

The Anthroposophical Society's 2012 Conference

Glen Saunders,
Christchurch, New Zealand

Roads Less Travelled - working and engaging with a changing world

**Michael Park School, Auckland
4 - 7 October 2012**

This year's Society conference theme is centred on work, taking initiative, finding ways to do new things while keeping grounded and practical. In our practical work, how do we find doors which will open to something new, leading to a road less travelled?

As many who try, you'll know this is difficult. It's very easy to repeat what's been done before but many people now feel we have to take new steps socially, economically and culturally on top of the content of the work itself. That won't come from 'them' – some powerful group – doing it for

us, but from what we can do ourselves. And as the context and idea of true education comes under increasing attack, how do we find those new ways?

Our morning speaker will be Peter Blom. Peter joined Triodos Bank in the Netherlands at its creation in 1980. Triodos was then a small, new social bank based on anthroposophical ideas – itself part of a new movement in Europe. Triodos (Tri-hodos – threefold way) has since grown enormously and become a world leader. It is now active throughout Western Europe along with many investments internationally – including Prometheus Finance here in New Zealand and a new social banking initiative called SEFA

ANTHROPOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN NEW ZEALAND ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2012

ROADS LESS TRAVELLED

WORKING AND ENGAGING WITH A CHANGING WORLD

MICHAEL PARK SCHOOL, AUCKLAND, 4-7 OCTOBER 2012

This year's theme is how to work in the world when you want to do something genuinely new, which is practical and will succeed but will contribute to new approaches and lead things forward, to be a road less travelled.

These last years show ever again that new approaches are needed but that it will be us and not someone else who will have to do this. Many people are feeling this and this is what we want to explore.

Our main speaker will be Peter Blom, someone who has built Triodos Bank in Europe and internationally to be one of the leading social banks in the world building on its anthroposophical roots. Peter is an eloquent speaker with a long history of combining deep spiritual insight with practicality, and finding the roads less travelled for many different activities.

in Australia. It's been a pioneer in renewable energy, organic and bio-dynamic agriculture, in investment in culture, in microfinance in the developing world investing in banking for the very poor, and many other areas which are now taken up by mainstream banks.

Triodos's threefold way has been one road less travelled and its work, providing the funds for many thousands of initiatives, has directly contributed to many other roads less travelled as well.

Peter has been at Triodos's centre from the beginning. He has a rare quality of combining high idealism with practicality and of finding those new roads. He has a great deal of insight into the challenges which arise and how you find the way through. And he's a very eloquent speaker who draws on spiritual insight but presents this in a completely contemporary way.

Peter will talk from his experience of and seeing what others have been able to do. He'll face questions of bringing spiritual insight into practical life. He will draw on the work of Triodos, on banking and economics and social questions but his focus will be on the much broader theme of what our times need to travel new roads. We hope you will come and contribute to what promises to be a significant conference wherever and however you work.

Our title comes from Robert Frost's fine poem 'The Road Not Taken' which embodies something of the theme –

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less travelled by,
And that has made all the difference. ♦

STAR WEAVINGS

*A Newsletter of the Australian Association
for Rudolf Steiner Early Childhood
Education*

Published bi-annually in March and September

Editor: Vicki Kearney

Subscription enquiries to : PO Box 446, Samford,
Queensland 4520 Australia

email: avenuesforchange@gmail.com