisi - Peace Secretary and Sergio lombi - Regional Coordinator can send you the list of Umbria Servas friends to make it easier for you take part in the meeting.

Here you have our emails:

giampaolo Fiordalisi - . 17fiorda17@alice.it
sergio lombi . lomb2002@yahoo.it



This newsletter is intended to provide a communication forum for SERVAS Australia members. The content, collation and distribution is undertaken by SERVAS members for SERVAS members.

NE X T ISSUE

Submissions Close: 31 October 2014 Distributed: November 2014

SUBMISSIONS

Submissions are welcome from members. Emails (word documents and high resolution photos via attachment) are preferred. Contributions are subject to approval and size restrictions. Sorry, late contributions may have to wait until the following edition.

Newsletters are compiled in February, May, August and November.

D I S T R I B U T I O N

The Newsletter is distributed to all members by post and email.

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D I S C L A I M E R

Every effort is made to ensure information is correct at the time of printing, however no responsibility will be accepted for misinformation. The views and opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of SERVAS Australia or the Newsletter Editor.

Membership Categories and Fees

Hosts:

- Pay a joining fee of \$25 which is placed in the Development Fund and used to assist with the development of Servas in less developed countries.
- Pay an annual membership renewal fee of \$20.
- Receive newsletters in February, May, August and November
- Receive a Host List containing details of hosts.

Travellers:

- All travellers, including hosts, must contact their State Travel Officer to obtain a Letter of Introduction. Australian hosts do not need a LOI when travelling within Australia.
- Hosts pay \$50 per person for a Letter of Introduction.
- Travellers who are not hosts pay \$100 per person for a Letter of Introduction.
- A Letter of Introduction is valid for 12 months.

Servas.org.au



If you haven't visited the website for a while I suggest you have a good look around. There are lots of newsletters from other Servas groups and SI. And there is a location map of all our hosts under the "People" tab

Also under this tab are some interesting travellers tales—great for those times when armchair travel is the only option!

There is a very easy way to keep up to date with new additions to the Servas website. On the right hand side under "Email Notification" is the following: "Notify me of new posts by email".

Just fill in your email address and you will receive a notification by email whenever there is new content on the site.

Pam



Servas has a Facebook page to help 'spread the word' .

facebook.com/servasaustralia

You can post photos, photo galleries, information about events and join in with any current conversations running on the Page or start new ones.

So if you would like to contribute to the Servas effort, especially in encouraging younger people to feel that Servas is an option for them, please consider becoming active on our Facebook page.

Contact me, Gil Webster, by email membership@servas.org.au for any additional information.

Gil

In reflecting on the [United Nations International Day of Peace](#),
[Sydney Peace Foundation](#) and the [Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies](#) invite you to a [Sydney Ideas](#)
 forum on

"Why It's So Hard to Talk About Peace in Sri Lanka"



GILBERTO ALGAR-FARIA

Visiting Scholar at the University of Sydney and PhD Candidate at the University of Bristol

Monday 22 September, 6.00 to 7.30 pm

History Room S223, The Quadrangle, The University of Sydney
 Building on first-hand recent experience of the post-2009 context, this lecture will open a
 discussion about the spaces for peace and conflict in Sri Lanka today.

Chair: Professor Stuart Rees

Discussants: Dr Wendy Lambourne and Dr Leticia Anderson

This [Sydney Ideas](#) talk is free and open to all, but online registration is requested:

<http://whatson.sydney.edu.au/events/published/sydney-ideas-gilberto-algar-faria>

NEW EDITOR NEEDED!!

Editing the Newsletter is a fascinating and enjoyable job....but Kate Thomas, our current editor, is no longer able to do it.

This will be her last newsletter and the Board and Kate are keen to hear from anyone who has the skills and would be prepared to take on the job. There are many helpful volunteers who submit articles and information, and assist with mailing.

Kate has indicated that she is happy to help and provide guidance to the new editor.

Thank you Kate for the great work you have done.

Please email Kate
 (newsletter@servas.org.au) or me,
 (secretary@servas.org.au) to find out more information and express your interest in taking over this rewarding and important task.
 Pam Webster



PEACE PICNIC

This year's Servas Sydney Peace Picnic will be held on

Saturday 20 September
 from 12 noon to about 2.30 pm
 in the band rotunda in Wahroonga Park,
 just 50 meters from Wahroonga railway station.

There is limited seating in the rotunda, so you may wish to bring along your own chairs as well. The Sheldons will bring along a table.

BYO everything else
 No need to RSVP, just turn up if you can.

In Peace,
 Neryle and Geoff Sheldon

Queensland News

An enjoyable get together was held on Sunday 20th July at the home of Ian & Juliann Payne near Gympie. Thanks to all who attended.

We have a lunch at a home of one of our hosts 3 times a year as well as 4 Pub Nights per year at the Irish Club in Brisbane.



Welcome to our New Hosts: Helen Grant-Taylor from Yeronga and Christine Doidge on Bribie Island. Both their details, as well as any changes for current hosts will be in the new Half Yearly update of the Host List that Gil is working on and will be distributing shortly. There have also been a couple of other enquiries from potential hosts.

Date Claimers:

Pub night: Wednesday 20th August from 6pm at the Irish Club 175 Elizabeth Street in Brisbane: all welcome for dinner or just coffee or a drink.

Lunch: Sunday 16th November at the home of Peter & Jean Wortley. 26 Kesteven Street Albany Creek. Please RSVP to Peter & Jean phone 3325 2873 or email pandj.wortley@gmail.com

June NSW Host get-together

About sixteen hosts had a very warm and sociable winter get-together at Neryle and Geoff Sheldon's home. Your President was kept busy making his excellent coffee and lots of good food was shared.

November get-together

Host Jaz Stephens has kindly offered to hold the next get-together and has booked a comfortable function room in her city central apartment block in Kent Street.



Time: **12.30 for shared lunch.** Geoff is happy to bring his legendary coffee machine.

Address: **HighGate, 127 Kent Street Millers Point.** The room is on the mezzanine level. The building is approx. 800 metres from Wynyard Station via the York Street exit. You can also take George Street buses to Millers Point 441 and 433 and alight at the last stop, turn left in Kent Street and it is a level walk of 600 metres. The central location should be handy for many hosts. Unfortunately we can't offer any transport collection from Wynyard Station.

For this get-together, **it is vital that you RSVP to me** the names of people who are attending. The building has security and if your name is not on the list you will not be allowed in. Looking forward to seeing lots of hosts and any travellers for our usual warm and friendly get-togethers.

Neryle Sheldon NSW Servas Host Coordinator

President's Board Report

The board met in Sydney on 23 and 24 August 2014, immediately before and after the Annual General Meeting.

The Board has been discussing developing an action plan for future development of Servas Australia. It was decided that Peter Williams and Barb Mawson would draft a survey to canvas ideas and opinions from all members. Members will be emailed a link to complete the survey using an online tool, survey monkey. We encourage you to complete the survey as it will provide an opportunity for members to have a say in the future directions for Servas Australia.

Recent changes to privacy policy legislation were reviewed. Although the level of Servas Australia activity is well below the threshold for strict compliance with the new laws, it was agreed that a formal privacy policy should be developed. An invitation will be extended to all members calling for a volunteer to assist with the process.

Outcomes of Annual General Meeting were discussed in detail. I have already issued a bulletin to all members outlining AGM voting results and implications. There was discussion about whether or not the vote in favour of the auditor's services no longer being required constitutes a vote to change the Constitution regarding auditing of accounts. The Secretary was instructed to seek clarification from Consumer Affairs Victoria in this regard. The decision of Consumer Affairs, received on 4 September 2014, is that the rules in the Constitution relating to auditing of accounts should be amended accordingly and that the motion passed at the AGM constituted a vote in favour of those amendments.

Further changes to Constitution were discussed in light of the outcome of the AGM. Inputs received from members during the lead-up to the AGM vote were discussed at length. A number of threshold issues were identified which appear to have been the main reasons for the special resolution votes for constitutional changes not having reached the required 75% majority. It was resolved that the full Board, rather than a select group, should constitute a working group to receive and consider suggestions to be invited from ALL MEMBERS about what changes are still required to our Constitution to comply with current state and federal law, our obligations as an affiliate of Servas International, and ANY OTHER changes which any member may propose.

Dates for the next four face to face and teleconference Board meetings are listed below. If you would like to propose agenda items for the Board to consider, please get in touch with your regional Board representative.

Geoff Sheldon



Proposed dates for Servas Australia Board meetings for the next 12 months

Teleconference Tuesday 2 December 2014
2015 face to face Board meetings and AGM to be held in
Hobart 21-22 March 2015
Teleconference Tuesday 2 June 2015
Teleconference Tuesday 1 September 2015

Travelling alone by public bus in S America in January and February 2014



I went from Santiago, Chile, through Argentina, Bolivia, and Peru, finishing in Lima.

Every day I was in a different public bus, and every night in a different hotel or hostel! I often planned hotels using Trip Advisor, and reserved on the net the day before arriving.

On a few occasions I was able to stay in the homes of Servas members, a great experience and a chance to speak English. I stayed with Servas in Santiago and Valparaiso, Chile; in Cordoba, Argentina; as well as day host in La Paz, Bolivia.

Because I was alone, to be secure, I seldom went out at night. I listened to the news on my iPad, wrote in my diary, watched TV, and made cups of tea with my electric water heater.

To keep my valuables safe, I wore a money belt under my clothes, also a bra pocket, and kept cash in the hems of my pants, as well as hidden in my backpack! All those precautions worked, and I had no bad experiences.

It was hard work sometimes, and long hours in busses, but I am so glad I did it! It gave me a lot of personal confidence to tackle other challenges in life.

If you have an opportunity to travel, don't put it off, just go!

Carol Devisser—Servas host in Buderim, Queensland, Australia

Travel report – Anne and Bob Maczkowiack, SE Qld Background

We first began our hospitality several years ago when we used home exchange as an opportunity to culturally enrich our travel experience. We extended those ideas in 2013 when considering a major trip to Europe in 2014. This, our current trip started with a 1,000 km walk in Spain (the Camino de Santiago). We completed that walk, and are currently elsewhere in Europe.

Our planning for hospitality travel started by exploring the internet, and we dipped our feet in the water by joining a major web-based hospitality site. We proceeded to invite a series of young travellers from Italy, Germany, France, and USA to stay with us at Brisbane. We provided a cosy room to rest in, internet facilities, an experience of our normal family life, and day trips to our Sunshine Coast scenery. These experiences were all very enjoyable. We also chanced to find the Servas organisation, and found that it embodied the philosophies we'd been independently following. We became members, and at length obtained membership lists for the range of countries we'd travel to in Europe in 2014.

Travel experiences

We discovered that many Servas members in Europe also participate in the very user-friendly web-based hospitality sites. In fact, our initial contact with three of our six hosts was through web-based sites, discovering only later that they are also Servas members.

Our first stay was with a very warm and helpful couple at Girona (near Barcelona). This couple gave us a wonderful introduction to their part of Spain: good accommodation, good food, guided walks around the city, cultural knowledge, and extended day trips to surrounding places of interest. Thank you Quim and Carolina!

Our next hospitality host was some 200 km into our Great Walk, at a small city called Balageur. There, Jordi took very good care of us with food and lodging, and spent time with us describing his passion for the environment and self-sufficiency, and introduced us to friends who dropped in.

Three hundred km further at Burgos, we had to cancel a longstanding arrangement with a Servas family because we arrived there just at Easter when they were away on holidays, forcing us to make other plans. As it turned out, we used yet another web-site to book a bed and breakfast arrangement with a private host. This turned out to be an equally rich cultural experience – a wonderfully warm lady in her sixties – who spoke no English and us only key words of Spanish. With much gesturing and goodwill, she took us for a walk around her part of Burgos, showed us how to catch a bus to and from the city centre for the Easter parades, and cooked us beautiful meals. We reciprocated by cooking a meal for her and her daughter (we cooked a rabbit, which they loved). Although the arrangement with her was one of paying for the service, it was a priceless cultural experience!



Our next experience in Southern Spain came to naught, and was a good lesson. We had contacted a Servas couple, and they were very happy to host us. The problems were all of our own making, and became evident only as circumstances played out. Eventually we had to admit defeat and withdraw from the opportunity. In short, the situation arose because we were using public transport, and were ignorant of geography and bus routes – for instance discovering that there is no public transport linking Murcia city with Murcia airport. Plus our other personal mistakes ... !



In Granada it worked out very much better – though not without its own dramas (also related to reliance on public transport to get to outlying suburbs). Our host showed us around the Alhambra, and we stayed several nights with her.

Our subsequent travels are taking us to Morocco, France and then to Eastern Europe where we will stay with a lady in Zagreb, and for a week with a Servas family in Bulgaria. We look forward to meeting those hosts and the cultural exchange. Later, we will peruse Servas lists for Italy and France, with a view to arrange stays during October and November.

Our experiences have been instructive, enjoyable and provided valuable exchanges. The lessons we learnt relate to:

The exhaustive process of delineating our itinerary (we are freelance travellers)

Identifying Servas hosts in locations that correspond to the itinerary (carefully matching the various key criteria such as age, interests, location, English, day/night hosting, contactability), composing personalised emails, monitoring responses, revising dates and itinerary as required, maintaining communication

Reliance on public transport where street signage may be absent, drivers speak no English, and where the host's detailed instructions can still prove inadequate for a person who is a total stranger to the region ...

The value of having a local person who can explain local customs, allow a day to rest, allow us to prepare simple home-style meals, provide a place to wash clothes, show us around a bit

All these lessons are in turn valuable the other way round – things to remember when we are again hosts strangers to our home and region in SE Queensland.

In summary, our Servas hosts (and the other hosts we stayed with), added great depth and richness to our experience of the world and we will continue to offer hospitality upon our return to Australia, both through Servas and the other web-based organisations.

Robert and Anne Maczkowiack

Help promote Servas by publishing your activities.

As you know, we maintain and operate a website (servas.org.au) and a Facebook page (facebook.com/servasaustralia). So if you are organising a get-together such as a Peace picnic or maybe just a social gathering it would help by publicising the event. Or as a host or traveller you may like to submit a description of any adventures you have had as a Servas member.

You are also welcome to alert me to publicises any event relevant to the Servas aims, such as peace conferences or marches, overseas gatherings, youth meetings, travel opportunities and so on.

The website is averaging some 1500 visitors a month and the Facebook reach is also extensive, posts are read by up to 600 individuals. So it is a good way to get the message out.

There is an area reserved on the web site for each state and territory, and I notice most of the material is well out-of-date. So help promote Servas by seeking out items of interest in your area and sending them to me.

Just email any material to webmaster@servas.org.au. Please include photos, as large a file size as you have as attachments (not imbedded). Photos make a big difference to the attractiveness and reach of any material. Remember, if you are a Facebook user you can submit posts or comment on existing posts on our site. Doing this enhances the site, making it interesting and lively. Gil.

Call for nominations for Peace Secretary



The promotion of world peace was the principal impetus in the establishment of Servas back in 1946 and remains a core aim today.

Briefly, the role of the Peace Secretary is to:

- Establish, expand, and maintain a network of Peace contacts. Encourage the establishment of local peace committees.
- Provide information about peace activities for the webpage, Facebook and newsletter.
- Maintain contact with SI Peace Secretary and other countries Peace Secretaries.
- Advise the Board on peace issues.
- Publicise the celebration of International Day of Peace (September 21).

Gwen Gregg's resignation as Peace Secretary coincided with Servas International sending out to all Servas countries a new job description for Servas Peace Secretaries. Gwen was sent the proposed job description and she agreed that it was appropriate. At its July meeting, the Board approved the job description. We delayed filling this position until after the AGM as it was hoped that by then the position would be as a board member. As the new constitution was not passed, we are now in a position to make the call for a Peace Secretary as an appointed key worker.

Please contact me (secretary@servas.org.au or phone 02 9451 9669) to get a full job description and to let me know if you would like to nominate for the position.

Pam Webster

Gwen's Letter of Resignation

Dear Board Members,

I would like to put the record straight and ask the board to make public my reasons for resigning, as described below.

Please note, my report for the year was sent to the Secretary, the President, the Newsletter Editor and the International Peace Secretary and I have written confirmation of receipt from all concerned. It was sent at the time of my resignation well before the agenda for the AGM was published although I had received no request for it and it was not mentioned in the agenda.

My resignation was mostly due to lack of information and my exclusion from meetings and also the behaviour of some of the members of the board at the 2013 AGM. I explained this in a couple of emails to the President.

I kept being told I was welcome at all board meetings at my own expense but there is not much risk of me attending if I'm not given the courtesy of being told when and where they are to be held. eg 2 Skype meetings held after the aborted meeting of March 2013. It was also explained to me that if there was a peace item on the pre agreed agenda I might have my fare paid.. How can you have a pre agreed item if you don't have any information about the meeting or the agenda? Confidence in your coworkers is essential. It was also explained that I was entitled to minutes of the meetings but again how can I ask for minutes of a meeting about which I know nothing?

The almost total exclusion left me working in the dark.

If you read my report you will see there is much to be discussed. Ideas from other members often help find solutions. How can anyone operate if receipt of their annual report is denied ?

Gwen Gregg