

LAM RIM



MANDALA

YEAR 2001. ISSUE NUMBER 7.

EDITORIAL

At last, the revival of the MANDALA magazine. So sorry it has taken so long. I would like to thank Sally Ward, Tom Davies and the previous editor, Sheila Yeger for all their hard work over the years on the MANDALA, which I hope, will once again grow from strength to strength. All your contributions are most welcome.

In this new edition, Geshe La has written a most welcome letter regarding

'developing a positive and sincere inner Millenium mind..... This new mind is peaceful mind, inside it is quiet, calm and comfortable'

I'm sure we would all like to develop this state of mind it is up to us to make that change. We are so fortunate to have the guidance, direction and teachings from Geshe La, here on our doorstep in the U.K. So many people across the world do not have the precious opportunities in this life - time to even see or meet a teacher as wonderful as Geshe La., or have access to the teachings.

There are some lovely contributions from friends in South Africa. Elizabeth Gaywood from Durban has written about the Dalai Lama's visit to South Africa while Geshe La and Margaret were there, and Pauline Mallabone has written about the progress at the Lam Rim Centre in Johannesburg.

Dechen (Sue Rochard) has written a fascinating story about her life as a western nun in a Tibetan Monastery. This is part 1 of 4 articles. Wonderful!

Year 7 at Coedcae School, Llanelli visited Lam Rim on 28th June 2000 and interviewed Geshe La and Margaret. A transcript of their interview is in this edition of the Mandala.

And last, but not least, the lovely contributions from the friends of Lam Rim Wales in the UK. There are also some reflections of Lam Rim's 21st birthday party in 1999!

A very special thank you to Edita for all her years of delicious homely cooking, hard work, love and advice at Lam Rim, and to Margaret for her dedication, organisation, warmth and love, always.

Lam Rim Wales is a place you always feel welcome and are

greeted with such love.

Thank you Geshe La for your compassion, love and teachings. We are all so very fortunate to receive your countless blessings.

Thank you Margaret for giving me the job of editing this magazine. I have found it rewarding reading all the lovely articles. Love and best wishes

Lorraine Harris

**BLESSING**

May all beings have happiness and the causes of happiness

May all beings be free from sorrow and the causes of sorrow

May all never be separated from the sacred happiness which is sorrow less

May all live in equanimity, without attachment or aversion, believing in the equality of all that lives.

*From the Nyingma Institute,
Berkeley, California*

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A LETTER FROM GESHE DAMCHO-LA

Dear Friends

It is very nice to be writing a letter for Lam Rim Mandala again and I would like to thank Lorraine, our editor, and all the contributors for wishing to help Lam Rim Buddhist Centre. It is so beneficial to share our thoughts and experiences with each other; then more understanding.

So, now we are in the year 2001. A fresh start to a new century. This time last year I went to London with David and Branwen for a special Millenium Interfaith service at the Palace of Westminster. From Westminster Bridge I saw the Big Wheel - The Big Eye. It reminded me of the Wheel of Life, watching it go round and round. Our lives are like that. We constantly follow the same habits, same patterns of behaviour - no change. This wheel is uncomfortable and wobbling all the time, each of us trapped in our own pods trying to change. No chance. First we have to stop the wheel turning if we want 'land of peace' - so, how do we stop the wheel?

The hub of the wheel is the real wheel to stop which is inside our own minds—that is the Big I. It is powered by greed, hatred and confusion. We can stop the wheel by refraining from our normal thinking - that is polluted thinking - we need to practice purification and mindfulness for pure mind. We need to search and learn how to practice to bring about change. You can check. If we get good result from practice then that is correct cause. If no good then not correct. Good causes bring positive thinking then good result brings happiness. True, not true, you need to check.

Some people think that result of practice is immediate - We can't get immediate results for many life - times bad habits. Normal thinking brings more suffering, therefore we need to change.

Let's make the New Millenium to mean New Mind 2001. This new mind is peaceful mind, inside it is quiet, calm and comfortable. Further development of study, practice and reflection is needed if you sincerely want a quality mind. Cheating and pretending to learn - we cheat ourselves - no good.

So dear friends, let's put great effort into developing a positive and sincere inner Millenium mind and then we can all enjoy a peaceful, comfortable outer millenium.

*Thank you very much
Geshe Damcho*

News from our friends in South Africa

Lam Rim Johannesburg Beginnings

The original concept to create a permanent Lam Rim Buddhist Centre in South Africa began in 1992 when the Venerable Geshe Damcho Yonten again visited the country to continue his teachings on Lam Rim at the request of a small but dedicated group of South African Buddhists. It was suggested that a permanent venue be found, when this was achieved, the Venerable Geshe La would endeavour to secure a semi-permanent resident teacher.

The Centre

In 1993 an old Dutch Reformed church with a unique hexagonal shape was secured, with financial assistance and a generous donation.

Since then a small, but dedicated group of South African, and immigrants of European extract have continued to work towards converting the original Christian church of worship into a traditional Buddhist Gumpa. With the Venerable Geshe La as the Spiritual Director..

The property comprises a large hall utilised for Tai Chi and Yoga practise. Also a large house

occupied currently by five adults and two cats. Weekly meetings involve teaching, meditation, also regular Tara practise. The centre would grow in leaps and bounds if a qualified teacher was available to take up residence.

Growth

Buddhism continues to gain popularity in South Africa, following a similar trend in the West. However we remain isolated in so far as the limited visits to the sub-continent by experienced Tibetan teachers. The demand in the West with its larger population will quite naturally attract these experienced teachers to the larger pupil base.

The recent visit by His Holiness the Dalai Lama resulted in a renewed surge of interest in Buddhism. The everyday stress we experience in our country due to the turmoil and violence we live with each waking hour, becomes manageable when one remembers the basic Buddhist practise of generating compassion towards all peoples.

The Venerable Geshe Damcho Yonten has been invited to visit the centre again early next year, by then the main shrine room will be completed.

Pauline Mallabone

“We remain isolated in so far as the limited visits to the sub-continent by experienced Tibetan teachers”



South African Protea

Ginger Tea



When I visit Lam Rim, Margaret and Edita have often made me a lovely cup of “warm” tea.

Grate a small amount (to taste) of fresh ginger into a teapot of regular tea. Serve in the usual way.

Lorraine

A Tasty South African Snack



Ingredients:

2 ripe avocados (soft to squeeze not hard)
Salt
Black Pepper
Vinegar
4 slices of Bread
Butter or Margarine.
Grated Cheese (optional)

Utensils:

Small Mixing Bowl
Fork and spoon.

Method

Slice avocados in half
Scoop out stones and discard.
Scoop out avocado flesh with a spoon into a mixing bowl and mash with a fork.
Add into this mixture a good pinch of salt, black pepper to taste and 1 to 2 teaspoons of vinegar. Mash into the mixture.
Toast the bread. Spread with margarine or butter. Then spread the avocado mixture on to the warm toast. Cut each piece of toast into triangles. Sprinkle with grated cheese. Delicious!!

Anthony Harris

His Holiness the Dalai Lama in South Africa

His Holiness the Dalai Lama arrives in South Africa

A great deal of excitement and anticipation was felt during the first week of December last year, when His Holiness the Dalai Lama arrived in South Africa on a 10-day visit embracing Durban and Cape Town. His Holiness arrived in Durban on 4th December to give a 2-day Teaching on the Three Principal Paths, including a Chenrezig Jenang, at the request of the Tibet Society of South Africa.

Preparations

We were very fortunate to have Geshe Damcho guide us through the year-long arrangements to prepare for this event and we couldn't have wished for more when Geshe-la agreed to come to Durban at the beginning of December to assist. This was fortunate indeed, as everything had to be finalised before His Holiness arrived; because when He does arrive, there is not time to make alternative plans; time seemed to speed up and everyone was swept along on a very tangible, but inexpressible energy.

Very early mornings and late evenings were necessary to complete the finer details and Geshe-la's patience and encouragement aided the committee members and helpers to remain focused and at relative ease!

The Venue

It was all worthwhile – the stage at the Elangeni Hotel in Durban, who kindly donated the Presidential Suite and Adjoining rooms for His Holiness and entourage, was transformed into a jewel. With His Holiness as the central gem.

The Teachings were a great success and people attended from all over the world. A number of people from Zimbabwe made a special effort to attend as a group, as well as from Cape Town and Johannesburg. The venue was full to capacity and without exception people were deeply moved by His Holiness' presence.

Other Engagements

Besides the Teaching event, other engagements had been arranged and His Holiness requested that Geshe Damcho join the entourage on these visits. We visited the Aryan Benevolent Home, which houses 300 inmates. The

We were very fortunate to have Geshe Damcho guide us through the year long arrangements to prepare for this event

establishment has a children's section catering for approximately 100 homeless and abandoned children from babes in arms to teenagers as well as an old-aged and mentally disadvantaged hospital. Experiencing His Holiness' compassion toward these people, and toward everyone He met, was an unforgettable experience. The eyes of the dying patients sparkled as His Holiness greeted them.

His Holiness flew to Cape Town on 7th December, primarily at the invitation of the World Parliament of Religions. He also had many other engagements including a Dharma talk on the Four Noble Truths, which Geshe-la, Margaret, David and I attended. The Cape Town visit was a great holiday, visiting Table Mountain and surrounds, plus a scenic drive to see Rodney and Heila Downey who have established a Zen Centre in a small town called Robertville, approximately 1½ hours from Cape Town.

Sincere thanks and gratitude to Tessa King for sharing her experiences with His Holiness' arrangements in the UK, Mike Austin for his computer wizardry, Margaret and David for their moral support and assistance during the visit, and of course our love to Geshe Damcho-la for being there when he is needed most.

With love Elizabeth

The following verses are excerpted from Stephen Batchelor's translation of A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life, composed by Shantideva in the eighth century.

PRAYER

May I be the doctor and the medicine

And may I be the nurse

For all sick beings in the world

Until everyone is healed.

May a rain of food and drink descend

To ease the pain of thirst and hunger

And during the aeon of famine

May I change myself into food and drink.



A BUDDHIST MEAL BLESSING

The Venerable Ayya Khema offers the following verses on observance at a meal, which she describes as the Buddha’s words and says

“are meant to remind us that we are eating to survive well and not just for reasons of pleasing the palate.”

We are eating this meal with mindfulness

Not only for pleasure, not for indulgence,

But only for maintaining this body, so that it endures.

For keeping it unharmed, for supporting life,

so that former feelings of hunger are destroyed

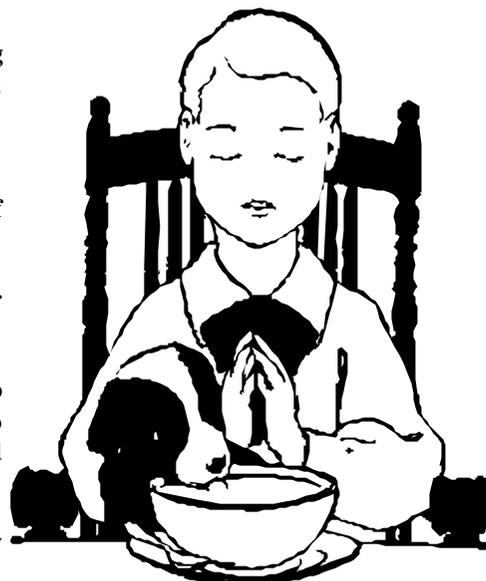
and new feelings from overeating do not arise,

then there will be lack of bodily obstacles

and living comfortably.

GUIDELINES FOR MINDFUL EATING

- **Resolve not to eat when standing or walking. Take the time to eat and be still.**
- **Resolve to take only what your body needs. Remind yourself that as we serve ourselves, we nourish and care for our bodies and can never fill the never satisfied mind**
- **As we prepare or wait for food to be served, take these moments to connect with our bodies and listen well to the moment.**
- **As you sit to eat, take a few moments to reflect with gratitude upon the efforts and labour of the many people who have been involved in providing us with this food.**
- **Reflect upon the nature of the interdependence that lies between ourselves and the Earth.**
- **As you eat, bring a wholehearted attentiveness to taste, to smell, to sensation.**
- **As you finish your meal, take a moment to extend appreciation and loving kindness to yourself, to those you care for, and to those who care for you, to all beings, known and unknown. May all live in peace.**



BLESSING

And when the cook is finished, the meal can be offered and blessed. Geshe Michael Roach explains that this Tibetan food blessing is

“a well-known grace that reflects the wish to reach enlightenment for the good of every living being.”

In faith I offer this delectable food

Of a thousand flavours, cooked to perfection,

To the Victors and their sons and daughters;

By this act may every living being

Revel in the richest feast

Of perfect meditation.

“ It must be said that genuine compassion is not like pity or, a feeling that others are somehow lower than you. Rather with genuine compassion you view others as more important than yourself ”

H.H.the Dalai Lama
The Dalai Lamas Book of Wisdom

PRAYER

**GENERATING THE MIND
FOR ENLIGHTENMENT**

With a wish to free all beings

I shall always go for refuge

To the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha

Until I reach full enlightenme nt.

Filled with wisdom and compassion,

Today in the Buddha’s presence

I generate the Mind for Full Awakening

For the benefit of all sentient beings.

As long as space remains,

As long as sentient beings remain,

Until then, may I too remain,

And dispel the miseries of the world.

A REFECTION OF MAKING OFFERINGS OF FOOD AND WATER

Buddhist teacher Thubten Chodron reflects on the practice of setting out altar offerings, which can slowly prepare us to give the gift of food - and other gifts - to others with sincerity and true generosity.

Making offerings helps us create positive potential energy and develop our good Qualities. At present, we have excessive attachment and miserliness. We tend to keep the biggest and best for ourselves and give the second best or something we don’t want to others. But these self - centred attitudes make us always feel poor and dissatisfied, no matter how much we have. We constantly fear losing what little we do have. Such attitudes make us restless and lead us to act dishonestly to get more things or to be unkind to others to protect what we have.



Our purpose in making offerings is to pacify these destructive habits of attachment and miserliness. When making an offering, it’s best to do so without any feelings of loss or regret. For this reason, bowls of water are often offered on the shrine. Water is readily accessible so that we can easily habituate ourselves to the thought and action of giving. Thus, we come to feel rich when we give and take pleasure in sharing good things with others.

Masala Tea.(India)

Ingredients

- 100g cinnamon powder
- 50g cloves
- 50-65g cardomon
- 50g white pepper
- 1 nutmeg(ground)
- 5g saffron (optional)

Grind all the ingredients to quite a fine powder, mix it and store it in an airtight container and take a little for everyday use in a separate container - it keeps for months. Use an average pinch for a cup of tea.



This was a recipe given to Edita at Lam Rim. She kindly gave me the recipe.



BLESSING

Serving Food:

In this food

I see clearly

the presence of the entire universe

supporting my existence.

Looking at the plate filled with food:

All living beings

are struggling for life.

May they all have

enough food to eat today.

Just before eating:

The plate is filled with food.

I am aware that each morsel is

the fruit of much hard work

by those who produced it.

- Thich Nhat Hanh

LIFE IN A TIBETAN MONASTERY

I have been asked to contribute on my life as a Western nun at a Tibetan monastic institute in India. It is impossible for me to give you a full picture of this, as I was there for seven-and-a-half years, and my situation changed and developed throughout that time. However, I shall try to highlight a few points and hope that this will give you a flavour of the overall situation.. I will write it in a series of instalments.

Part One - The First Year

When I first arrived in India I was already in a state of exhaustion, having worked at three jobs for a year in London to raise the money for my living expenses for the 10 year study programme at the Institute of Buddhist Dialectics, Dharamsala. From the moment of my arrival at Delhi airport I was blessed with the loving care of Paljor-la, the personal attendant of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. He arranged for me to be met at the airport and escorted to Dharamsala (which is just as well because I was practically hallucinating with fatigue). With great difficulty he had succeeded in obtaining a room for me near the Temple for the first few months of my stay. He fed me for the first month, sending breakfast, lunch and dinner in steel tiffins, delivered by His Holiness' bodyguards. On my arrival he provided me with everything that I could possibly need: medicines, robes, shoes, mug, blankets, mattress, table lamp, chair, and even loo paper. For the first few days things would just appear in my room in the arms of strong bodyguards. I was rather overwhelmed. He was afraid I might go back to England, he told me later, due to the state of my room. It was indeed rather terrible. It had no windows that opened to the outside world, and therefore no view or natural light. It had water running down one wall when it rained, but no water coming out of the tap in the kitchen next-door. It had a large rat that used to visit during the night and jump across the room. It was right next to the lavatories, which, due to the lack of water, were in a filthy state and stank. Yes, no doubt he was wise to be concerned. However, I never considered that as an option. I had worked so hard to get there, and had such a clear aim in mind. Furthermore, I was close to His Holiness, and Paljor-la, and very happy to be so. Nevertheless, I did miss

the peace and greenness of England. I hadn't said 'goodbye' to it properly, not having had time. However, it would be three whole years before I was to see it again, each winter vacation bringing with it some compelling activity for me to take part in somewhere in India.

I arrived just in time to receive the Heruka Initiation from His Holiness, followed by a rare teaching on the Six Yogas of Naropa. This was in March 1990, at the tail end of the Losar teachings that His Holiness gives virtually every year. After the teachings were over the monasteries started their regular schedule again. For me I just needed to spend the first few months learning Tibetan, as the new philosophy class would not be starting until March 1991. It wasn't easy learning Tibetan, as skilled TFL teachers (teaching Tibetan as a foreign language) were non-existent. I studied by attending classes at the Library, and by exchanging Tibetan and English classes with a series of monks, mostly from Namgyal Monastery, and most of whom only lasted about a month. I also began regular English language teaching at our Institute three times a week, which was to continue for several years. My first year was notable for the lack of communication that I had with the monks at our Institute, most of whom wouldn't speak to me because I was female. Also I was limited by my own lack of Tibetan. In any case, during the first year my friends were mostly Westerners who found it pleasant to visit someone living close to the main Temple. I managed to find a new room in the same building after a couple of months, where I was allowed to stay for a year. It had a big window with sunshine pouring in during the afternoon, but again one rather damp wall. The toilets were the same dirty ones, with no running water in the building. I devised a system of buckets, and visits to another building which usually had water available from the taps. It worked fine.

Continued from Page 8... LIFE IN A TIBETAN MONASTERY

One thing I would like to mention is the sheer noise of living in India, as well as in a Tibetan monastery. People who haven't experienced either think they are quiet situations. India itself is noisy anyway. People 'share' their music with their neighbours, usually the soundtracks of the most popular Hindi movies. The Hindu temples regularly blare out their often distorted recordings of their sacred (and quite lively) songs. Restaurants and shops likewise contribute their share of taped music. On top of this there are the sounds of monks memorising their various texts and reciting them at the tops of their voices morning and night, of great pujas with deep guttural chanting, cymbals and horns, and the overwhelming and unique sounds of the debate courtyard. On top of this we must not forget the dogs, cows, Indian lorries, and taxis honking to attract custom. It is definitely not a place for quiet retreat - which is why people go to the mountains for this. However, it is a great place for practising patience!

After my first month in Dharamsala, Paljor-la arranged for me to eat with a Tibetan family, the widow of one of His Holiness' cooks who had died a couple of years earlier. So in exchange for Rs.400 per month I did this on a trial basis for the second month. Even though I could hardly speak any Tibetan at this stage, Lobsang Chodrun and I got on tremendously well, had a lot of laughs, and have remained firm friends to this day. However, I was quite distressed at the time about the lack of vegetables in the diet. Mostly it was carbohydrate (noodle soup in the evenings, and rice-and-something at lunchtimes). I remember going to Paljor-la with tears almost brimming in my eyes telling him how necessary it was to have some vitamins and minerals in the food, and I recollect how bravely he attempted to sit there listening to me without laughing! He just about managed to fix the corners of his mouth with a great deal of self-control and suggested I take some vitamin pills. A few months later, upon meeting an American woman fairly new to India, I had the same experience only in reverse! This time it was

me, now an 'old hand' at the Indian life-style, who had to control myself! Anyway, I continued to eat with Lobsang Chodrun for the second month, and after that started cooking for myself. I could have eaten at the Dialectics Institute on a daily basis, but it was thought that my delicate English stomach would not be able to tolerate the food served there. Later I came to understand why, though I did eat there from time to time, particularly on days when there was specially sponsored food.

Paljor-la very thoughtfully arranged for me to have an 'assistant', who was one of His Holiness' bodyguards, and a very dear man who became like a brother to me. Tsering Norbu helped me with all kinds of things, not least obtaining a two-ring gas stove and cylinder for me to cook with, which wasn't easy to get hold of in those days. With that equipment I was really set up for some culinary magic! And a couple of months later a Dialectics Institute monk (one of those very rare ones who did actually exchange a few words with me in my first year) asked if we could cook together as he was suffering from a stomach ulcer. I agreed immediately, and a friend of mine offered to sponsor his food costs as I wasn't in a position to do so. So there we were, all set up for the next few years. Lobsang Wangdu turned out to be a very good cook, and very fast, which was just as well because when it came to joining in the philosophy classes the following year we never had more than an hour for mealtimes (which included preparing and cooking the food, eating it, and washing up - all without running water available).

I must mention the monsoon in Dharamsala, though it is totally unmentionable. It lasts from early July to the end of September. Everything goes mouldy, including books, shoes, bed-linen, clothing, pencil-leads, furniture, food and medicine. The atmosphere makes the mind and body feel dull and heavy. Wet clothes cannot dry. Roads and mountain-sides collapse. People get easily sick. Yet the misery of it all is sometimes wondrously relieved by a crystal clear day, and an occasional double rainbow sweeping right across the sky. In the midst of

Continued from Page 9... LIFE IN A TIBETAN MONASTERY

the monsoon I was blessed with my first private audience with His Holiness. We spent about half-an-hour together, talking about combining study and meditation practice. He also spoke about Dzogchen practice, and recommended Khamtrul Rinpoche (resident in Dharamsala). He blessed my statues and ritual objects. And upon my request he formally accepted me as his disciple. It was a gentle and lovely meeting. Furthermore, I did go to see Khamtrul Rinpoche and requested a Dzogchen teaching. Rinpoche gave me a beautiful teaching about the root of the Dzogchen path, Guru Devotion, with specific reference to His Holiness.

A couple of months later it was time for me to go to Delhi to attend an intensive Tibetan language course that I had booked into at the Karmapa Institute. The language classes were given by the Western students of Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso, and he himself gave some philosophy teachings. I spent three months there and found it very worthwhile. After this it was back to Dharamsala for His Holiness' Losar teachings. A full year had passed, and I was feeling apprehensive about the imminent start of the Buddhist philosophy training, as indeed were all the students in our year. (A new class in our Institute is begun only once every two or three years, not every year). A day or two after the Losar teachings had ended we had the inauguration ceremony of our new class, which all the students of our Institute attended. The prayer hall was packed. Our abbot, the indomitable Gen. Lobsang Gyatso-la, conducted the ceremony with his usual display of verbal enthusiasm and gave at least one very long speech. There were lots of prayers and readings from the scriptural texts, and at one point Gen-la handed round to all of us new students an unusual ritual object for us to treasure. He gave each of us a needle with a long white thread. You might think that he wanted us to become domesticated, and maybe mend some curtains in the Institute or something. But no, that wasn't it at all. He explained that the needle symbolised our development of sharp

intelligence, and that the long white thread symbolised the long duration of our studies. So armed with these implements we stood up at the end of the ceremony to leave the prayer-hall. But in one area of the hall there was quite a commotion. One monk couldn't stand up. His classmate, who had sat behind him during the ceremony, had sewn his lower robe to the long heavy mattress on which his row of monks was now standing. (This just shows you the spirit of playfulness that pervades every aspect of life in Tibetan society. It is a great joy, and something that I sorely miss in **the often rather serious and earnest atmosphere of England. The Tibetans demonstrate a real depth of commitment combined with a genuine sense of fun, which is, I am sure, the best balance for spiritual development.**)

**End of Part One
Dechen(Susan Rochard)**

HOLIDAYS

- Mini breaks, spiritual retreats for groups and individuals; walkers and naturalists
- Comfortable basic self-catering accommodation. Bring bedding, sleeping bags, towels, soap, slippers (no outdoor shoes worn in house)
- Morning, basic guided meditation session before breakfast, instruction given if required.
- House is centrally heated, woodburning stove in meditation room.
- Kitchen has microwave, gas hob and electric cooker.
- Guided walks can be arranged in the Rame Peninsula.

'YONTEN' is a 3 storey Victorian House in the quiet part of the riverside town of Torpoint. It enjoys a fine view over a tidal area of the River Tamar and park. Little Egrets, Grey Heron and Curlews can be seen from the house. The house is open all year and offers a base to explore the beautiful surrounding countryside Rame Peninsula coastline and sandy beaches in a quiet reflective manner. There is no T. V. No smoking or alcohol. Sorry, no pets can be catered for.

TENZIN GYALTSEN (Stuart)

Telephone: 01752 816995

'YONTEN'

**43 SYDNEY ROAD, TORPOINT,
CORNWALL PL11 2LZ**

Q: “Your Holiness, it is a well-known fact that you are a very busy person with many demands on your time. Could you advise a lay person with home, family and work demands, on how to develop a systematic pattern of Dharma practice?”

ON DHARMA PRACTICE.....

Of course at the initial stage, as a beginner, you do need periods of concentrated meditation so that you have a base from which you can begin.

This is certainly crucial. But once you have established that base, then you will be able to adopt a way of life where your daily activity is at least in accord with the principles of the Dharma. So all this points to the importance of making an effort. Without some effort, there is no way that we can integrate the principles of Dharma in our lives.

HHDL:

My Western friends often ask me for the quickest, easiest, most effective—and cheapest—way of practising Dharma! I think to find such a way is impossible! Maybe that is a sign of failure!

We should realise that practising the Dharma is actually something that needs to be done twenty-four hours of the day. That’s why we make a distinction between actual meditation sessions and post-meditation periods, the idea being that both while you are in the meditative session and also when you are out of it, you should be fully within the realm of Dharma practice.

In Fact, one could say that the post-meditation periods are the real test of the strength of your practice. During formal meditation, in a sense you are recharging your batteries, so that when you come out of the session you are better equipped to deal with the demands of your everyday life. The very purpose of recharging a battery is to enable it to run something, isn’t it? Similarly, once you have equipped yourself through whatever practices you engage in, as a human being you can’t avoid the daily routines of life, and it is during these periods that you should be able to live according to the principles of your Dharma practice.

For a serious practitioner, the most serious effort is necessary. Just a few short prayers, a little chanting, and some mantra recitation with a mala (rosary) are not sufficient. Why not? Because this cannot transform your mind. Our negative emotions are so powerful that constant effort is needed in order to counteract them. If we practise constantly, then we can definitely change.

from *The Four Noble Truths*
His Holiness the Dalai Lama

“ With increased inner strength it is possible to develop firm determination and with determination there is a greater chance of success, no matter what obstacles there may be. On the other hand, if you feel hesitation, fear and lack of self-confidence, then often you will develop a pessimistic attitude. I consider that to be the real seed of failure. Therefore, even in the conventional sense, compassion is very important for a successful future.”

H.H. the Dalai Lama.
The Dalai Lamas Book of Wisdom.(Thorsons £3.99)

LIVING WITHOUT FEAR

Awareness of fear is the end of fear. For, fear is always of the unknown. And so, as soon as fear is known for what it is, there is no more fear. A child is afraid in the dark, not of darkness itself, but of the danger which may be lurking in the dark. Then there will be fear of the images of things, which may be there, unseen, unknown by the physical senses, but imagined and conceived by the mind, fear of the devil, of the vampire, fear of being kidnapped, fear of destitution. Fear is not of the knowing mind, but of the mental images which are all focussed on the 'self'.

Why does fear arise in the unknowing mind? The mind's function is to understand; it collects information, stores it up in memory classifies it for reference, all of which are actions providing security of continuance, through savings, through insurance, through investments. It is the feeling of insecurity that causes fear. It is only in security that the mind feels safe and at rest, away from conflict, away from worry and agitation, away from strife and striving. Such security is to be found only in continued existence; and it is the uncertainty of continued existence, always in the future, that produces fear in the present. If there is no continuation in the future, then existence in the present becomes meaningless, baseless, and useless. We do not live for the moment, but for tomorrow. All our actions are directed towards a result, which is to-morrow, the future, which is the continuation of 'self'. And as long as that future is uncertain, unsafe, insecure, there is fear, which is conflict. The future is uncertain, because it is unknown. And, therefore, we people the future with our imaginings, and we are afraid of our own concepts.

Can we be aware of this process? It is possible, if the present is seen only as the present moment. But when the present is made use of to secure the future, then there is no awareness but craving or grasping for continuance of an imaginary 'self'.

Is the 'self' imaginary, when it is so powerful to create and fill life with fear? What is this 'self' but a reaction to an accumulation of the past. My 'self' is my name, my education, my family-connection, my race, my money, my possessions, all of them 'mine' making me the owner, the actor, even the observer of my actions.

And what is there beyond these properties, beyond those qualities? Is there a proprietor, an owner? What happens to the owner if the qualities are not there? Can there be a proprietor without property? Can there be an actor without acting? A walker who does not walk? A sleeper who is awake? A watcher who is asleep? What happens to a watcher who is found asleep on duty? He will be sacked because he was not a watcher.

Likewise in all respects, there is no actor apart from her action. It is the action which makes the actor, just as a child makes one a mother. This relationship between subject and object, between cause and effect, is only a mental separation that has no actual existence, for when one ceases, the other is not there either. The actor does not produce his act, and the act cannot continue apart from the actor. There is only acting, the verb which joins in itself both subject and object. Taking the two apart, there is no acting, and hence neither actor nor act; apart from actual thinking, there is neither a thinker nor her thought.

Yet this separation is made necessary by a mind which wants to continue in security and which cannot continue in action. Action, whether walking or talking, thinking or anything else cannot continue unchanged. There is movement in action that cannot cease without causing the cessation of the act. In action there is no continuity, only proceeding in change, in renewal; but in renewal, in change, there is no identity or entity. And so, the mind has invented an entity to remain constant while action continuously changes. Thus the owner remains even when their property has gone!

Such is the absurdity the mind is forced into by its greed to continue. And then seeing the contradiction in this conflict, there is fear. Fear of darkness is still there even though a light is kept burning all night. There may be no darkness, but the fear of darkness remains as long as there is insecurity in the mind.

Such fear, therefore, has no real existence, although it is an actual experience. Awareness of the state of mind will not provide a substitute for fear. The thought of a guardian angel watching over you is a sublimation of that fear, just as a lamp burning during the night. Fear remains as long as fear is not understood, as long as fear is not seen as a search for security, as long as security is not understood as a desire for continuity as a separation of an actor and their act.

It is this fear that is a search for security, which makes one collect ideas and things, to build a wall of self-protection, both mentally and physically. It is the fear of being alone, without the support of the beliefs of a religious organisation, without the convictions of a political

.....continued from Page 12

LIVING WITHOUT FEAR

party, without the proof of identity invested in a passport, belonging to a recognised nation or race. Being aware of the nature this wall of self-protection, the isolation ceases to be meaningful, the opposition fades and the conflict is no more. And so, fear ceases in awareness, fear which is seen as the reaction to the demands of 'self'.

Fear, then is an escape from what is today into the uncertainty of tomorrow. Does that not seem absurd? The present is the only certainty one has, the only moment of which one can be aware. But the mind develops fear in the knowledge of its discontinuance; and so the uncertainty of tomorrow becomes the obsessing of fear, and causes one to escape from what is. It is this fear that is the basis of all conflict. The sheer fact of today is simple. There may be pain, there may be hunger, there may be fatigue and exhaustion. But they are not a cause of worry and fear. They are unsatisfactory conditions, no doubt. But they are here, and hence no cause of fear.

Fear is about the future, the unborn, the mental image, the incapacity of reaching the goal of the ideal. It is this fear in all its complexity, which forms the conflict. To be free from tomorrow, from the image, from the ideal, all of which are based on the memory of yesterday. To be thus free must be awareness of the present moment in which fear has arisen.

But, instead of being aware of this moment, aware of the arising of fear, aware of the cause of such fear, there is an escape from the present in search of continuity of what was yesterday's. That is the creation of the self', as the bearer, as the soul, the substance of the fleeting mo-

ment. That is the endeavour of the continuation of the object in the subject. The experience once gathered becomes the store of memories, tradition, attachment, religion, views all of which are centred in the 'self' concept.: my religion, my country, my family, my experience. These ideas are now projected into the future as ideals, hopes and desires, ambitions, schemes, heavens and hells, eternity, God. They all try to mask the intrinsic fear of non-continuance, when the past is not certain to continue into the future.

What do we have in the present? Pain, hunger, short-lived joys, remembered sorrows, unfulfilled desires, striving for the escape into an ideal with the fear of non-attainment, fear of loss and the insecurity of hope. Instead of this we desire pleasure and satisfaction, gratification and fulfilment, achievement and security. And as none of these can be found in the present moment, there is fear that even in the future they may not be attainable. Thus we go back into the past from which we have summoned some memories of love and peace. And now we want to transplant those into the future. But the future will always remain unknown; and thus there is fear.

That fear is now, not in the past, not in the future. And thus it is possible to be aware of that constant fear which gnaws at every experience of the moment. This fear twists our ideas, colours our thoughts, distorts our actions, sets up barriers of mistrust between people, creates opposition, destroys love and prevents all understanding. Reputation, social position, stability in a job, economic security, even health, friends and relations, all are forms in which the 'self' tries to endure, but in the possession of which arises the fear of losing them. To live without

fear is to live without expectations, to act without 'self'-projecting purpose. To live without fear is to live without the framework of protective memories and ideals. To live without fear is to live free from all identification. In understanding the baselessness of fear in the absence of a 'self', there arises a direct and spontaneous relationship, which gives joy in surrender without purpose, in giving without expectations, in loving without 'self'.

In the understanding of a need, there is no fear of failure, because there is no 'beyond' in understanding, and hence no thought of gain or loss. But when action reaches out beyond need, and thus becomes greed, there is the birth of fear.

John Peacock

“ I think the person who has had more experience of hardship can stand more firmly in the face of problems than the person who has never experienced suffering. From this angle then, some suffering can be a good lesson for life.”

His Holiness the Dalai Lama

 SHORT STORIES, POEMS AND SAYINGS

**A TEACHING FROM
GESHE DAMCHO-LA ON WHY?**

Why is life so difficult?
Life is not difficult, it is your mind,
came the reply.

Why is my mind so difficult?
Your mind is not difficult, it's your
delusions
came the reply.

Why are my delusions so difficult?
Your delusions are rooted in
ignorance,
came the reply.

Why can't I do something?
You can - study reflect and meditate,
came the reply.

Why is life so difficult?
Why don't you listen?
came the reply.

Margaret H Travis

Long ago in the dense jungle near Kashi (Varanasi) lived a grouse, a hare, a monkey and an elephant. They dwelt together in peace and harmony. Wishing to know which among them was the eldest so that they might

accord each other appropriate respect, the grouse asked each of them to tell how they first remembered seeing a particular tree. The elephant and the monkey recalled seeing it when it was the same size as themselves, the rabbit had drunk dew drops off it when it had but two leaves, while the bird said that he had eaten some seeds and that the tree had sprouted from his droppings. Discovering their proper order of seniority in this way they went about with the monkey riding on the elephant's back, the hare on its shoulders and the grouse perched on top of the hare.

They decided to enter the path of virtue by observing the five basic moral deeds, avoiding:

1. Killing
2. Taking what is not given
3. Sexual misconduct
4. Lying
5. Taking intoxicants

Having made these the basis of their own conduct, they set out to teach them to the other animals in the forest. The resulting

**The Four Harmonious
Brothers**

A traditional Buddhist Tale

harmony brought great peace and prosperity to the kingdom.

One day, the king and queen and their ministers asked a clairvoyant hermit to tell them the cause of their good

fortune. He explained that it was because of the animals' good conduct. When they expressed a wish to see the animals, the hermit told them it was unnecessary for they could achieve the same by following the same precepts. This they did and the kingdom enjoyed great wealth and prosperity.

Subsequently, they were reborn as gods.



SHORT STORIES AND POEMS

The Mantra Walk

Sometimes life is so simple yet so beautiful:
if someone should chance to walk along the path
on a summer evening when the sun is going down
and the effort of making distinctions is put off until morning,
then that quiet figure climbing towards the apple trees
and raising a hand to the prayer flags
would find among the gathering shadows
a more powerful silence, a resonant stillness
untroubled by the flexing of a bird's claw
or the slow ascent of stars.



And Renunciation?

To practise renunciation is to let go of want...

it is marvellous to have no desire, no hopes.
In this detachment I listen and look. I am receptive, aware.
I can see that each advance, each move from one place to another,
Returns us to the same spot; in change there is no change,
Only repeated impulse towards change itself. And so,
how can I say that *I am*, having lived so many lives
and none of them mine?

Into this calm I enter, as into a clearing in a wood,
hearing the murmur of wood-pigeons, watching the sunlight
brighten the soft grasses, breathing in the warm scent
Of ramsons, of cow-parsley, of bluebells.
Here I am mild, content; apart and yet present;
there is a taste of solace, of existence forgiven and welcomed back.

To practise renunciation is to be freed from the inachievable.

Sheila Wild

THE WARRIOR

Once there was a young warrior. Her teacher told her that she had to do battle with fear. She didn't want to do that. It seemed too aggressive: it was scary: it seemed unfriendly. But the teacher said she had to do it and gave her instructions for battle.



The day arrived, the student warrior stood on the side and fear stood on the other. The warrior was feeling small and fear was looking big and wrathful. They both had weapons. The young warrior roused herself and went towards fear, prostrated three times, and asked,

“May I have permission to go into battle with you?”

Fear said

“Thank you for showing me such respect that you ask permission.”

Then the young warrior said,

“How can I defeat you?”

Fear replied,

“My weapons are that I talk fast, and I get very close to your face, then you get completely unnerved and you do whatever I say. If you don't do what I tell you, I have no power. You can listen to me and can have respect for me; you can even be convinced by me. But if you don't do what I say, I have no power.”

In that way, the student warrior learned how to defeat fear.

Pema Chodrun



LAM RIM WALES CELEBRATES 21 YEARS

Before we enter the year 2001, we thought an article on our 'Coming of Age' might be a lovely thought to celebrate with Geshe-la, without whom this would not be possible, and to Margaret for all her support and love from the beginning as well as Edita, who has also provided the delicious food for 22 years plus!



The Party

Thank you to Tessa King who was the organiser of the party & to Roy Radcliffe and Mike Austin for attending to the car park & all their hard work. There was an abundance of food thanks to all your kind contributions. The weather was perfect with familiar and new faces everywhere. An air of happiness and contentment pervaded Lam Rim. People sat out in the beautiful grounds, almost like the Victorian tea parties of an age gone by.



The Children's Performance

What a wonderful memory of the lovely children performing their story. (The Jarmey family children, Margaret Moreton's grandchildren...) Thank you so much to all the children who performed the play and made it such an enjoyable afternoon. You could tell that they really enjoyed playing their parts. A big thank you to Margaret Cook who was the organiser of the play.



The Musicians

What talent! Beautiful music was played throughout the afternoon by Paul Kirby who played the fiddle, Anne-Marie who played percussion and John Peacock on the Sitar. People wandered around quite merrily while the music was playing.



All the Fun of the Fair

The Fortune Teller worked hard all day reading people's fortune's. She asked you to pick a precious stone (gem) that you were drawn to, and then proceeded to give some guidance. The queues to her caravan seemed endless, and lasted all day. It all added to the "fun of the fair". The children enjoyed having their faces painted by artist Tracey Dove. Margaret Moreton had a stall and shop set up and Mary Hodges had a Tombolla stall.

REFLECTIONS

Sun baked afternoons and the sharp taste of Edita's elderflower cordial, feature strongly in my childhood memories of Lam Rim, so the 21st birthday celebrations were particularly poignant for me as I too turned 21 in 1999. As one of the first generation of children brought to Lam Rim, it was wonderful to watch a new crowd of youngsters running about the place and getting up to mischief; however their energies were concentrated later on in the afternoon when they put on a play for everyone and did a jolly good job of it too!

Much feasting and merry making was afoot and I enjoyed a lazy afternoon gorging myself on Edita's cooking, lolling about in the glorious sunshine and having my fortune told which was hilarious and frighteningly accurate! I'm going to be a famous writer don't you know!

Lam Rim has thrived over the past 21 years with the building of the coach house, which means that people can now do extended retreats. In 1993 we were even blessed with a visit from His Holiness the Dalai Lama and a whole new shrine was built in his honour. However, despite all the changes over the years, some things have remained constant: the ever smiling Margaret with her words of wisdom, the ever active Edita who, when I was smaller, always had an endless supply of sweet goodies and the inspirational Geshe-la. Here's to another 21 years!

Tara Sinclair

A Retreat in the Coach House

Sponsored Retreat

For a week in May this year, I was the lucky recipient of a sponsored retreat at Lam Rim Wales. Dr Joan Kerden was the kind sponsor, to whom I wish to offer my thanks and dedicate any merits that may have accidentally arisen.

Not being on a large income, it is unlikely that I could have retreated at that time without sponsorship. Yet, as if by magic the opportunity arose, so enabling me to try to fulfil the Guru's advice.

Environment

As a retreat place, Lam Rim Wales is ideal. It is very quiet, a place where other people are practising and have created an atmosphere of practise over the years. The close proximity to a high practitioner such as Geshe Damcho Yonten is also very beneficial.

The Coach House

The space I was offered was in the luxurious Coach House, which proved perfect for retreat. The three rooms in the flat mean that you avoid feeling confined, and

The view stretching out over the rolling Welsh hills also provides a calming, expansive effect on the mind.

Overall, the Coach House is a most supportive environment for concentration and contemplation.

..the Coach House is a most supportive environment for concentration and contemplation

Auspicious Sign

Incidentally, on the last day of my retreat a rainbow appeared across the other side of the valley—most auspicious. (I'm not sure why it's auspicious, but the Tibetans always make a fuss over it).

Once again, many thanks to my kind sponsor.

Brian Pearson

“May all human and non human beings who eliminate adversity and create conclusive conditions for practising the excellent paths Never be parted in any of their lives From the purest path praised by the buddhas”

Lam Rim Dedication Prayer

Notes on Progress at Lam Rim Wales

Often we feel overwhelmed by the amount of work that needs to be done. Then friends come and help, support, nurture, encourage and laugh at the enormity of the load—it then begins to dissolve and we emerge to watch the different tasks rolling down the hill gathering momentum to completion. We then straighten our backs for a period of time before another load is slapped on. Well, thanks to you all, we are in a state of emergence—so lets look at the tasks rolling down the hill:

Guardians of Lam Rim

We now have 66 Guardians of Lam Rim. For the first time in 22 years we are able to structure a financial base. However, we still need to encourage another 18 Guardians this year to complete the 84 Guardians of Lam Rim. For 34 pence a day you can create such lasting benefit for so many people. *(see back page for more details)*

Prayer Path

The deluge of rain has washed away the wood chippings from the path, so when the ground dries, we will need to replace the chippings – the length of the path is 1/3rd of a mile so that will take a considerable amount of chippings—approximately £1,000.00. So we shall appeal to your practice of generosity so we can continue to create more prayers walking that soft, soft path.

Trees

We now have a canopy of trees on the path, so when the sun was out in the summer – it brought coolness and

shade for all beings. In Autumn silver birches and beech trees made a glorious golden offering display... it was wonderful. We are now developing a new orchard opposite the vegetable garden, the first fruit trees have been planted in memory of the late Philip Jones – Jones the Breath. Yoga Master.

School Visits

There is an increase in the number of school children visiting the Centre as part of their study programme and meeting Geshe-la. They just love sitting meditating with him. You can hear a pin drop....

Repairs

Window repairs and the house/annex painting are nearing completion now.

Rates

Unfortunately we have to increase our rates by £1.50 per day. As you are aware profit margins are very slim and we have experienced increased costs for heating and food

There is an increase in the number of school children visiting the Centre as part of their study programme & meeting Geshe-la

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LAM RIM BUDDHIST CENTRE

Religious Studies Field Work Day with Year 7, Wednesday 28th June 2000

Last July, a group of Junior pupils (year 7) from Coedcae Comprehensive School in Llanelli, Carmarthenshire, spent a full day at Lam Rim Buddhist Centre. The day's activities included research tasks, art work, walking the centre's meditation path, interviewing members of the community as well as having fun. Our thanks go to Pam Evans, Head of Religious Studies and her staff for such a wonderful experience.

MARGARET



Interview with Margaret
(Co-ordinator at Lam Rim)

Q1. How long have you been a buddhist?

A1. In 1977 I took Refuge in the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha and became a Buddhist.

Q2. Why did you become a Buddhist?

A2. I was attracted to the teachings of the Buddha and felt comfortable with taking responsibility for my own actions.

Q3. How long have you lived at Lam Rim?

A3. Twenty two years on the 31st July 2000.

Q4. What does your job as co-ordinator involve?

A4. I organise the courses, retreats-visits. I compile the programmes for the year. I also do all the office work—answering telephone queries, bookings, I take the money and do the accounts, go to the bank and pay the bills. I look after the school visits with David and give Monday evening meditation classes. I look after Geshe-La, and drive him to the Doctor, Dentist or hospital.

Q5. Do many people come to stay at Lam Rim?

A5. We have about 500 people a year stay here.

Q6. What do people do when they come here?

A6. All the people who come to stay are asked to observe the 5 basic precepts:

1. REFRAIN FROM HARMING ANYTHING

2. REFRAIN FROM TAKING SOMETHING THAT IS NOT FREELY GIVEN

3. REFRAIN FROM ANY ACTION WHICH IS SUBJECT TO BLAME

4. REFRAIN FROM SPEAKING FALSELY, HARSHLY OR UNKINDLY.

5. REFRAIN FROM INDULGING IN ANYTHING THAT CAUSES THE MIND TO LOSE ITS NATURAL CLEARNESS, SUCH AS TOBACCO, DRUGS OR ALCOHOL.

People come for various reasons - to do a solo retreat; to come on a course; to do a group retreat; to enjoy the peace and quiet and just relax; to walk around the countryside, or just searching about the meaning of life and wanting to find out about Buddha's teachings. Finally, there are people who have other faiths and want to enjoy the spiritual calm of Lam Rim.

Q7. What is a typical day like for those members of Lam Rim who live here all the time?

A7. Our time table at Lam Rim during the week-days is:

6.00	Awake
6.30 - 7.30	Morning Prayers (Chanting Puja)
8.00 - 8.45	Breakfast and wash - up
9.00 - 1.00	Work Activities
1.00 - 2.00	Lunch
2.00 - 3.00	Rest and Read
4.00 - 6.00	Work (if very busy) or study and preparation for visitors / meditators
6.00 - 7.00	Supper
7.30 - 8.15	Evening Prayers
8.30 - 10.00	Private Practice and Bed

During the week-ends we have courses on and have to adjust to their programme.

Q8. Do you meditate often?

A2. Not enough - there always seems to be work to do and people to see as the path of a Buddhist practitioner is to be of service to others. I get up at 4.45 and that is the time I enjoy meditating—there is a clearness in the air and a hush when all the people are still in bed. The birds are just singing and the sun (when it appears) arises - another day, another experience, a fresh promise of how you can skilfully use your time to be of benefit.. I also go to morning and evening puja and complete my practice commitments in the evening (this I find harder

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In as I am tired). I always try to dedicate my activities of the day for the benefit of all living beings. I also enjoy walking meditation..

Q9. What are the benefits of meditation?

A9. Meditation helps you to think clearly, to be focused in what you are doing (we call that mindfulness). With effort you can start to meditate whenever you do something (not just sitting on your cushion) and in meditating you do not waste your energy. You become calm and peaceful and have happy mind, people then find you easy to be with..

When you think things through in your meditation practice then you stop blaming others for mishaps that happen to you.

When you feel helpless in situations you can meditate and ask the Buddhas to help you. Then you feel O.K. Thank you for coming to see us. We thought you were great.

Margaret



**Lam Rim Buddhist Centre
Religious Studies Field Work Day with Year 7
Wednesday 28th June 2000**

“It was brilliant”.

“The shrine room was amazing”

“I don’t want to go home!”

“Can we come back next year?”

These were just a few of the comments made by Year 7 pupils from Coedcae School, Llanelli after a day of Religious Studies field work at Lam Rim Tibetan Buddhist Centre near Raglan.

Pupils spent a day at the centre and carried out extensive research into Tibetan Buddhism and Eco-friendly life-styles. Some pupils also interviewed permanent residents of the Dharma centre including the spiritual director of Lam Rim, The Venerable Geshe Damcho Yonten, who escaped from Tibet with His Holiness the Dalai Lama in 1959 after the Chinese invasion. Geshe-La, as he is addressed by members of Lam Rim, answered pupils questions about re-birth, reincarnation, karma, world peace and Tibet. One pupil even asked him if he was a “Buddha”. Geshe La answered,

“I am trying to become one.”

The day ended with a short meditation led by Geshe La. Total silence, and total peace. Wonderful! A beautiful day enjoyed by all.

Pam Evans
Head of Religious Studies
Coedcae School, Llanelli, Carmarthenshire

*Notes on Progress
at Lam Rim Wales ..continued...*

The Coach House

We are enjoying an increase in people wishing to participate in a retreat or quiet time-out in the Coach House.



New Technology

We are moving into the new technology— visit our web page at <http://www.lamrim.org.uk/>. You will also be pleased to know we are now processing our mailing list on an annual basis, so in future renewals will only be in September/October(see back page). If you wish, send us your Email address.

Margaret and David

A Simple Practice For People Everywhere

Recently a group spent several days visiting with His Holiness the Dalai Lama focusing upon what they believe the five most important questions to be considered moving into the new millennium.

The five questions were:

- How do we address the widening gap between rich and poor?
- How do we protect the earth?
- How do we educate our children?
- How do we help Tibet and other oppressed countries and people of the world?
- How do we bring spirituality (deep caring for one another) through all disciplines of life?

His Holiness the Dalai Lama said all five questions fall under the last one. If we have true compassion in our hearts, our children will be educated wisely, we will care for the earth, those who “have not” will be cared for.

The group asked His Holiness the Dalai Lama,

“Do you think loving on the planet is increasing or staying the same?”

His response,

“My experience leads me to believe that love IS increasing.”

He shared a simple practice that will increase loving and compassion in the world. He asked everyone in the group to share it with as many people as they can.

The Practice

- **Spend 5 minutes at the beginning of each day remembering we all want the same things (*to be happy and be loved*) and we are all connected to one another.**
- **Spend 5 minutes breathing in—cherishing yourself; and—breathing out—cherishing others. If you think about people you have difficulty cherishing extend your cherishing to them anyway.**
- **During the day extend that attitude to everyone you meet. Practice cherishing the simplest person (clerks, attendants, etc., as well as the “important” people in your life; cherish the people you love and the people you dislike).**
- **Continue this practice no matter what happens or what anyone does to you.**

“The practice of cherishing can be taken very deep if done wordlessly, allowing yourself to feel the love and appreciation that already exists in your heart”

GESHE-LA IS GOING TO SOUTH AFRICA

Geshe-La is going to South Africa on the 9th January with Mike Austin from Lam Rim Bristol Centre and returns on the 16th March.

My mind reflects on that inspiration journey in November 1999 - my first visit to South Africa. The imprints on my mind are of the presence of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, together with Geshe-La and a reunion with the late Godwin Sarnararatue from Sri Lanka, who had taught at Lam Rim Buddhist Centre many times.

I always enjoy visiting places with Geshe-La, so many things to be mindful of and it is very helpful visiting other meditation centres sharing their spiritual energies.

The visual delights were also special. Table Mountain in Cape Town, and the Great Drakensberg Mountain range. I experienced a profound sense of reverence for the ancient energies standing on these mountains. The profusion of flowers, brilliant colours, shapes and perfumes together with a diversity of architectural delights - the Englishness, the Dutchness, the Africaness, such excitement for me to see and touch.

There was also another aspect of South Africa which touched my heart - the people that I met. The warmth, the kindness, the generosity and hospitality mixed with spontaneous fun. I felt nurtured by that young at heart energy that is so apparent.

My psyche has been touched by this ancient land that displays so much beauty and so many warm hearts. I will pray all will be well with the peoples of South Africa and the dharma will flourish in your minds.

Margaret

Have You Heard of the Guardians of Lam Rim?

“Who are they?”

They are individuals who contribute £10 a month to benefit Lam Rim Buddhist Centre. We need 84 Guardians to generate £10,000 per year to underpin our outgoing expenses in an emergency.

“How?”

By taking out a Deed of Covenant for £10 a month for 4 years

“Why?”

By helping to provide a financial cushion to soften our workload as our profit margins are quite slim. Quality not quantity is our philosophy.

“When?”

Send off now and be included in the Millenium Draw of Guardians for **either** a free weekend in the Coach House for 2, or one weeks retreat for 1 in the Coach House worth £100 offered by a sponsor. If you wish you can use your prize to become a benefactor to enable someone else to do a week’s retreat who is unable to afford it.

To: The Co-ordinator, Lam Rim Buddhist Centre, Penrhos, Raglan, USK, Monmouthshire, NP15 2LE

Please forward a Deed of Covenant form as I wish to help Lam Rim Buddhist Centre develop their emergency fund.

Name

Phone

Address:

.....



LAM RIM BUDDHIST CENTRE

**Penrhos, Raglan,
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**Spiritual Director and Resident Teacher
The Venerable Geshe Damcho Yonten**