

# SoFiA Inc. – SUNSHINE COAST

## SEA OF FAITH (SoFiA)

*openly exploring issues of religion, faith and meaning...*



*proudly presents...*

## South-East QLD 2007 Conference

**Dates:** Registration from 5pm FRIDAY 29 June, 2007  
Conference closes at 2pm SUNDAY 1 July, 2007

**Venue:** Alexandra Park Conference Centre

**Cost:** \$ 160 - includes all meals, accommodation,  
sessions and entertainment

**Theme:** *An Interfaith Experience – Men’s Business, Women’s Business*

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The Sunshine Coast members have benefited from the stories of a number of excellent guest speakers from a range of traditional and not-so-traditional faith groups over the past two years. This conference is an opportunity for all SoFiA members to hear from some of these interesting people. On this occasion, our presenters have been asked to focus on the issue of how those in their faith group can interact, dialogue, appreciate and understand those who do not share their specific beliefs.

Our presenters are:

**Ian Fry** – Author of *Trouble in the Triangle*, Ian has devoted thirty years to researching relations between the three Abrahamic faiths and their relationship to other world faiths.

**Janette Hashemi** – Janette leads the Sunshine Coast Interfaith Network and will speak on beliefs, misconceptions and gender roles within Islam.

**Barry Farrin** - Barry Farrin founded the Forest Way Zen in 1989 on the Sunshine Coast, Queensland. He is primarily interested in how we can apply the insights gained from practising Zen meditation in everyday life.

**Marian Free** – Toowong’s Anglican Priest, Marian will share something of her journey to ordination and beyond. She will help us to explore the gender issues that affect our lives.

Profiles of each speaker are provided at the back of this program.

## The Venue

The Alexandra Park Conference Centre is just a short walk from the popular Alexandra Headlands surf beach, just north of Mooloolaba.

- From the Bruce Highway, simply follow all signs to Mooloolaba's waterfront esplanade
- Continue north until you reach the Alexandra Headlands Surf Club and beach
- Turn left into Mari St and you will see the gates of the conference centre on the left hand side of the cul de sac
- There should be plenty of parking space at the venue.



We will have our own conference facility, dining room and accommodation area. All facilities are extremely new and in excellent condition.

## Our Accommodation

We will have our own set of bungalows that consist of sleeping quarters, a full ensuite and a large deck (see diagram). Each bungalow space contains two sets of single bunks and another single bed and its own shower and toilet. The rates quoted are for a minimum of three people in each bungalow space. *A surcharge of \$7 per person per night applies if only two people occupy a bungalow space, therefore if a couple wanted their own bungalow it would add \$28 to the total cost.*



The bungalows are set in a natural forest setting and are very close to our conference and dining rooms. They are brand new, very clean and comfortable.



YOU WILL NEED TO BRING YOUR OWN PILLOW, SHEETS, BLANKETS AND TOWELS etc.

## Meals

Registration on Friday will include a 'Meet'n'Mingle barbecue. All other meals from breakfast Saturday to lunch Sunday will be provided by the centre in our dining room.

**Program** (all activities are encouraged but, of course, optional)

**Friday 29 June**

- Registration from 5 – 7pm
- 6pm - Meet 'n' Mingle barbecue

**Saturday 30 June**

- Early morning beach walk
- 8am Breakfast
- 9 – 10:30am IAN FRY
- 10:30 – 11:00am Morning Tea
- 11:00am – 12:30pm JANETTE HASHEMI
- 12:30 – 1:30pm Lunch
- 1:30 – 3:00pm BARRY FARRIN
- 3:00 – 4:30pm SoFiA AGM
- 4:30 – 6pm Free Time / Group meetings / Activity Session
- 6pm Dinner
- Entertainment to follow

**Sunday 1 July**

- Early morning beach walk
- 8am Breakfast
- Rooms need to be tidied and vacated prior to first session
- 9 – 10:30 am MARIAN FREE
- 10:30 – 11:30am Morning Tea
- 11:30am – 1pm PANEL SESSION AND CLOSE
- 1 – 2pm Lunch

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**CONFERENCE REGISTRATION SLIP**

Please complete details below, tear off and return this slip with your cheque to

**Bob Cole – 21 Curtain Rd, PIE CREEK, QLD 4570.**

Enquiries to: Bob tel: 5483 8236 or 0400 638236 or [rfcole@bigpond.net.au](mailto:rfcole@bigpond.net.au)  
Kay tel: 5456 2005 or [ackerman-kay@pacific.net.au](mailto:ackerman-kay@pacific.net.au)

Name/s: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

(Number)

Full registration @ \$ 160 per person =  
(includes all meals, accommodation, sessions and entertainment)

(Number)

Day registration @ \$ 70 per person =  
(no accom, includes lunch)

Any special dietary requirements: \_\_\_\_\_  
If you would prefer to pay by direct deposit/internet transfer, please call Bob for account details.

## **Ian Fry**

*Ian Fry has devoted thirty years of personal research to relations between the three primary Abrahamic Faiths and their relationship to other world faiths.*

His critical assessment of the relations between Christianity, Judaism and Islam, *Trouble in the Triangle*, was published in 2000, and he has since contributed papers at several international conferences. [Melbourne University's conference on International Peace and Reconciliation; the International Colloquium on Managing Muslim-Christian Relations: Educational Policy Options; the International Seminar on Intertextuality of the Holy Books convened by the Marthoma Dialogue Centre, Kerala, India; and Globalization for the Common Good, Chaminade University, Honolulu.]

A former long-serving member of the Standing Committee of the Uniting Church (Victoria), he has attended assemblies of the World Council of Churches, the World Conference of Religions for Peace, the World Association for Christian Communication, Islam and the West (at the invitation of the General Secretariat of the Islamic Conference), and conferences of the International Movement for a JUST World.

He is a member of the Interfaith Commission of the Victorian Council of Churches and was founding secretary of the Jewish-Christian-Muslim Association of Australia.

His professional career began in agricultural advisory work and the chemical industry. He later established a communications office for the Presbyterian Board of Local Mission in Victoria, then a provincial newspaper in Papua New Guinea for an NGO while he and his wife served as Australian Volunteers Abroad, and, subsequently, he was appointed general manager of WORD, jointly owned by PNG's four major churches, publisher of the former *Times* of PNG.

He is currently a PhD candidate at the Melbourne College of Divinity.

## **A Dialogue Among Faiths**

### ***Religious Interaction: From Disaster to Harmony and Stability***

Ian Fry will take us on a broad sweep through our history, briefly outlining the evolution of world religious faiths, noting the influence that each has had on others, and the circumstances that led to conflict between Christians, Jews and Muslims.

With that as background, he will discuss:

- \* the current state of crisis in relations between faith communities and its immediate impact;
- \* the longer term dynamic and irreversible change in authority in world affairs from the Christian-dominated powers of the West to the non-Christian powers of the other four fifths of the world;
- \* the self-understanding, attitudes and policies of Western powers that have brought us to this point;
- \* some of the changes we can anticipate from that shift in influence;
- \* the critical need to shift gear from a dialogue of tolerance to reassessment of our religious beliefs and attitudes so that we can secure a future of harmony and stability.

*The workshop groups will be encouraged to focus on how to approach that gear-shift and the advantage that interaction within our multicultural and multi-religious community can give us in Australia to kick start the process.*

## **Janette Hashemi**

**Janette Hashemi** is founder and co ordinator of the Sunshine Coast Interfaith Network (SCIN), founder of the Islamic Society of the Sunshine Coast and is a writer and speaker on the religion of Islam.

Janette was born and raised on Sydney's north shore, moving to the beautiful Glasshouse Mountains area in 1995. She graduated from Hawkesbury Agricultural College in 1980 and spent 20 years working in sales and marketing with multinational companies including Schering & Bayer.

During this time Janette went to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, to study Islamic philosophy, belief, law and worship graduating in 1989 from the Regional Islamic Council of South-East Asia and the Pacific in conjunction with the International Islamic University.

After converting to Islam in 1986 she has spent 20 years within the Muslim community maintaining friendship and communication with classical and progressive Islamic and interfaith groups in Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne. Janette is a regular writer for the Queensland Muslim Times newspaper and the Forum on Australia and Islamic Relations (FAIR) national newspaper. She also regularly speaks on the religion of Islam at university, schools and community groups.

Interfaith dialogue and Muslim social issues are a priority for Janette who attended the Voice of Australian Muslims research seminar at Griffith University on 21<sup>st</sup> January, 2007 and the Abrahamic Interfaith Forum held at Parliament House, Brisbane, on 7<sup>th</sup> February, 2007.

## **Barry Farrin**

Barry Farrin founded the Forest Way Zen in 1989 on the Sunshine Coast, Queensland. He is a Sensei in the Diamond Sangha Zen tradition.

Barry has studied Vipassana and Zen meditation, which are forms of Buddhist practice, since 1984 and began his meditation practice while studying Karate in the early 70s. He became interested in Transcendental Meditation in 1977 and attended many of their retreats in the Blue Mountains in NSW.

Barry became interested in the science of meditation while he completed his Masters Degree. He looked at meditation as a way of enhancing quality of life and has designed a Stress Management Program based on these studies.

He lived in a Zen Monastery in Brisbane for 12 months in 1995-96 and studied with the prominent Zen teacher Aitken Roshi in Hawaii in 1996. He is a student of Subhana Barzagli Roshi and has trained with her since 1991. Barry has also studied with other prominent Zen teachers including Gregg Howard, Geoff Dawson, Ezra Bayda and Elizabeth Hamilton from the Ordinary Mind Zen, Ama Samy Roshi, Rosalind Stone and Hogen Roshi.

He is currently working as a consultant counsellor in palliative care. He has a Bachelor of Social Science, a Masters degree in Applied Science and a Graduate Diploma in Counselling. He is a founding member of the Sunshine Coast Interfaith Network, (SCIN) and is committed to exploring and developing better processes in living together. He is married with two children and seven grandchildren.

Barry is interested in how we apply the insights gained in Zen meditation practice to every day life. Barry places emphasis on the ordinary moments of our life and his teachings are about taking responsibility in our daily affairs. He encourages his students to examine the relevance of Zen in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and the role of Zen meditation in developing the qualities of personal responsibility.

## **Marian Free**

Marian Free is an Anglican priest in the Parish of Toowong. From 1983-1990, she was an active member in the Movement for the Ordination of Women. Since ordination she has worked at Sunnybank and Rosewood before coming to Toowong.

Her current passion is to find new ways of connecting with people who have some interest in things spiritual, but who are not church attenders. Marian will share with you something of her journey and encourage you to explore the gender issues that affect our lives.