

# The International Theosophical Centre in Naarden



From Past to Future



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**The International Theosophical Centre in Naarden**  
**From Past to Future**  
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**The International Theosophical Centre  
in Naarden**

# From Past to Future



The booklet was compiled and published  
in close cooperation with the Executive Committee of the ITC.

 **Theosophy Forward**





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## History of the ITC Naarden

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### Introduction

The International Theosophical Centre in Naarden (ITC) has a stirring history in which its existence has been challenged several times. Today its basis is much stronger. This Ebook gives a short overview of this history and outlook towards the future. The complex history can, however, hardly be described in a few pages.

### The Surroundings of the ITC

The ITC is situated on the most northern part of the Utrecht chain of hills, sand of which was pushed forward over long distances by glaciers during the last Ice Age. Most of the rest of the country was a huge delta, with rivers, lakes and swamps. It seems unavoidable that people lived on this dry ground in ancient times, while they were able to fish in the nearby former sea - in those days part of the Rhine delta - and collect food in the fertile wet grounds. Grave mounds and finds of Roman coins in the neighbourhood seem proof of that. Since the 14th century the fortified city of Naarden was situated at a strategic point at the end of the hills on the way to Amsterdam. In the 17th to 19th centuries sand was dug here for the construction of Amsterdam. The canals and low fields close by the ITC still bear



witness to that and contribute to the beauty of the area. In the 19th century the area was much better accessible and many mansions were built here for rich people from Amsterdam

One of the relatively recent villa's was the summerhouse for the Amsterdam bankers family Van Eeghen. The house "De Duinen" (The Dunes) was built in 1912 by the architect Th. Rueter who also designed a large part of the interior of the house. The garden was designed by L.A. Springer and was adjusted by D.F. Tersteeg in 1920. Originally the house had the post address of the municipality of Huizen, reason why the Centre was referred to as "the Huizen Centre" in the past. Later the post address became part of the municipality of Naarden which name is now often linked to that of the ITC as a reference. Both house and garden are labelled as monuments by the Province of North Holland.



*House "De Duinen" around 1920*

The picture of the first years of the ITC is not complete since the archive of the ITC was lost during the war and was probably destroyed by its Trust Board. The pre-war history is based on rather incidental documents which individual Board members kept at home and which are now in the possession of the ITC.

## A Donation to the Theosophical Society

After her divorce in 1921 Mrs. Mary Van Eeghen-Boissevain (or Mevrouw Mary van Eeghen as she was always referred to in the TS) received the house "De Duinen" and the surrounding grounds out of the estate. In her house she received amongst others the famous Indian poet Rabindranath Tagore. He invited her to come to India. As she intended to stay in India for a longer time she asked her son to rent out the house. During a visit to Tiger Hill Mrs. Van Eeghen experienced a spiritual rapture in which she was asked to take up important work at the estate. It was, however, not yet clear what work she had to take up and what she should do with the house. She strongly had the feeling that she was to fill her life with an important task.

After she started to study astrology she came in contact with the Theosophical Society and became a member in March 1923. Shortly after that she met Mr. W.B. Fricke, one of the Founding Fathers of the Dutch section, at the country day of the nearby Gooi lodge. Mr. Fricke visited the estate and told her: "Madam, there is such a strong influence of angels here, do not take a hasty decision about the house. When time is right it will come."

Next she came into contact with the Liberal Catholic Church (LCC) and was baptized in December 1923 by the first LCC





*Mevrouw Mary van Eeghen*

priest in the Netherlands, Mr. J. Schuurman. In 1924 Mr. Fricke told her: "The influence of the angels has much increased, I believe you will not have to wait much longer." She then heard that Mr. P.M. Cochius was requested by Annie Besant to search for a place in Holland where bishop J.I. Wedgwood could begin to train three or four young persons in ceremonial work. The same year Wedgwood moved to the House and a small private chapel was built, dedicated to the archangel St. Michael and all Angels. In 1925 Mrs. Van Eeghen intended to give the estate to Wedgwood but he refused to receive this as he found it had to serve a wider aim, rooted in theosophical work. Later that year the Centre was visited by George and Rukmini Arundale as well as by Annie Besant. Mrs. Van Eeghen then offered the entire estate of 17 hectares and the house to Annie Besant for the

service of the Masters. Annie Besant accepted this offer in Their Name. St. Michael's Foundation was established 11 September 1925, followed later that year by the Annie Besant lodge, a Montessori school, a Co-Masonry lodge, a section of the Order of the Star, a healing group, the Round Table and the "World League of Motherhood". During the following years various active theatrical activities were established. Plays by the "St. Michael's Players" can be found in the ITC archives.



*The Private Chapel in 1924 and 1925*

Wedgwood became Head of the Centre. Remarkably no formal relationship with Adyar was created. Both Annie Besant as well as George Arundale as President of the TS became honorary-chairman of the ITC. Jinarajadasa, the fourth President of the TS, decided not to accept this title, after which this custom ceased.



## Aims of the Centre

The first statutes of the Foundation gave as aim: "To promote Universal Brotherhood and International Peace, by means of maintaining and promoting all such social, political, spiritual, educational and other activities which promote this principle according to the judgment of the Board". In 1959 the description of "political" activities was changed into "theosophical". In the nineteen thirties political discussions were clearly relevant to young TS members. In the nineteen seventies the aim was extended to "dedicated to the service of the Hierarchy and aims at providing a worthy channel for Their Work". As the official



*Interior of the Private Chapel*

aims are mentioned in legal documents it was then decided to describe as the aims: "The object of the Foundation is to foster the principle of Universal Brotherhood and Peace under the inspiration of the highest human values, with the will to serve the world and under the perspective of the Oneness of Life in all living beings and in all". In practice this means that the Foundation aims to foster the aims of the Theosophical Society. The Council made a clear -internal- statement that "under the inspiration of the highest human values" is actually meant "dedicated to the service of the Hierarchy etc."



*The temporary Extension of the Chapel (1925 to 1927)*

## The Disaster Year 1928

In 1928 a large church for 400 persons was built in addition to the original chapel, which initially seated 18 persons, in 1925 extended to 60 within 10 days. Comments from Annie Besant to



Mrs Van Eeghen: "Now, Mevrouw, I will never again say the Dutch are slow". This is currently the place of the Garden of Remembrance. Due to lightning the new church burnt down on August 12, 13 days after its consecration and 10 days after the ordination of Mr. A.G. Vreede as bishop of the LCC! It was then decided to use the eastern part of the large Masonic temple as church, which large building (10 by 30 meters) came in use earlier that year and stood at the place of the current Besant Hall. The Theosophical lodge had its own small building on the grounds of the ITC, in the place where the current LCC chapel is now located.



*The new Church in 1928; on the left the small original chapel, on the right the large church, a few days before the fire.*

## Sale of part of ITC and Foundation of Tekels Park in Camberley UK

After the fire Wedgwood wanted to relocate the Centre to England. Mrs. Van Eeghen refused this as she found that a spiritual Centre could not be replaced. Later this was clearly confirmed by C.W. Leadbeater. Nevertheless Wedgwood intended to proceed with his plans for which he got permission from Annie Besant.

In order to make the purchase of Tekels Park in Camberley possible, Mrs. Van Eeghen bought back for 80.000 guilders the eastern part of the estate in 1929, including St. Michael's House, ten hectares of land, the garage and the house at the entrance, property she had donated four years earlier! In addition to this capital the insurance money received for the church after the fire was handed over to Wedgwood. The western part of the Centre, with its building for activities remained under the ownership of the Foundation. Wedgwood moved to Tekels Park, where he passed away in 1951.

It is clear that these changes and losses of both capital and the departure of Wedgwood had never been the intention at the time of the donation and foundation of the Centre just a few years earlier. As a result this was the beginning of a very difficult period for the Centre. The Trust Board had practically no financial means. Mrs. Van Eeghen actually needed her capital again. In 1932 the Foundation bought the House and 7.5 hectares back from Mrs Van Eeghen for 80.000 guilders. As the ITC had hardly any money this resulted in a remaining debt to her of 70.000 guilders.





*Ashrama, the only old building left.*

The exploitation of St. Michael's House in particular was a heavy burden for the Foundation, and several options were discussed. The first years each individual year had its own solution and letters were sent around with requests for donations. Renting out to theosophical hosts, to third parties and even sale to third parties were options frequently discussed. In 1934 and 1935 the house was rented by a group of Young Theosophists. Even in 1935 there were serious plans to sell St. Michael's House as its exploitation would remain structurally very difficult and - according to George Arundale in a fund raising letter to all Friends of the ITC - the House was not really necessary for the work itself. In 1937 the House was rented by George Arundale, which rent was paid by John Coats, later the sixth President of the TS.

Nevertheless many people, including George Arundale, were of the opinion that the Centre, including St. Michael's House, should remain intact as the Theosophical Centre in Europe. This meant that the debt to Mrs. Van Eeghen had to be paid off. Despite the recession small and large donations arrived from all over the world. In England the Camberley-Huizen Fund was founded with the aim to repay the "occult" debt to the ITC. George Arundale insisted that Tekels Park could only be "acknowledged" if the future of ITC were safe. This was of course a considerable challenge in times of recession as TS members in England were also asked to contribute to the Centre in Tekels Park. About £3,700 (some 37.000 guilders at the exchange rate of the time) was collected up to 1937 and transferred to the Netherlands. Thanks to a donation from the USA the debt to Mrs. Van Eeghen could be paid off after which the debt of Tekels Park to the ITC was considered cleared.



*The Annie Besant Lodge building, later hostel for young guests*



## The Years of War

In order to avoid confiscation by the German occupation the statutes of the ITC were changed in December 1940, as a result of which it officially became a church centre. All references to the TS and English contacts were removed and even the memorial stone of Annie Besant was reallocated to the private garden of Mrs. Van Eeghen. The church activities continued, whereas the theosophical lodge was requested to relocate to the nearby Drafna estate, as this estate with a theosophical school was considered lost in any case!



*Students in front of Drafna (1929)*

From the war years only an elaborate after-war report from the treasurer remained. Woodcutters were hired for the sale of

wood to Centre members living nearby. Home grown vegetables and fruit were also a source of income, as was the sale of the remaining stock of coal and redundant furniture. The grand piano "went" for 3.000 guilders! The woods suffered a lot during the war, partly through large scale theft. The German occupation tried to confiscate the ITC several times, despite the - probably somewhat transparent - church status. In January 1943 the Foundation was forcibly abolished and all its possessions were confiscated. The inhabitants of St. Michael's House were allowed to stay. In July of that year the confiscation was abrogated but the Foundation had to pay for all costs of the confiscation. From April to December 1944 the German army claimed St. Michaels House as living quarters for a German officer and all the inhabitants of the House had to leave at short notice. Though contributions from Centre members from abroad



*The old Besant Hall, with the LCC church in the background*



stopped during war time the financial situation after the war was somewhat better than before due to a lack of materials for maintenance. As a result the buildings rapidly deteriorated.

## After the War

After the war the work was taken up again with much vigour. The Dutch PC Meuleman Foundation, owner of the building for



*Interior of old Besant Hall (1959)*

the Dutch section in Amsterdam was kind enough to give a loan through which much needed maintenance could be implemented. Many times big meetings were organised. The ordination of Bishop De Vogel in 1948 for instance attracted over 500 persons! Many camped at the Centre during holidays, often with the whole family. Others stayed in the houses of Centre members living close by. Just after war a nearby house was rented to be able to receive more guests. The pre-war lodge building became a hostel with two dormitories, which was actually only suitable for younger guests. In 1960 a group of theosophical students from Delft University took the initiative to build a new Guest House, the current Arundale House, which offered lodging for over 20 people.



*Arundale House on the right with entrance Crystal House and Hall on the left (2011)*



The focus of the work changed over the years. Thanks to the lectures of Prof. J. E. Van der Stok much attention was paid to the occult aspects of the work. Gradually the focus of the work shifted towards the regeneration of man. Though the aims of the ITC remain the same, the way this is expressed may change over the years. Time and again the ITC workers seek to improve and adjust the form according to the opportunities and needs of the time.

A second disaster occurred in 1966 when the original Besant Hall went up in flames. The valuable library was also lost. Sometimes, however, a disaster gives space for something new. Mrs. Rukmini Devi Arundale then launched a major effort to have a large and modern Besant Hall built, with a new separate chapel for the LCC.



*The new Besant Hall (2011)*

## Relationship with the Liberal Catholic Church (LCC)

One of the striking things in the minutes of the pre war Trust Board is the very close relationship with the work of the LCC. The minutes show that the Board was much involved with the purchase and financing of the church organ, who was allowed to play on it, who was not, and who had to take further lessons as the current playing was considered not quite satisfactory! The Centre paid the vicar, contributed to the costs of the church robes and covered part of the exploitation losses of the church, and, moreover, was actively involved in the appointment of the priests. The explanation for this is that the chapel was considered a private chapel, in fact that of Mrs. Mary. As a result the ITC only has a relationship with the local church community.

Over the years the involvement with the LCC has diminished and at present the profile of the ITC is theosophical only. Nevertheless the relationship with the local church remains unique. Rukmini called the church "a power-house" of the ITC. After the fire the church community and the Trust Board of the ITC developed plans to build a new chapel at the ITC, comparable with the temples of the different world religions in Adyar. Funds were then collected through the treasurer of the ITC. However, this proved insufficient. At the time the Dutch government gave considerable subsidies for the building of churches, provided the church itself were to build, and not the ITC. The only option for the ITC was to give out the land in a long-term lease for a minimum duration of 40 years as determined by the ministry. The long-term lease structure was therefore a creative solution with the aim to reverse this to the



original intended situation. This has always been the intention of both parties. This long-term lease contract ended on 1 July 2011 and has meanwhile been replaced by an on-going lease contract of the land and chapel. The change from long term lease with its "own" LCC chapel to a - symbolic - rent of the chapel, owned by the ITC was thus realised in a harmonious way.



*The Chapel of the LCC (2011)*

## George and Rukmini Devi Arundale

Any description of the ITC cannot be complete without paying attention to the great contribution of George and Rukmini Arundale. They came to the Centre for the first time on 24

December 1924, having been invited by Bishop Wedgwood for Christmas and the ordination into the priesthood of Oscar Köllerstrom. That winter they stayed at the castle of Baron van Pallandt in Ommen at the invitation of Krishnamurti. They came back in June and July 1925. Annie Besant stayed there for several months as well, which led to the donation of the estate by Mrs. Van Eeghen. This was the beginning of a large number of visits and a close relationship with the Arundales. In 1930 George Arundale succeeded Wedgwood as Head of the Centre. When Arundale became President of the TS Rukmini succeeded him as Head of the Centre, which function she kept until her death in 1986. During each visit of the Arundales the work of the Centre was given an enormous - and often very practical - impulse, time and again. In 1931 the Arundales even considered coming to live at St. Michael's House. In 1932 George suggested to use the masonic temple more broadly and to call the western part of this wooden building Besant Hall. His active involvement to help solve the financial problems of the ITC in the nineteen thirties cannot be underestimated. His influence here was crucial for the survival of the Centre.

Rukmini often tried to involve younger people in the work and in 1932 took the initiative to build Ashrama for that purpose. She also had great interest in art and animal welfare. She had the intention to make the ITC into a meditation centre, which would represent all the world religions. To this end she received a very beautiful Buddha statue which she saw as the beginning of new forms of meditation and spiritual activities.

As Head of the Centre Rukmini took all the major decisions. As she lived a long way away at Adyar this model to govern the Centre was not easy. As a result the Board was not always



equally resolute and decisions made were sometimes reversed by her. Nevertheless this worked all those years due to the great respect people had for Rukmini. Around 1980 Rukmini started to look for a successor. She was then, however, advised that there would never be another "Rukmini" and that in due time a new model to govern the Centre would be found. Rukmini accepted this advise and left the succession open.



*George and Rukmini Devi Arundale  
in the Garden of St. Michael's House*



## Relationship with Adyar

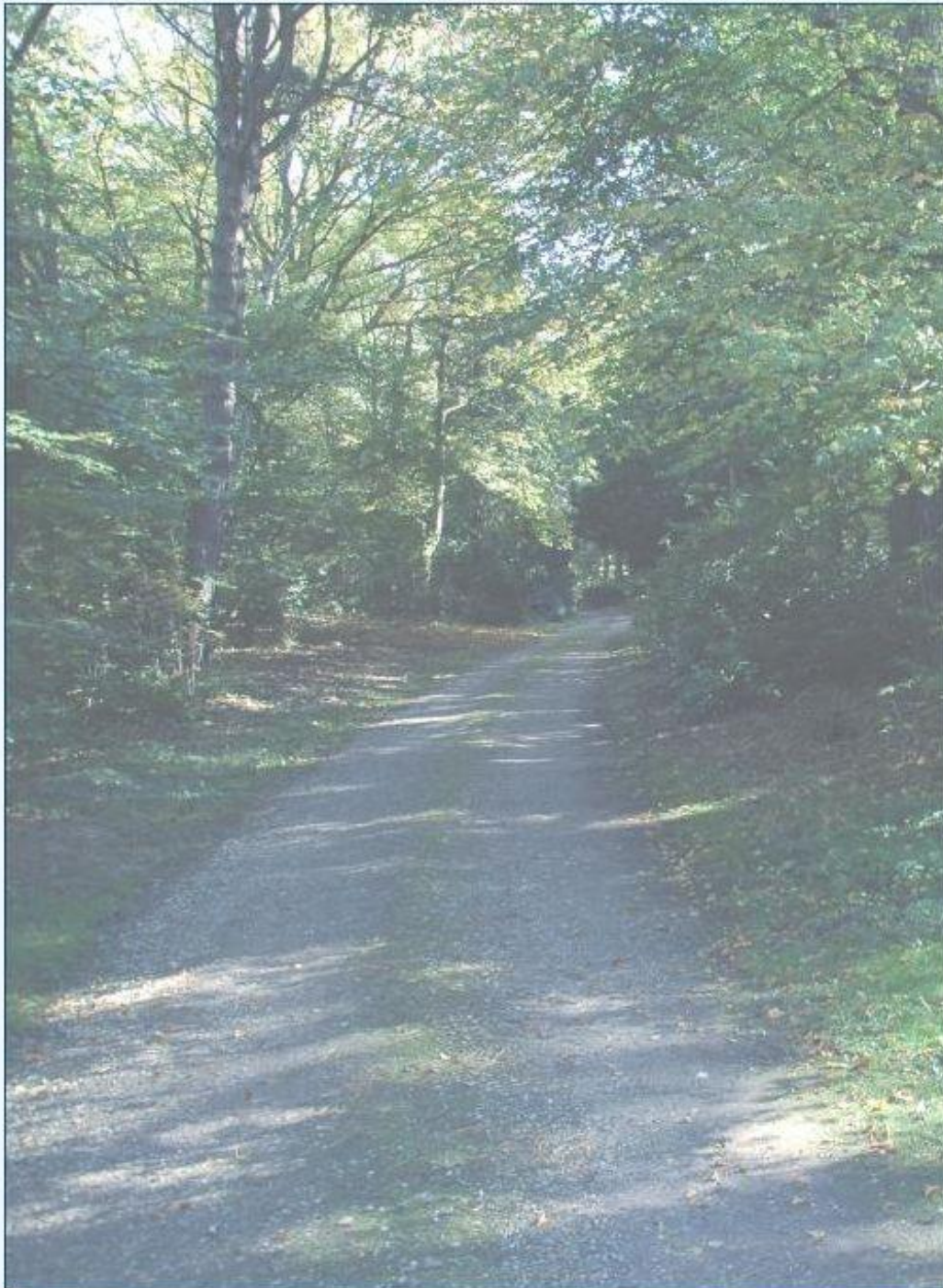
The relationship with Adyar has not always been simple and easy. Both Annie Besant and George Arundale were honorary chairmen of the ITC and thus closely connected with it. Jinarajadasa as 4th President of the TS, however, had the remarkable view that the ITC was mainly a church centre and though he acknowledged that the ITC had an occult link with the President of the TS he kept his distance from the work of the Centre. Also Sri Ram, the 5th President of the TS, did not play an active role at the Centre. Apparently he left this to his sister Rukmini, through whom a relationship existed with Adyar, although this was not formal.

After the death of Rukmini a new situation emerged. The Trust Board took the time to consider a new model to govern the Centre. This model needed to include a direct and irreversible connection with Adyar installed. The function of Head was abolished and the newly Council was to be responsible for all current affairs. The President of the TS should become honorary chairman of the ITC, with certain powers to safeguard the theosophical identity of the Centre. Radha Burnier, in her capacity of President of the TS, fully agreed with this model. In 1988 the Council made the changes in its statutes accordingly.

*St. Michaels House in Winter*







## The Current Situation

### The Estate of the ITC

The estate of St. Michael's Foundation comprises 17 hectares of wood and park, situated in the municipality of Naarden, between the Meentweg; the entrance for activities, and the Valkeveenselaan, the entrance for St. Michael's House.

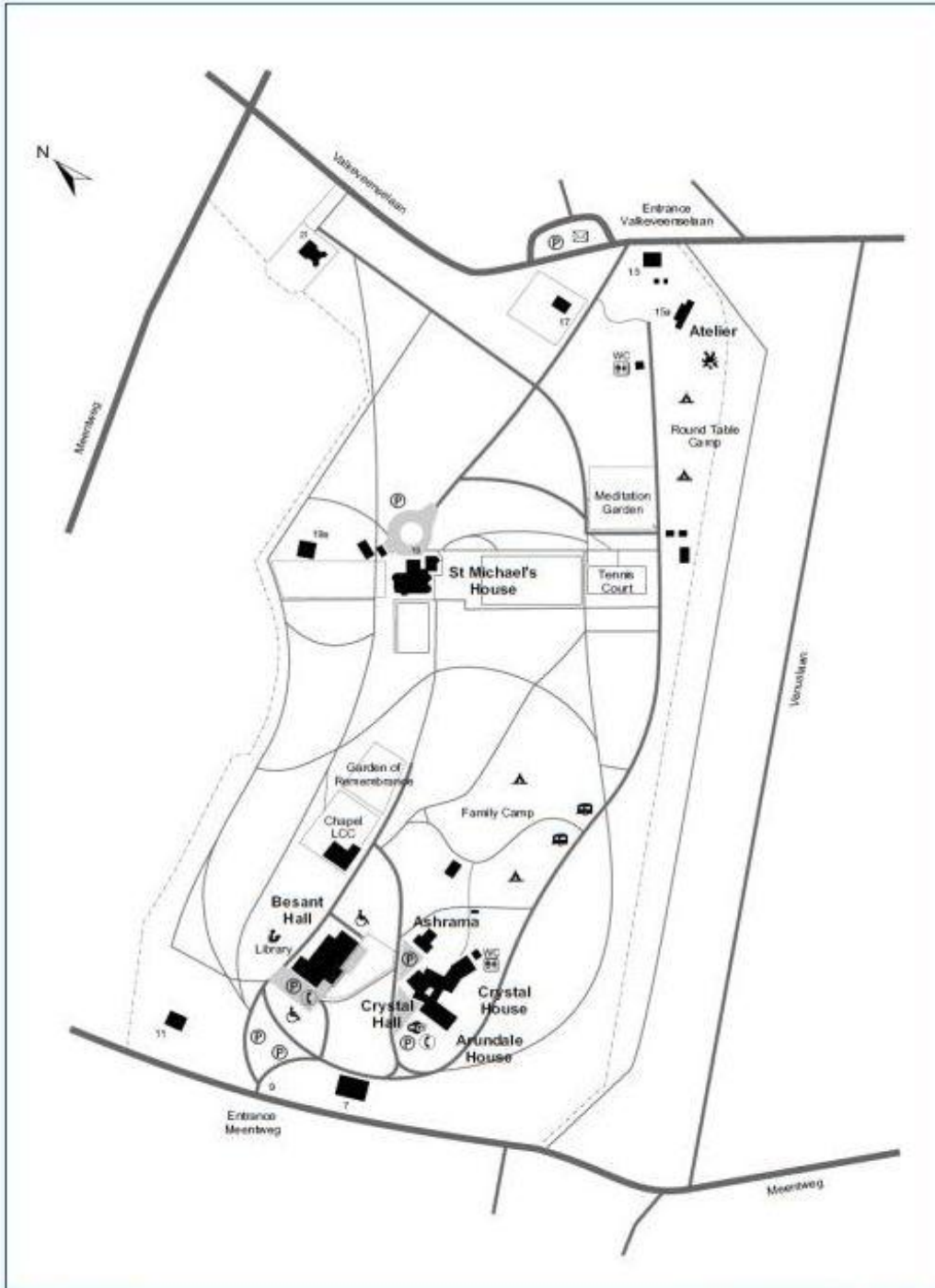
St. Michael's House houses a few workers and incidental guests, and is also used as an office and for conducting meetings. Five more villas are situated on the estate to house workers. Over the last few years the Council has decided to sell a few villas outside the compound to strengthen the financial situation and to make the exploitation of the estate, largely by volunteers, easier.

The Besant Hall has a large auditorium for some 150 persons, a spacious entrance hall, several small rooms and a kitchen. Its library contains over 10.000 books, mainly in English and Dutch.

The Ashrama is the only pre-war building left, originally built for the young theosophists. It is now used for a range of activities.

The Atelier is a small wooding building near the Valkeveenselaan, which is used amongst others by Round Table and a yoga school at present.





The Arundale House offers basic lodging; 9 bedrooms, each with two beds, shared showers and toilets. It has its own kitchen en living room.

As a result of the changes over the last 25 years the ITC has clearly become the European home of the TS. The consequence of this was that the Centre needed new accommodation for domestic and foreign guests. Contributions from all over the world made possible the building of the new Crystal House and Hall, a miracle in its own right, given the vulnerable financial situation in the past. Crystal House offers 20 bedrooms; 10 single person and 10 two person bedrooms each with its own bathroom, while Crystal Hall, with a professional kitchen, is used as dining hall but is equally suitable for meetings, such as meditation groups.

The Chapel is used by the local LCC church community.



*Crystal Hall (2011)*



## The Emblem of the ITC

The Centre has always stood for an active approach to Theosophy, where art and beauty play an important role in addition to the "hard core" theosophy. The emblem of the ITC is - of course - based on that of the TS. It was thus decided to add some roses to the TS emblem. The roses symbolise love, peace, caring, renewal, growth and also beauty which expresses wisdom, by which Truth reveals itself.



## The Future of the ITC

In 2010 the Council of the ITC established a long-term policy regarding its aims and role as a basis for future activities. The more clearly it can expound its values, if possible in modern terms, the better the internal and external communication will become. The policy describes the direction for the next few years and can only be implemented gradually. Nevertheless it is important for the ITC to continue in the direction agreed upon.

### Summary:

### Choices Made in the Policy Note

A first reading may give the impression that the obvious has been described and that no clear choices were made. Therefore a few of the choices made are listed below:

**Role and Core Values of the ITC.** The choice has been made that the ITC is not only for TS members, but should be more active and of service to the world. At the same time it confirms and even strengthens our own theosophical identity, which is one of the paradoxes we face.

**The Paradox of a Spiritual Centre.** We have experienced that we are constantly seeking our way while facing a range of paradoxes. Describing how we intend to deal with the contrast between the inner and the outside world is new, at least to us.



**Activities.** The ITC intends to give greater emphasis to activities aimed at the public at large, people faced with the serious questions of life. The organization of the School of the Wisdom, the organization of a retreat and study centre as well as the organization of attractive Theosophy related seminars for all interested people has high priority.

**Library.** The library of the ITC is mainly significant during serious activities. The ITC library will become a smaller study library, for which reason cooperation with the large library of the Dutch section will be intensified. The ITC and both libraries together can thus offer a unique study centre.



*Crystal Hall's restaurant*

## Aims, Role and Core Values

The International Theosophical Centre (ITC) aims to foster the principle of Universal Brotherhood and Peace under the inspiration of the highest human values, with the will to serve the world and having regard to the Oneness of Life in all living beings.

The ITC aims to be an active and inspiring spiritual centre, contributing to the service of the world and the uplifting of mankind in particular. The ITC therefore invites people to the Centre to work on the process of human regeneration through personal transformation.

The core values of the ITC are based on the wholeness of life:

- **Human regeneration** through personal transformation, based upon a deeper understanding of one's true nature. This quest for truth involves a particular interest in esoteric wisdom
- **Freedom of thought**, which means non-sectarianism, no dogmas. Each person is responsible for his own spiritual path
- **Beauty and service** in all activities conducted at the ITC, as well as maintaining the beauty and profound atmosphere of the estate This implies work in harmony with nature.

This requires living a respectful and responsible / ethical life, which implies:

- Selflessness
- Being creative, open to new spiritual and scientific insights and experiences, all within the framework of the identity and values of the Centre



- Integrity, respect, acceptance of other people and activities
- Awareness, non-identification
- Humour, which is related to non-attachment.



*Entrance to both Crystal Hall and Crystal House*

## The International Theosophical Centre at Naarden, Its Identity and Work

The aims of the ITC are realized by stimulating and fostering the aims of the Theosophical Society, Adyar (TS), in particular through theosophical, religious, educational, cultural, and social activities as described in our statutes; as the European home of

the TS, and as the natural partner for the activities of the TVN (the Dutch section of the TS) and the EFTS (the European Federation of the TS), either by offering its facilities and / or in helping to co-organize.

The ITC is an integral part of the TS. It is one of the International Centres of the TS; it belongs to the tradition of the TS and is linked with the spiritual line of its Founders. This contributes to its atmosphere, its energy, and to a certain degree, also to its protection. The President of the TS is also President of the ITC, in order to preserve its Theosophical identity. The Centre also has a special relationship with organizations derived from the TS.

The Centre is - potentially - powerful, but needs people to become active. It can be considered a spiritual laboratory, where the secure atmosphere allows workers and visitors to be spiritually vulnerable, in search of new ways of understanding. It is one of the few TS communities in the world where TS members live and work together. This implies the obligation for the laboratory to be active.

The ITC fosters its special atmosphere, being a place of work where the physical and the spiritual meet, where TS members and interested people are welcome and can be inspired, where they can learn to be open and feel spiritually at home.

Work in a spiritual Centre is the work of people. Where people come together for this work energy emerges. Even a few people can thus move mountains. But a spiritual centre is also a path where people learn and energy can burst from time to time. In the archives of the ITC it has been described that this Centre is



an experiment. In the past such centres were founded around a spiritual teacher or school, with a clear authority. For the first time there is now a Centre where the work is done through the mutual effort and search of - equal - workers. This is the challenge, now and in the future.

Activities are the key to the functioning of the ITC, as only through the activity of each one of us it can work as a spiritual Centre. The ITC protects ceremonial and other spiritual groups which work in line with the aims of the Centre. The ITC also fosters contacts with related spiritual organizations.

## Spiritual Work; the Ultimate Aim is Regeneration or Transformation

The spiritual work of the Centre has many different dimensions, which include the following elements:

The activities in the Centre support the spiritual development of the participants. A silent openness is a pre-requisite for deeper understanding on the spiritual path. The ultimate aim of this path is Regeneration or Transformation of the Mind, and therefore of Mankind.

Transformation of the individual has a great influence on the uplifting of mankind as a whole. Human civilization can only really change for the better through the continued efforts of individuals, both as living examples and through positive energy, emanating from their spiritual work.

Finally such work has great relevance for Creation as a whole, in all its varied and rich facets.

This process of transformation develops much faster in a spiritual centre than in the outer world. The Centre can be considered a centre of Light, or Positive Energy for the world, transforming finer energies to the levels at which it can be used. The Centre is therefore a place for study, meditation and service. Such service may well include supporting the Centre itself, maintaining and further vitalizing it for generations to come. This can be done individually, during a personal retreat or in groups. This can be enriched by meeting people in different activities in the same quest for Truth. An open spiritual approach is essential for the spiritual atmosphere of the Centre, and can be described as the main distinct and unique characteristic of the Centre.



*In the meditation Garden*



## The paradox of a Spiritual Centre, Open and Closed

There is a certain paradox in the relationship of the Centre with the 'outside' world, due to the difference between the unrest of the world and the quiet spiritual atmosphere of the Centre, which determines its identity. This contradiction results in a certain tension, which can act as a spiritual dynamo for the workers. If the concern for the purity of the Centre becomes our main criterion, however, this may result in an internal focus and inhibition. This in turn brings with it the risk that the Centre no longer acts as a shining Centre for the world and that its energy is blocked. The Centre and its workers are aware of this paradox, which we intend to cope with responsibility, spiritual growth, enquiry, curiosity and education.

## The ITC Activities

The ITC considers the School of the Wisdom at Naarden - a serious study period of one or two weeks - as one of its key activities, if possible organised together with its natural partners, the European Federation and the Dutch section.

The ITC has decided to re-allocate some of its resources and to give greater emphasis to activities aimed at the public at large, faced with serious questions of life. By doing so it intends to work along the lines of its aims and role. Attractiveness for a broader public will be an important selection criterion for future programs. Activities could include organizing:

- seminars with a relationship between spirituality and issues in science or in society as a whole.
- courses on different spiritually related issues, such as different religions.
- meetings with a special focus on young adults.
- different forms of meditation, the use of a public meditation room.
- courses on healthy living, including vegetarian cooking.
- art exhibitions and performances, as art results in more openness and non-verbal communication.



*Garden of Remembrance*

## The ITC as Retreat and Study Centre

Today one no longer goes to a certain place for general information, which has become otherwise readily available through internet. People come together or go to a certain place for two reasons:



1. To meet similar-minded people, to gain inspiration for the inner quality of life, for shared spiritual experiences, to come to a better understanding of the questions of life. Key word: sharing.

2. To escape from the hassle of the world, with similar aims. Key word: silence.

Inspiration and transformation are key elements, not to be found at random. A clearly defined library collection, specialised in certain subjects, but broad and qualitative in its offerings per subject, should add to its attractiveness. We can imagine that someone who intends to write a book or an article may want to do so partly at the ITC.



*Participants retreat 2010*

The positioning of the ITC as a Retreat and Study Centre will have a high priority. The ITC intends to offer opportunities for TS members and interested people to hold organized group retreats. This means:

- Providing a public meditation room
- Maintaining a specialized library, with a well informed librarian
- Supplying internet access to libraries (including TVN and Adyar) and specialized sites
- Provide self catering lodging facilities for individual retreats / students
- Provide for bikes and regional maps so that participants can do their own shopping



*St. Michael's House*



## The ITC Library

Today study centres are largely virtual; access to databanks is crucial. Many of our traditionally unique books can now easily be purchased through the internet, or are otherwise easily available. Despite the fact that any search for the right sources and information is currently mainly done through internet, it is believed that once these sources are found, students continue to prefer real books for their study. This is in particular the case when the study involves elements of inner search / meditation. A study centre with a specialized study library is therefore considered "future proof". The library is a central aspect in the development of the study centre.

The library of the Dutch section, situated close by in Amsterdam, is probably the largest English language and most professionally operated accessible TS library in Europe. See amongst others at <http://www.theosofie.nl/bibliotheek/collectie/> For the time being the site is in Dutch only but the collection can be searched on site. Positive cooperation already exists between the TVN and ITC libraries. The TVN and ITC libraries can improve their services in line with the following policy:

TVN and ITC libraries together can offer a unique study centre proposition to all TS sections in Europe as well as serious students at large. Students / study groups can reside at the ITC for study. The library of the ITC will therefore intensify its cooperation with the library of the TVN. The depth of the TVN library will take precedence; the ITC library does not aim to offer a full range. It will offer a nuclear collection of fundamental theosophical literature, but can also make use of the more

extended collection of the TVN, as well as the advice of its librarian. Books can easily be brought from Amsterdam to the ITC for study purposes. In cooperation with the TVN library a relationship with the Adyar library will be sought in order to increase the range and therefore value of the collection, in particular with the range of Oriental Studies.



*The ITC library*



## Visiting the International Theosophical Centre

The International Theosophical Centre (ITC) aims to foster the principle of Universal Brotherhood and Peace under the inspiration of the highest human values, with the will to serve the world and with regard for the Oneness of Life in all living beings.

The ITC aims to be an active and inspiring spiritual centre, contributing to the service of the world and the uplifting of mankind in particular. The ITC therefore invites people to the Centre to work at the process of human regeneration through individual transformation.

Any stay at the Centre is meant to promote quietness of mind, peace and a harmonious life. Therefore smoking or using drugs on the estate is not allowed; furthermore only vegetarian meals and non-alcoholic beverages may be consumed.

Contact and communication  
The International Theosophical Centre at Naarden  
Valkeveenselaan 19, 1411 GT Naarden  
The Netherlands  
Tel: + 31 (0)35 6945121

Information on ITC programs can be found on the ITC site:  
[www.itc-naarden.org](http://www.itc-naarden.org)

The ITC publishes a news letter Centre News, which is distributed through email. If you would like to receive this please contact us by Email:  
[info@itc-naarden.org](mailto:info@itc-naarden.org)



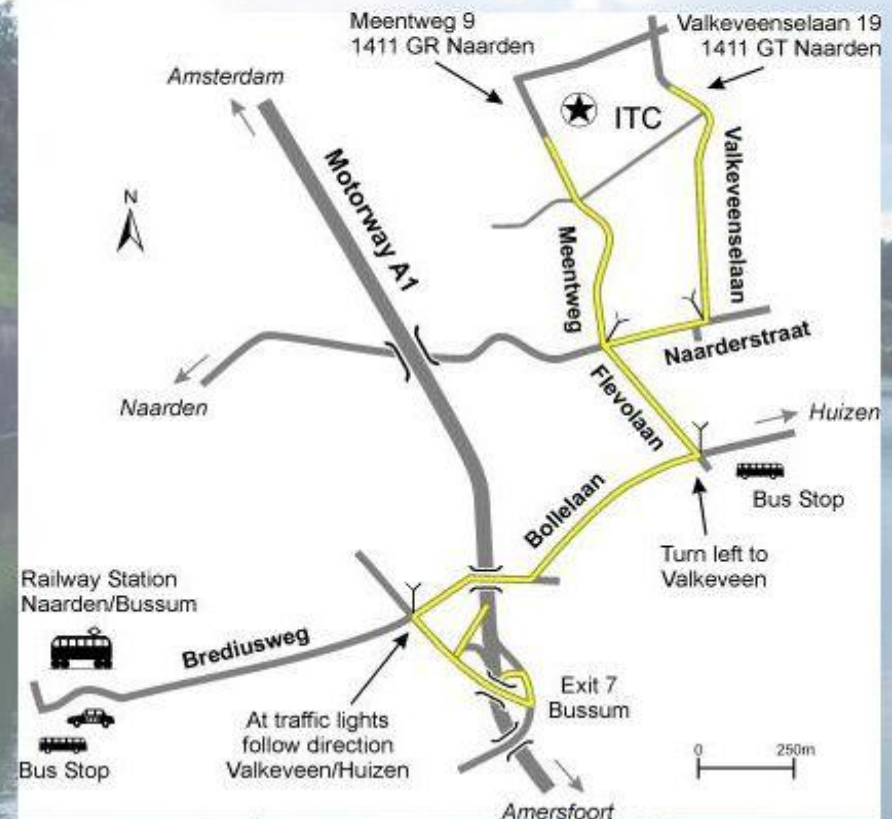
## Route Description

The ITC is located approx. 20 km east of Amsterdam, close to the old fortified city of Naarden.

By plane: Fly into Schiphol airport, Amsterdam. The railway station is under the airport. Buy a ticket to station Naarden/Bussum.

By train: Buy a ticket to station Naarden/Bussum. Go by regular taxi to the ITC (see plan) or by bus (Regioliner 100; from the bus stop at Flevolaan it is a 20 minute walk). You can also rent a bike at the railway station.

By car: Take Motorway A1 between Amsterdam and Amersfoort, exit Bussum/Naarden. Then follow the description on the plan below.







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## THEOSOPHY IN SLOVENIA

in collaboration with the  
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